

Ohio's Budget

Praying for our Daily Bread

Ohio's budget is about priorities:



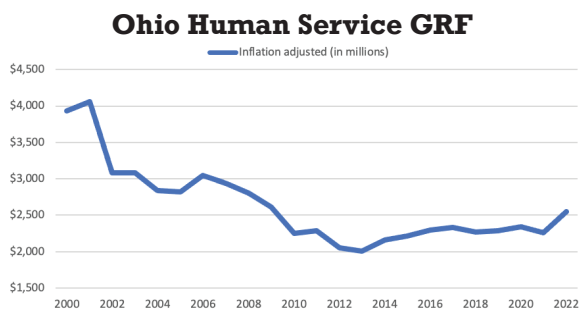
Ohio's main operating budget sets the direction for our state, our schools, and our communities. On Jan. 31st, the Governor proposed his budget to expand healthcare to more women and children, more investments into lead abatement and clean water, and expanding childcare and college grants for low-and-middle income Ohioans. These are positive steps that will strengthen Ohio communities.

Budgets are Moral Documents:



A budget reflects our values as a community. This budget proposal diverts resources away from our public schools by expanding vouchers and it moves far too slowly toward equitable and adequate school funding. It does not do nearly enough to reduce hunger in our communities. However, as the \$100 billion proposal moves toward passage in June, it can be strengthened to meet our moral obligations to future generations.

Ohio has the resources to address our most pressing concerns.



Ohio can invest in hardworking families and make sure all Ohioans have pathways to economic security, dignity, and stability. However, for nearly 20 years Ohio has cut taxes for the wealthy and well-connected - which led to a 40% cut to human service investments. Ohio tried to tax cut our way to prosperity, and it simply didn't work. Policymakers should end the tax cutting experiment and restore funding for effective and efficient programs.



Three steps to reduce hunger in our communities

1. Hunger Free Schools:

Full bellies lead to full minds. Our schools provide desks, transportation, and textbooks so that all students can succeed - and food should be a part of the equation of student success. During the pandemic, Ohio expanded free meals to nearly every school district. In urban, suburban, and rural communities, people recognize that these efforts worked to improve focus and behavior, strengthen the classroom, and reduce hunger. In addition to the positive outcomes for students, universal school meals also reduces bureaucracy and stigma. Universal School Meals will improve the health of children and cut costs in the long-run. ***We encourage the Ohio General Assembly to expand school meals and guarantee that all children receive their daily bread.***

2. Strengthen Ohio's Effective and Efficient Foodbank Network:

The Ohio Association of Foodbanks continues to be on the front lines of Ohio's charitable response to hunger. The Governor proposed to flat-fund Ohio's foodbanks despite growing need, the loss of federal pandemic nutrition assistance, and inflationary pressures at the grocery store. Our network of food banks supports local Ohio farmers by purchasing surplus produce, ensures its safe and healthy transportation and storage to our local food pantries, meal sites, and markets across the state. ***We encourage the Ohio General Assembly to increase funding for Ohio's foodbanks to \$50 million per year.***

3. Expand Senior Citizen SNAP benefit:

SNAP is our number one defense against hunger in Ohio. Many eligible Ohio senior citizens only receive the minimum benefit of \$23 a month through SNAP. Many of these seniors are still caring for aging parents and helping to support their grandchildren. \$23 is not enough. ***We encourage the Ohio General Assembly to offer a state supplement to SNAP for seniors to raise their minimum to \$50 a month.***

DID YOU KNOW...

Poverty and hunger are threats to many of our neighbors

- + **1 in 9** people face hunger in Ohio (1.4 million people)
- + **1 in 6** children face hunger in Ohio (412,000 kids)
- + **1 in 10** households with seniors face hunger.
- + **29% of Ohio households** are below 200% of the FPL - often choosing between bills, food, and other necessities.
- + Inflation has eliminated recent wage gains for Ohioans.
 - Groceries 12.5%,
 - Heating 33%,
 - Rent 12.6%