

Local Matters

PARTNERING *for* HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

★★★★★★

2022 Election Guide

★★★★★★



Overview

For the 2020 election season, Local Matters published an election guide for Franklin County, posing questions related to food justice to candidates running for public office. Building upon our 2020 Election Guide, Local Matters has created this guide for the 2022 midterms. The goal of the guide is to provide information on candidates' priorities and support of policies, as well as to encourage greater participation in the democratic process.

Focusing on the communities where we do our work, we identified the candidates running for office in Franklin County and congressional districts that fall within Franklin County. We have also included the statewide races for governor and US senate. Questions were drafted with attention to the three mission pillars of Local Matters: food access, food advocacy, and food education. You can read our extended questions below, and a shortened version is included under the candidates who responded. The guide will continue to be updated online as we receive more responses from candidates.

How to Use the Guide

We encourage you to use this guide as a starting point to hold candidates accountable and communicate their vision for our communities. Use the following pages to find candidates from your district and read their responses to the questions posed by Local Matters. If your candidates did not answer our survey, you can help solicit responses and therefore bring greater transparency to their platforms. Questions can be asked during public candidate forums, through social media, and by calling or emailing their campaign teams. If you receive any answers that you would like to share with us to include in the guide, please contact Courtney West (cwest@local-matters.org) or Brian Landers (blanders@local-matters.org).

To find your district and polling location, visit the Franklin County Board of Elections Voter Record Search (<https://electionlink.franklincountyohio.gov/portals/ElectionLink/Votersearch.aspx>). If you need to check your registration status, visit the Ohio Secretary of State's Voter Registration webpage (<https://olvr.ohiosos.gov/>).

Our Questions

1. The Ohio Farm to School Network is an example of a farm-to-institution program that aims to enrich the connection communities have with local food by changing procurement practices, building school gardens, and educating students about healthy food. In addition, farm-to-institution programs could give Ohio farmers the opportunity to develop new markets to sell their goods to colleges, hospitals and prisons. Given the importance of a strong local food system to the health of our community, especially in helping prevent diet-related disease in children, what will you do to encourage state and local governments to develop local food systems that produce food for schools and institutions?
2. Feeding America, the national network of foodbanks, predicted that rates of food insecurity would increase by approximately five percent as a result of pandemic-related stresses on American families¹, and when combined with pre-pandemic figures one in five children in Ohio could go hungry. To address this issue, during the pandemic, SNAP allotments were increased by emergency waiver in order to account for increased food prices and loss of economic opportunity for individuals and families. However, food prices have continued to increase and families continue to feel the economic impact of the pandemic. Would you support making permanent increases to SNAP benefits, and what measures would you implement to support emergency assistance for families struggling to make ends meet while navigating complex food assistance programs?
3. Currently, Ohio does not have statewide Health Education Standards. Rather, it has only a general policy to provide basic nutrition education in schools. At the same time, 17% of Ohio children have obesity.² Given the importance of our children's health for the future of Ohio and of the nation, and the lack of Health Education Standards in Ohio, would you support a comprehensive nutrition education curriculum in pre-K through 12th grade and how can we get started?
4. Rates of diet-related chronic diseases are historically higher among low-income and BIPOC communities, which lead to lower life expectancy and lower quality of life for these populations.³ Studies conducted in Los Angeles, New York and New Orleans found that fast-food restaurants are more highly concentrated in predominantly African American neighborhoods.⁴ Another study found that predominantly Black areas have the fewest number of supermarkets, while predominantly white areas have the highest number of supermarkets.⁵ What would you do to reduce poverty and create equitable food access in under-served and under-resourced communities?

¹ https://www.feedingamerica.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/National%20Projections%20Brief_3.9.2021_0.pdf

² <https://stateofchildhoodobesity.org/states/oh/>

³ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2729116/>

⁴ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3482049/>

⁵ <https://bmcnutr.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s40795-021-00434-2>

Responses

Local Matters garnered responses from 12 candidates. Answers below were submitted by the candidates or their staff with no editing, paraphrasing or other changes by Local Matters staff.

US Senate

Tim Ryan (D)

No response

JD Vance (R)

No response

Governor

Nan Whaley (D)



Biography

As mayor of Dayton, I led my community through some of the toughest challenges imaginable - a KKK rally, devastating tornadoes, and an awful mass shooting. Each time, I worked to bring people together to come out stronger.

