



## Oklahoma Food Banks

July 15, 2020

The Honorable James Lankford  
United States Senator  
316 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Lankford:

On behalf of Oklahoma Food Banks, we are writing you to ensure the next Senate COVID-19 stimulus bill prioritizes people facing hunger including the 12 million children who are food insecure in the United States. Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma, Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma, and many others across the Feeding America network of 200 food banks and 60,000 partner feeding agencies continue to experience an increase in demand for local emergency hunger relief. Feeding America estimates that an additional 17.1 million people in the United States including 6.8 million additional children will experience food insecurity due to the pandemic. In order to meet the demand, Congress will need to make additional investments in federal nutrition programs including The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP).

SNAP is the nation's largest domestic program to address hunger and provides healthy nutritious meals for millions of individuals including the 44% of all SNAP participants who are children under the age of 18. An increase of SNAP benefits by 15% would provide around an additional \$25 more per month for an individual and just under \$100 per month for a family of four. In addition, increasing the SNAP minimum benefit from \$16 to \$30 would help individuals economically impacted by the pandemic. Please see Feeding America's data visualization on the impact of SNAP and COVID-19 in Oklahoma. In addition to the SNAP request of an increase of 15%, the extension of Pandemic-EBT is also a top priority to ensure children continue to have access to meals when schools are closed during this time. We would like to request a legislative fix for the extension and improvement of P-EBT, to further support families in every state.

We also urge you to include an additional \$500 million in TEFAP food and funds to ensure food banks can serve community members in need, and provide \$543.25 million in funding for TEFAP storage and distribution and infrastructure needs to support the rental, lease, or purchase of essential assets such as acquiring refrigerated and dry trucks, trailers, refrigeration, and spacing for efficiently storing and distributing food across food bank service areas.

We greatly appreciate all the support you have provided to us, and we hope you consider these requests to ensure families facing food insecurity in Oklahoma can put food on the table during this unprecedented time.

Our State Advocacy and Public Policy Director, Bailey Perkins, is available for any questions you may have. You may reach her at 580-483-1600; bperkins@rfbo.org



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