



Working together toward a hunger-free and healthier community.

July 29, 2018

Mid-Ohio Foodbank

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### **Senate Passes Farm Bill with Increased TEFAP Funding; Reject Punitive Amendments**

The Senate passed its version of the 2018 Farm Bill - the “Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018” – by a vote of 86-11, with amendments to increase funding for The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) while rejecting other onerous proposals. This bill was crafted through bipartisan effort and added \$100 million in TEFAP funding to take the program to recommended levels, while continuing SNAP at current funding levels. The bill also proposes changes to improve SNAP program operations, such as preventing dual enrollment across state lines. Two of the amendments that were handily defeated would have required a photo ID for SNAP recipients (a logistical nightmare) and eliminated state waiver options that would have curtailed needed flexibility by states such as Ohio. Please be sure to thank Ohio Senators [Brown](#) and [Portman](#) for their support of sound anti-hunger policy and urge them to protect the gains made in this bill during the reconciliation process with the U.S. House of Representatives.

### **Next Step: Reconciliation**

The Senate and House versions of the Farm Bill now head to the reconciliation stage. A committee of select Senators and Representatives are to craft a version of the bill that can pass both chambers. Considering differences in the respective bills, it is difficult to predict what the final version may contain and when it will be enacted. While a bill is supposed to be in effect for the new federal fiscal year beginning October 1, Congress can continue current law into the new fiscal year until a bill takes effect.

### **The Power of Advocacy**

The Farm Bill has been a demonstration of the power of advocacy. The introduction and adoption of the Senate amendment to increase TEFAP funding, along with the defeat of multiple onerous amendments, illustrates that voices speaking in unison on issues can make a difference. Even on the House side, with the passage of HR2 and its punitive measures, advocacy efforts were noticeable throughout the debate. So – keep up the phone calls, emails, letters and site visits. Utilize your supporters and others to share the good work being done in our communities. We need to ensure that the reconciliation committee for the Farm Bill works to create a sound framework for anti-hunger efforts. For information on the Farm Bill and grassroots advocacy, visit the [Feeding America](#) and the [Food Research and Action Center](#) (FRAC) advocacy sites. And, feel free to contact Tim White, Advocacy Manager, at [twwhite@midohiofoodbank.org](mailto:twwhite@midohiofoodbank.org) or (614) 317-9480.

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#### **Connect with Us**



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