My message is pretty simple: I want your pay to go up, your bills to go down, and your government to work for you. This is how we make Ohio a place where one good job is enough, where every community is safe and healthy, and where your kids have real opportunities.

1. What will you do to encourage state and local governments to develop local food systems that produce food for schools and institutions?

As governor, I will work with the Ohio Food Policy Network (OFPN) and their respective regional food councils to design a statewide action plan for farmland production and delivery to local consumers. We can better tackle the issue of fresh food production and delivery with improved communication between state and local entities.

Statewide communication and collaboration of regional food councils would allow for the detection of larger patterns that transcend the local level. By utilizing the social network produced by OFPN, the governor's office can lead a concerted effort to prioritize local food production and delivery to Ohio institutions across the state.

I would coalesce the resources and relationships at the Ohio Department of Agriculture, Ohio Department of Education, and the Ohio State University Extension (OSUE) to assist food service directors in procuring local food for their programs. Working with local food groups with established relationships with local growers and distributors can make it easier for schools and other organizations to source food locally.

Additionally, these state agencies can be a central resource to help Ohio farmers build business relationships with local schools and institutions. Large-scale purchasing of local food from school systems and other institutions supports local growers and contributes to a resilient local

food system. It also provides Ohio students with fresh and nutritious food to promote positive health outcomes.

2. Would you support making permanent increases to SNAP benefits, and what measures would you implement to support emergency assistance for families struggling to make ends meet while navigating complex food assistance programs?

Yes, I would support making permanent increases to SNAP benefits. Unlike Gov. DeWine, I would also provide Ohio food banks with the support they need.

Ohioans are seeing the cost of nearly everything increase – from record-high gas prices to increasing costs for groceries and other necessities like baby formula. That’s why I have a plan to help Ohioans struggling with increased costs by sending an inflation rebate of \$350 to every middle-class Ohioan.

Ohio is set to receive \$2.68 billion in the next round of federal funding from the American Rescue Plan. The State of Ohio should use that money to help struggling Ohio families deal with increased costs in their everyday lives through an inflation rebate. This rebate would go to roughly 7.4 million Ohioans, the same individuals who received federal stimulus checks. This would cover 89 percent of adults in the state. Individuals making up to \$80,000 a year or couples making \$160,000 a year or under would be eligible to receive the rebate, at \$350 or \$700, respectively.

3. Would you support a comprehensive nutrition education curriculum in pre-K through 12th grade and how can we get started?

Yes, I support a comprehensive nutrition education curriculum in pre-k through 12th grade. Ohio is the only state in the country that does not have health education standards. I would support passing a bill that permits the State Board of Education to develop and adopt health education standards for grades K-12.

4. What would you do to reduce poverty and create equitable food access in under-served and under-resourced communities?

Communities must become innovative in achieving common ends like access to fresh, healthy food locally. As governor, I will work to implement innovative solutions for equitable access to quality, affordable, local food and produce. Most food deserts exist in historically underserved communities, such as minority neighborhoods and low-income communities. In Ohio, there is a 30-year life expectancy gap that exists based on where you are born and live. Limited access to affordable, healthier foods is a critical factor making it harder for some Ohioans to eat a healthy diet.

Underserved communities cannot count on traditional retail investment to resolve the problem. To improve food security, establishing local food cooperatives has been a solution gaining more attention, and Dayton is an example of its success in alleviating food insecurity for under-resourced communities.

The Gem City Market, a community-centered, full-service grocery store located along lower Salem Avenue near downtown Dayton is a multi-stakeholder co-op. The market now has more than 5,000 members. It is important for not only addressing food insecurity, but also helping the community shift from being recipients to co-creators of the community that they want to see.

Dealing with food inequity is a complex issue with no easy solutions. It is difficult for communities and cities to simply build more grocery stores, develop more transit options, or find ways to help individuals generate more income to purchase healthy foods.

Mike Dewine (R)

No response

US House

District 3

Joyce Beatty (D)



Biography

Since 2013, Congresswoman Joyce Beatty has proudly represented Ohio's 3rd District. She serves as Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus and on the Committee on Financial Services as Chair of the Subcommittee on Diversity and Inclusion and as a member of the Housing, Community Development, and Insurance Subcommittees. Prior to Congress, she was a member in the Ohio House of Representatives for five terms including serving as the first female Democratic House Leader in Ohio's history.

