

OHIO ASSOCIATION OF FOODBANKS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

June 30, 2015

Response to 2016-17 Biennial Budget Amended Sub. H.B. 64 as Signed by Governor Kasich

Media Statement from Lisa Hamler-Fugitt, executive director for the Ohio Association of Foodbanks:

“Today, Governor John R. Kasich signed the 2016-17 biennial budget which includes \$19.75 million per year to support Ohio’s 12 Feeding America foodbanks and their 3,300 member food pantries, soup kitchens and homeless shelters. As Ohio’s largest charitable response to hunger, we are deeply grateful for the incredible leadership demonstrated by Governor Kasich, Senate President Keith Faber and House Speaker Cliff Rosenberger and the extraordinary commitment from members of the Ohio House of Representatives and the Ohio Senate in responding to the growing hunger crisis in our state in this budget.

“This funding represents a \$5.25 million per year increase in support for the Ohio Food Program and Agricultural Clearance Program, which provides fresh, Ohio-grown fruits and vegetables and shelf-stable, protein-packed foods to Ohioans that struggle to afford food on their own. This additional support directly responds to the 40 percent increase in demand for help from foodbanks that our network experienced from 2010 to 2014. We are thankful that Ohio’s leaders recognize that our charitable network – 71 percent of which are faith-based organizations – cannot respond to the need for help on its own.

“This important investment, which represents a mere 83 cents per person, per meal served through our network, will pay dividends in educational achievement, worker productivity and health care outcomes. It will tell the older adults, children, families, people living with disabilities and the working poor that we serve that they are not alone, and that adequate, nutritious food is something the State of Ohio believes no one should go without.

“We thank Governor Kasich and leadership and members of the Ohio House and Senate for their hard work during this budget process and their willingness to stand in solidarity with the 2 million of their constituents struggling with hunger. Thanks to this vital support, our network can continue to answer the call for the one in six Ohioans that don’t always know where their next meal will come from. We look forward to continuing to work with Governor Kasich, his administration and members of the Ohio General Assembly as we collectively strive to ensure that no Ohioan is left behind.”

##

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 2014, the association and its member foodbanks were able to acquire and distribute over 186 million pounds of food and grocery items. The association also serves as the home of The Ohio Benefit Bank and operates the state’s largest navigator program for the Affordable Care Act. Follow the association on [Twitter](#), stay connected on [Facebook](#) and visit them on the web at www.ohiofoodbanks.org.

Contact: Lisa Hamler-Fugitt, Executive Director for the Ohio Association of Foodbanks at 614-221-4336 ext. 222 or 614-271-4803 (cell) or lisa@ohiofoodbanks.org