



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **White House Budget Proposal puts hundreds of thousands of Oklahomans at risk of hunger, takes money away from local economies, drastically reduces the effectiveness of nation's strongest public-private partnership.**

OKLAHOMA, February 2018 – The following statement has been issued by Hunger Free Oklahoma, The Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma, and the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma in response to the proposed budget released by the White House. President Trump's recently released budget proposal calls for drastic changes and severe cuts to the USDA federal nutrition programs. The most detrimental changes include:

- Replacing flexible benefits with inflexible food packages – This proposal replaces flexible Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (food stamp) benefits with inflexible food packages that will increase government bureaucracy while taking away hundreds of millions of dollars from local Oklahoma economies.
- Decreasing the impact of food stamps as an economic stimulus - Nationally, this proposal cuts \$13 billion annually from SNAP and takes an additional \$13 billion a year out of the open market for local grocers and business owners to create a new government buying and shipping program that will lead to inefficiencies, mistakes, delays, and undermine the effectiveness of the existing program.
- Eliminating the minimum SNAP Benefit – The minimum benefit is crucial to many seniors and people with disabilities across our state. The minimum benefit may seem insignificant, but to the nearly 40,000 Oklahoma seniors that rely on SNAP it is the difference between a healthy diet and skipping meals to pay for life-saving prescription medications.
- Capping benefits for large families – The president's proposal will force parents to make hard decisions about feeding their children – punishing children for circumstances out of their control. Food insecure children are more likely to face negative health, education, and life outcomes that undermine their ability to overcome poverty.

This proposal takes dollars out of the hands of local families and the registers of local businesses. It undermines decades of effort to end hunger in America, will ensure that thousands more Oklahomans depend on a charitable system that cannot fill the gap that this proposal creates, and grows government bureaucracy at Oklahoma's expense.

Making sure every Oklahoman has enough to eat is crucial to the prosperity of our state. We urge all Oklahomans to let your Senators and Representatives know these changes are bad for Oklahoma and the nation. Congress must protect crucial anti-hunger programs, the children, seniors, and people with disabilities they support, and the local economies that rely on them.

For further comment please contact:

- Chris Bernard, Hunger Free Oklahoma – [chris.bernard@hungerfreeok.org](mailto:chris.bernard@hungerfreeok.org); 918-264-0693
- Eileen Bradshaw, Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma – [ebradshaw@okfoodbank.org](mailto:ebradshaw@okfoodbank.org)
- Katie Fitzgerald, Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma – [kfitzgerald@regionalfoodbank.org](mailto:kfitzgerald@regionalfoodbank.org)
- Effie Craven, Oklahoma Food Banks – [ecraven@regionalfoodbank.org](mailto:ecraven@regionalfoodbank.org); 405-600-3129