1. What will you do to encourage state and local governments to develop local food systems that produce food for schools and institutions?

I speak often about being a stroke survivor and how changes to my diet allowed me to rehabilitate faster and with less long term consequences. I am a strong advocate for the impact that food can have on our long term health. In Congress, I am supportive of local farming support in the form of grants and tax relief for local family farms and I will continue to encourage our institutions to use local providers.

2. Would you support making permanent increases to SNAP benefits, and what measures would you implement to support emergency assistance for families struggling to make ends meet while navigating complex food assistance programs?

I would support permanent increases to SNAP benefits and have advocated for additional federal measures to ensure better food security for our children and families. Access to quality food is an important factor in ensuring the health of our communities and I will continue to tie food security to our overall healthcare measures in Congress.

3. Would you support a comprehensive nutrition education curriculum in pre-K through 12th grade and how can we get started?

I would support comprehensive nutrition standards and was a strong proponent of the work then First Lady Michelle Obama did around ensuring that our students have access to quality nutrition and nutrition education in our schools.

4. What would you do to reduce poverty and create equitable food access in under-served and under-resourced communities?

I think that it is important that we view affordable and accessible housing through a lens of a supportive community that helps foster and strengthen those who live in those housing units. A key component of that is access to quality food. It is important as we discuss growth in Central

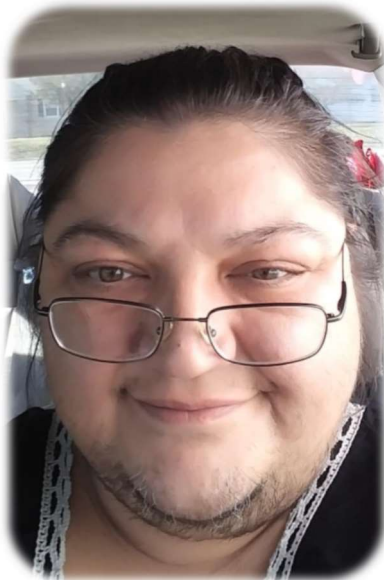
Ohio that we include in that equation how we grow access to supermarkets and local food resources like neighborhood farming and co-ops as well to ensure that we are setting all of our residents up for success.

Lee Stahley (R)

No response

District 12

Amy Ripple Elton (D)



Biography

I am so many things that putting it plainly is not easy. Born in Newark, moved to Columbus at the beginning of the second grade. Spent summers, holidays, and many weekends in Newark with my extended family and grandparents. Graduated Hamilton Township High School 1993 Married May 1994 Divorced May 2008 On disability since 2010 2 children both now adults, both with special needs. More volunteer work than can fit. Moved back to Newark 10 years ago to care for relatives on hospice.

1. What will you do to encourage state and local governments to develop local food systems that produce food for schools and institutions?

My other half died on June 6th. He was head farmhand at a farm in grove city ohio. Their primary produce was strawberries and pumpkins. We loved pumpkin season. The children got to come to the farm and take hay rides out to pick their own pumpkins from the field. He would educate the kids about the growing of the pumpkins in the process if any questions came up. The owner had a delicious recipe for pumpkin doughnuts as well. The kids got a doughnut and apple cider before leaving as well. It was fun and educational. I also support community gardens. We have a few nice ones in Newark. I think if a lawyer could write it up and help me get it through the CBO and prove the cost benefit ratio being at a balance or to the positive benefit for any community. It would be worth pushing for a one time grant bill to purchase and clean up property for the community to use for these purposes if the locality will forgoe taxes on it. Especially if these places border schools so that kids can take biology time there at the beginning and end of the school year.

2. Would you support making permanent increases to SNAP benefits, and what measures would you implement to support emergency assistance for families struggling to make ends meet while navigating complex food assistance programs?

First off I receive food stamps! Second I am diabetic, without stamps there have been times I would have died (literally) for lack of the ability to provide for basic needs. What Will I Do??? Whatever It Takes! Why? Because Unlike Most of DC I Was Not Born With A Silver Spoon In My Mouth.

3. Would you support a comprehensive nutrition education curriculum in pre-K through 12th grade and how can we get started?

Lunch as a class? This is this part of the food pyramid that is that part of the food pyramid and so on and this is how we gave you a balanced meal?

