

OHIO ASSOCIATION OF FOODBANKS

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Inaction on Congress Hurls 1.8 Million Ohioans Over Hunger Cliff *\$193 million will be lost from Ohio's economy in the next year*

COLUMBUS – Due to an automatic expiration of a temporary boost to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly called food stamps) benefits, over 1.8 million Ohioans that rely on SNAP to help feed themselves and their families will be experiencing across-the-board reductions in their benefits beginning November 1.

The boost to SNAP benefits established by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) will expire tomorrow. Over the next year, this reduction in benefits will result in a loss of \$193 million from low-income Ohioans' food budgets, resulting in an inevitable loss to Ohio's economy and loss in wages and income tax revenue from employees at local grocers and food retailers. For a family of four, the cuts will mean an average of \$36 less per month in SNAP benefits.

"Last year, our 12 member foodbanks and 3,300 member charities distributed emergency food valued at about \$223 million," said Lisa Hamler-Fugitt, executive director of the Ohio Association of Foodbanks. "Just these cuts alone equal nearly all of the food our emergency food assistance network was able to distribute. We have no new sources of food or funding. Our network cannot fill this gap."

At the same time, Congress has now resumed its debate surrounding the Farm Bill. Both the current Senate and House versions propose cuts and/or harmful structural changes to SNAP. The House version proposes nearly \$40 billion in cuts to SNAP over the next ten years, while the Senate version would cut about \$4 billion over the same time period.

"We are talking about modest supplemental benefits that put low-income Ohioans in grocery store lines when they can't afford enough food on their own," said Hamler-Fugitt. "The vast majority of people receiving SNAP are children, seniors, individuals living with disabilities and adults who are working for low wages or recovering from the loss of a job or reduced hours at work. Now is not the time to take these benefits out of low-income households or local economies."

About the Ohio Association of Foodbanks

The Ohio Association of Foodbanks is Ohio's largest charitable response to hunger, representing Ohio's 12 Feeding America foodbanks and 3,300 member charities including food pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters. In SFY 2013, the association and its member foodbanks were able to acquire and distribute over 173 million pounds of food and grocery items. Follow the association on [Twitter](#), stay connected on [Facebook](#), and visit them on the web at www.ohiofoodbanks.org.

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