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## **Farm Bill Threatens Food Access for 23,000 Wisconsin Children**

**MILWAUKEE** – (May 2, 2018) – Wisconsin children stand to lose the most with the House Farm Bill, where Wisconsin could see a \$23.8 million cut from funding that supports need-based food assistance programs statewide. Of the 23,369 children who would experience significant hunger if the legislation passes, children in rural communities would be hit the hardest.

“Nearly 40% of the people Hunger Task Force serves are under the age of 18; these children often have no control over their ability to find food at home,” said Sherrie Tussler, executive director of Hunger Task Force and member of the Hunger Relief Federation. “Hunger doesn’t take a summer vacation. These 23,000 children need our help...they *need* access to school meals to grow and learn into contributing members of society. That’s how we make Wisconsin stronger.”

The 2018 House Farm Bill (H.R. 2) would prevent states like Wisconsin from offering broad-based categorical eligibility to families that do not receive cash assistance or ongoing TANF-funded services, according to the non-partisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau. An estimated eight percent of currently enrolled children would lose their FoodShare eligibility *and* their ability to receive free and reduced price meals at school.

“Food banks and food pantries in Wisconsin provide much-needed services to those in the community who are already struggling to make ends meet,” added Tussler. “It will be impossible for these organizations to make up the difference if Congress continues to make harmful cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) like those proposed in the Farm Bill.”

Following Governor Scott Walker’s recent Welfare Reform, which presented drastic cuts and limitations to FoodShare recipients, local food service programs are already seeing an increase in attendance. These organizations, intended to provide short-lived assistance in an emergency situation, will not be able to replace the wide-reaching, life-changing benefits that programs like SNAP provide to struggling families statewide.

*The **Hunger Relief Federation of Wisconsin** aims to connect food banking partners throughout the state to engage and expand the FREE | LOCAL | INDEPENDENT model. Each local member of the Hunger Relief Federation of Wisconsin works to serve the specific needs in their community and has developed a comprehensive plan to combat hunger in their region. Together, federation members agree to maintain a healthy, robust network of free and local food banks, pantries and resources.*

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