4. What would you do to reduce poverty and create equitable food access in under-served and under-resourced communities?

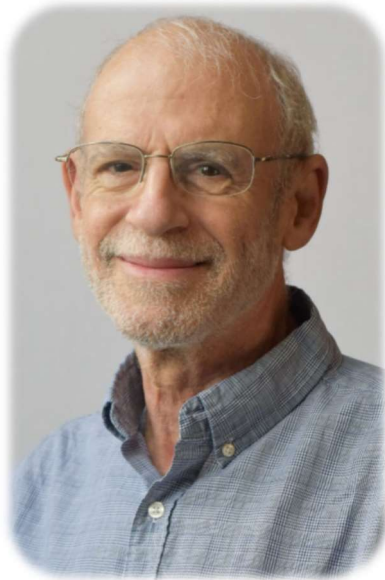
Use apps like Nextdoor to encourage ride sharing? Encourage public transportation to frequent the under-resourced community more frequently heading straight to the resourced area/no bus changes. Reducing poverty is part of my platform. Education is the key. Education that is accessible and affordable. Childcare is one key, food, housing, and medical care are the other three. Green energy jobs (college level positions) are the keys for the future. Additionally there are jobs like hvac, electrician, and other building services positions. Things that can be taught at career centers. You want to attack poverty, give the family some stability while the income earner goes to school. Based on need of course.

Troy Balderson (R)

No response

District 15

Gary Josephson (D)



Biography

A native Ohioan, Gary Josephson was born in Cleveland, one of four children, with two older brothers and a younger sister. He has lived in central Ohio all of his adult life. Over 50 years of activism. I oppose fear mongering, factions, stereotyping, personality cults, sexism, and racism

1. What will you do to encourage state and local governments to develop local food systems that produce food for schools and institutions?

Most farmers and food processors are not opposed sustainable products and packaging, however they become chained to the market. My job as a representative is to create policies that ensure the best food is the most affordable and protected and industry practices adapt to future health and safety for all.

2. Would you support making permanent increases to SNAP benefits, and what measures would you implement to support emergency assistance for families struggling to make ends meet while navigating complex food assistance programs?

No one in America should go hungry. However, quality and availability need to be an integral part of this equation. Programs like meals on wheels should be available in food desert neighborhoods. Delivery has become a major industry since COVID, but so many eat diminished quality food and are isolated. Expansion of SNAP and more availability are necessary so that none should go hungry and all should have healthy food. These are so rewarding as goals. What could be more important?

3. Would you support a comprehensive nutrition education curriculum in pre-K through 12th grade and how can we get started?

Yes, I would support nutrition education. To succeed I would have actual practice with a daily practice along with the lesson. Eat and learn about food at the same time. The connection goes to the brain even if on a particular day the food snack is not the same as the food learned about, but whenever possible match the product sample with the lesson.

4. What would you do to reduce poverty and create equitable food access in under-served and under-resourced communities?

I would adapt the same ideas of meals on wheels type delivery where at least once a week there is a 10 minute teaching (adults do not want to be taught, so this would be a discussion on a new topic every week)

Mike Carey (R)

No response

Franklin County Commissioner

Erica Crawley (D)

No response

Luis Gil (R)

No response

Ohio House

District 1

Dontavius Jarrells (D)



Biography

Rep Jarrells currently represents Ohio's 25th House District and next cycle will be representing the new 1st House District encompassing downtown Columbus, Old Towne East, Milo Grogan, parts of Franklinton, Bexley and German Village.

1. What will you do to encourage state and local governments to develop local food systems that produce food for schools and institutions?

I am a strong advocate for urban farming and healthy eating. Much of my current 25th House District is considered a food desert often leaving people without access to healthy food. This creates health issues and diet-related diseases in the community. I will continue to advocate for access to healthy, affordable food for all Ohioans.

2. Would you support making permanent increases to SNAP benefits, and what measures would you implement to support

emergency assistance for families struggling to make ends meet while navigating complex food assistance programs?

Yes

3. Would you support a comprehensive nutrition education curriculum in pre-K through 12th grade and how can we get started?

