

# OHIO ASSOCIATION OF FOODBANKS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

June 16, 2015

## ***Response to Acceptance of Ohio Senate Finance Committee Omnibus Amendment to Amended Substitute H.B. 64***

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

“Our emergency hunger relief network is made up of 12 Feeding America foodbanks and 3,300 pantries, soup kitchens and shelters that provided food and hope to more than two million different Ohioans last year. Every community in all 88 Ohio counties is impacted by hunger and food insecurity.

“With the acceptance of this omnibus amendment proposing an increase in funding for Ohio’s foodbanks in amended substitute H.B. 64, members of the Ohio Senate Finance Committee have signaled that they recognize the importance of addressing hunger head-on. On behalf of our network and the people we serve, I want to thank the entire Ohio Senate, including members of Senate leadership and members serving on the Ohio Senate Finance Committee, for standing in solidarity with families struggling to put nutritious food on the table.

“We are profoundly thankful that the Ohio Senate Finance Committee demonstrated their support for hungry Ohioans by proposing a budget bill that includes an additional \$2.5 million per year in the 2016-17 biennial budget for Ohio’s foodbanks, for a total of \$19.75 million per year. This proposed increase in funding builds on the support demonstrated by Governor Kasich in his executive budget and by the Ohio House in H.B. 64.

“As a network that serves hungry people making tough choices, we know that hunger is merely a symptom of poverty. We are grateful that the Senate recognizes that gains in educational achievement, worker productivity and health outcomes cannot be realized without first ensuring access to adequate, nutritious food. These issues take support from every sector to solve.

“From 2010 to 2014, when the economy began to recover for some, demand for help from our network rose by 40 percent. Last year, we served more than one in six people in our state. This investment not only puts nutritious food on the table for our most vulnerable individuals and families, but also prevents food from going to waste in the fields of Ohio farms.

“We thank Ohio’s senators for their hard work during this budget process and look forward to working with them, their colleagues in the House and the administration to make sure no Ohioan goes without adequate, nutritious food.”

Lisa Hamler-Fugitt will be available for phone interviews following the full Senate vote.

###

### **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](http://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](mailto:lisa@ohiofoodbanks.org)