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Contact Name: Amy Bell, communications director
Organization: Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance
Phone Number: (501) 399-999
Email: abell@arhungeralliance.org

Despite Decline in Food Insecurity, Arkansas Continues to Remain Well Above the National Average

Little Rock, AR (September 6, 2019) – The US Department of Agriculture released its Household Food Security in the United States in 2018 report this week. The percentage of U.S. households that were food insecure decreased from 12.5 million (17%) to 11.2 million (15.2%).

Arkansas food insecurity dropped significantly, from 17.4% in 2017 to 15.1% in 2018, moving our national ranking from 2nd to 6th. Although we are seeing a decline in food-insecure households, policies from the current Administration threaten to reverse this trend.

“While we are thrilled to see a significant decrease in overall food insecurity in Arkansas, we cannot let this momentum be interrupted by restricting access to public services,” said Kathy Webb, Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance executive director. “On the national level, the rate of food-insecure households has dropped to pre-recession levels, thanks in large part to bipartisan efforts to increase access to anti-poverty programs. We must not allow the Trump administration policies to undo nearly a decade of progress.”

The Alliance believes anti-poverty programs, such as SNAP, are a key component in the fight to eliminate food insecurity. Without a bipartisan effort from our elected officials to increase access to these programs, we will see a reverse in this reported progress.

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About the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance
Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance, lead partner in Arkansas for the No Kid Hungry campaign, is a non-profit collaborative network of more than 440 hunger relief organizations across Arkansas. Our founding members include the Arkansas Foodbank in Little Rock, the Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas in Jonesboro, Food Bank of North Central Arkansas in Norfork, Harvest Regional Food Bank in Texarkana, Northwest Arkansas Food Bank in Bethel Heights, and River Valley Regional Food Bank in Fort Smith. The Alliance is dedicated to reducing hunger through direct relief, education and advocacy. We invite you to visit our website for more details on hunger relief programs, donor and volunteer opportunities.

About the USDA Report
The United States Department of Agriculture, using data from surveys conducted annually by the Census Bureau, has released estimates since 1995 of the number of people in households that are food insecure. Food-insecure households are those that are not able to afford an adequate diet at all times in the past 12 months. The report also includes food-insecurity rates for each state, but for states it uses three-year averages to give a better estimate of the number of households experiencing food insecurity.