Yes

4. What would you do to reduce poverty and create equitable food access in under-served and under-resourced communities?

See also my first answer. I will continue to advocate for urban farming, healthy eating education and work to create more grocery stores and farmers markets in predominantly BIPOC communities.

unopposed

District 2

Latyna Humphrey (D)



Biography

Born in Columbus and raised on the near east side, Latyna is a graduate of Columbus East High School. A single mother, Latyna's highest priority is the same as so many others, to give her son a better start in life than she had.

She is involved here in Columbus with local organizations such as the YWCA, YMCA, Central Ohio Young Black Democrats, NAACP-Columbus and the Franklin County Democratic Party where she serves as Secretary of the Central Committee.

1. What will you do to encourage state and local governments to develop local food systems that produce food for schools and institutions?

I will work to promote local food systems including expanding support for local farms and community farms. I have also worked with Childrens hunger alliance to ensure more children have

access to high quality food.

2. Would you support making permanent increases to SNAP benefits, and what measures would you implement to support emergency assistance for families struggling to make ends meet while navigating complex food assistance programs?

I would support making permanent increases to SNAP benefits and I would support indexing the assistance to our families to inflation.

3. Would you support a comprehensive nutrition education curriculum in pre-K through 12th grade and how can we get started?

I would support a comprehensive nutrition education curriculum and it can be started by talking with legislators about introducing legislation that reflects these priorities.

4. What would you do to reduce poverty and create equitable food access in under-served and under-resourced communities?

I support housing that includes wrap around services including access to food and community services.

unopposed

District 3

Ismail Mohamed (D)



Biography

Ismail and his family were forced to flee Somalia in the late 1990s. Ismail's mother believed moving to Columbus could enable a new start. Ismail graduated from Northland High School, then went to the Ohio State University, earning a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, and later his law degree. Now an attorney in private practice, Ismail knows first-hand the struggles families face navigating the criminal justice system and serves his community as a voice for the vulnerable.

1. What will you do to encourage state and local governments to develop local food systems that produce food for schools and institutions?

I will support legislation that speaks to improving local food systems and if none is proposed, I will propose legislation myself.

2. Would you support making permanent increases to SNAP benefits, and what measures would you implement to support emergency assistance for families struggling to make ends meet while navigating complex food assistance programs?

I would support increasing SNAP benefits.

3. Would you support a comprehensive nutrition education curriculum in pre-K through 12th grade and how can we get started?

Yes. You get started by having the conversation and proposing legislation.

4. What would you do to reduce poverty and create equitable food access in under-served and under-resourced communities?

We reduce poverty by increasing job opportunities with in these identified communities, raise the standard and access to education and healthcare. Incentivize grocery stores to locate in designated areas and for promote healthy food intake and attainable resources.

Josiah Lanning (R)

No response

District 4

Mary Lightbody (D)

No response

Jill Rudler (R)



Biography

Jill was raised in a small town in Northeastern Ohio. She relocated to Central Ohio at the age of 30 and has built a successful small business as a Realtor. Having sold over 5,000 homes, she has spent the last 44 years helping families realize the American dream through home ownership. She has worked with people to find a common thread to help all sides reach reasonable compromises when needed. She intends to use her business experiences in the Statehouse to effectively serve her constituents.

1. What will you do to encourage state and local governments to develop local food systems that produce food for schools and institutions?

This program really does appear as if it is a win-win situation for all parties involved. Local farmers gain access to expanded markets to sell their goods within, children benefit from both nutritional foods and activities that teach them more about agriculture. Communities also benefit from this program because the expanded market access and increased flow of goods will require additional sector-specific jobs that can boost the local or regional economy. Overall, I believe that this is an excellent opportunity to equip children with meaningful knowledge on the subject, all the while keeping them and our communities fed. I believe this will help the Ohio Farm community prosper and I would seek to assist in any way that I can at the state level, including looking at implementing this program at a larger level.

2. Would you support making permanent increases to SNAP benefits, and what measures would you implement to support emergency assistance for families struggling to make ends meet while navigating complex food assistance programs?

It is vital that our children receive nutrition that exceeds basic standards. Ohio has a very high rate of children living in poverty. It is imperative that Ohio legislators work to ensure that every child has a roof over their head and nutritious meals so that they have a fair shot at achieving a prosperous future. I fully support emergency assistance to hungry children across Ohio. Additionally, it is incumbent upon the State Legislature to ensure that every child attending a public school receives adequate and nutritious meals. Further, it is important that children going through online public schooling can receive adequate nutrition.

