



Working together toward a hunger-free and healthier community.

Mid-Ohio Foodbank

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## Senate Farm Bill Huge Step Forward!

The U.S. Senate Agriculture Committee released its version of the 2018 Farm Bill - the "Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018" - late last week. The bill was crafted through bipartisan effort and funds SNAP at current levels and avoids draconian changes to work eligibility requirements. The bill also proposes changes to improve SNAP program operations, such as preventing dual enrollment across state lines. In all, the bill is a large step forward in comparison to HR2, the House Farm Bill. The bill is scheduled for hearing and potential markup tomorrow (Wednesday, the 13<sup>th</sup>) to possibly be on the Senate Floor for vote next week.

However, the bill represents a missed opportunity to invest in The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). Last year, over 31.345 million pounds of wholesome food was provided as a result of TEFAP in Ohio, representing over 14.5 percent of food distributed to hungry Ohioans. TEFAP is essential for the many households who earn slightly too much to be eligible for SNAP, but still rely regularly on the state's foodbank network. In Ohio, the recent Feeding America *Map the Meal Gap* study estimates nearly half of food insecure individuals in Ohio (47 percent) likely earn between 130-200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level. Advocacy efforts are under way to raise TEFAP funding to needed levels.

Meanwhile, the House is expected to reconsider HR2 next week. The differing proposals will need to be reconciled once both chambers have passed their respective bills. For now, please [contact Ohio's Senators](#) to ask them to oppose any cuts to SNAP funding and eligibility requirements while supporting an increase in TEFAP spending. Also, keep an eye out for updates and potential calls-to-action coming later this week or early next week as both Farm Bill proposals prepare to move through respective chambers.

For talking points and information on the Farm Bill, visit the [Feeding America](#) and the [Food Research and Action Center \(FRAC\)](#) advocacy sites. As always, for questions or additional information, feel free to contact Tim White, Advocacy Manager, at [twhite@midohiofoodbank.org](mailto:twhite@midohiofoodbank.org) or (614) 317-9480.

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