3. Would you support a comprehensive nutrition education curriculum in pre-K through 12th grade and how can we get started?

I strongly believe that we need to do a better job as a nation in how we teach our children about eating healthy and taking care of their body. Eating nutritiously and keeping in physical shape directly correlates with our mental health. I think that encouraging our children to take care of their physical health can have a positive reversal effect on the increased mental health disorders that we have seen a stark rise in recent years. The first thing that I believe we can do to get started is encourage and educate parents on the value of teaching their children the importance of taking care of themselves and eating well. Furthermore, parents modeling the positive behavior regarding eating healthy is probably the most effective way to get our children to emulate them and eat nutritiously.

4. What would you do to reduce poverty and create equitable food access in under-served and under-resourced communities?

The lack of supermarkets in predominantly black communities, particularly in the inner-city, is a grave issue. Many chain supermarkets and other large grocery stores have vacated these communities because of the often-high crime rates accompanying these communities. This is a multi-pronged solution because we need to increase public safety in these areas and encourage food providers in the free market to return to these underserved areas. In the meantime, setting up community farmers markets and food drives in these underserved areas will be the best way to get food directly to residents in a much more accessible and affordable way.

District 5

Richard Brown (D)

No response

Ronald Beach (R)

No response

District 6

Adam Miller (D)



Biography

I am most proud of my bipartisan work that has led to real results. In my third term in office, I have introduced more bipartisan jointly sponsored legislation than any other member of the Ohio House of Representatives. As a former teacher, coach, school board member, and current US Army Reservist, I bring a lifelong passion of community service to tackling the challenges our society faces.

1. What will you do to encourage state and local governments to develop local food systems that produce food for schools and institutions?

State leadership through appropriations and rule making must encourage and support efforts to bring local foods and nutrition education to our schools. I led the effort for the Highland Youth Garden in the Ohio Capital Budget to receive capital funding for its new education building. While this will make a big difference to the Hilltop, more programs need state investment; something I will fight for.

2. Would you support making permanent increases to SNAP benefits, and what measures would you implement to support emergency assistance for families struggling to make ends meet while navigating complex food assistance programs?

Absolutely. The food banks kept the fabric of our society together during the COVID pandemic. What's more is showed what many of us already know, food insecurity affects far more families on the margin than anyone realized. As food prices skyrocket, we need real, significant, and consistent increases in all food aid programs as well as reducing the red tape so we can get to the food to the people who need it when they need it.

3. Would you support a comprehensive nutrition education curriculum in pre-K through 12th grade and how can we get started?

I do and would support efforts to increase healthy nutrition education. From curriculum changes in schools to other after school programs like the Highland Youth Garden our two ways we can do this. We can also work with organizations like Mount Carmel and its Healthy Living Center and provide addition support for their programming that helps educate adults and parents who can then bring those lessons to their families.

4. What would you do to reduce poverty and create equitable food access in under-served and under-resourced communities?

Like my answers above, food education and food security must be priorities, particularly in areas where there are food deserts. Education is important when it comes to healthy living, it will fail if there is not access to healthy food choices. The government must invest in food aid with programs like SNAP, but we must also provide incentives and enticements to major food distributors and grocery stores stay in low income areas. Columbus has seen a number of grocery stores close whether in Linden or Eastland, leaving little access to healthy foods. Without doing more to help from both buyer and seller, we are likely to see more closing, exacerbating the already high disparities. We need real investment. We have the money as a state. We need legislatures with the will.

Joe Wharton (R)

No response

District 7

Allison Russo (D)

No response

unopposed

District 8

Beth Liston (D)

No response

unopposed

District 9

Munira Abdullahi (D)

No response

unopposed

District 10

Russell Harris (D)

No response

David Dobos (R)

No response

District 11

Anita Somani (D)

No response

Omar Tarazi (R)

No response

District 12

Brian Stewart (R)

No response

unopposed

Ohio Senate

District 3

Tina Maharath (D)



Biography

State Senator Tina Maharath is a mom, born and raised in Ohio who is the voice of Central Ohio families in the Ohio Senate. She is the first Asian-American State Senator in Ohio's history.

1. What will you do to encourage state and local governments to develop local food systems that produce food for schools and institutions?

It is important that as a state that we foster and encourage locally sourced food here in Ohio as well as encourage urban and suburban participation in production of food and nutrients.

2. Would you support making permanent increases to SNAP benefits, and what measures would you implement to support emergency assistance for families struggling to make ends meet while navigating complex food assistance programs?

We need to continue to fund the increase in SNAP allotments

and place a premium on SNAP benefits for children, seniors and those in poverty. This is a priority.

3. Would you support a comprehensive nutrition education curriculum in pre-K through 12th grade and how can we get started?

I support efforts to provide comprehensive nutrition education coupled with addressing access to appropriate food sources in urban and rural food deserts.

4. What would you do to reduce poverty and create equitable food access in under-served and under-resourced communities?

We need to both educate, encourage and provide access to healthy food sources as well as fitness opportunities. Any investment in the State of Ohio in this area saves comprehensive health care costs that are borne through lack of access to proper nutrition as well as a basic understanding of healthy eating choices in poverty areas.

Michael Reynolds (R)

No response

District 15

Hearcel Craig (D)

No response

unopposed

District 19

Heather Swiger (D)



Biography

Currently I am the Director at a local non-profit in Columbus Ohio feeding approximately 175 individuals daily. I understand the importance of serving our neighbors in need and have been doing so for over 13 years. I have a passion to our community and strive to make an impact in the lives of those serve. Our organization reaches tens of thousands of neighbors per year and I am proud of the work of our staff and volunteers.

1. What will you do to encourage state and local governments to develop local food systems that produce food for schools and institutions?

Having a daily understanding of the needs within our communities I will work tirelessly to promote the Farm to Schools program. I comprehend the importance this program brings to students, schools, community and farmer.

2. Would you support making permanent increases to SNAP benefits, and what measures would you implement to support emergency assistance for families struggling to make ends meet while navigating complex food assistance programs?

Parents struggle daily to provide the basic needs for their children and I believe it is our duty to make sure these needs are covered. Parents with economical challenges should not be forced to choose between rent and food, and for too many that is the case. We must work to make sure no child goes hungry in Ohio.

3. Would you support a comprehensive nutrition education curriculum in pre-K through 12th grade and how can we get started?

Way too often healthy foods are unfamiliar to the families we serve, from taste to preparation. Education is key to understanding. I believe starting this education in our schools will lead to a healthier home life and future for families.

4. What would you do to reduce poverty and create equitable food access in under-served and under-resourced communities?

We, as a state, must address food deserts in Ohio. The inequality of access to food is unacceptable and I will work to promote a higher number of supermarkets in areas of need. We must do better for those who struggle most in our communities.

Andrew Brenner (R)



Biography

Andrew is a State Senator in the Ohio Senate. He served 8 years in the Ohio House prior to becoming state senator. Andrew chairs the Ohio Senate primary & secondary education committee and serves on the Rules and Reference, Energy and Public Utilities, Insurance, and Finance Committee. He has a bachelors degree in business from Ohio State and a Masters in Education from Liberty University. He is licensed in real estate & insurance. He and his wife Sara Marie live in Delaware.

1. What will you do to encourage state and local governments to develop local food systems that produce food for schools and institutions?

Everyone should have access to highly nutritious locally grown food. I have supported policies and budgets which have expanded access to locally grown food and will continue to do so.

2. Would you support making permanent increases to SNAP benefits, and what measures would you implement to support emergency assistance for families struggling to make ends meet while navigating complex food assistance programs?

I will continue to support SNAP. I will need to monitor the state budget to make sure we have the funds needed to help those who truly need additional supports.

3. Would you support a comprehensive nutrition education curriculum in pre-K through 12th grade and how can we get started?

As Chair of the Senate Primary and Secondary Education Committee, suggesting that the state does not have health standards does not necessarily show causation for obesity in children. We also have English, math, science and other standards, yet children in high poverty districts perform poorly on all subjects. I think this has more to do with poverty than the need for health standards, as all local school districts have health standards. I am not opposed to having model comprehensive nutrition curriculum approved by the state school board. Said curriculum needs to be backed by scientifically peer reviewed studies.

4. What would you do to reduce poverty and create equitable food access in under-served and under-resourced communities?

Many fast food restaurants are located in areas of high poverty, which coincidentally are also areas of many minority populations. Fast food is much more affordable & convenient than higher end restaurants, especially since the pandemic and higher inflation. The reality is this is mostly a local community decision. Localities can use their local zoning and taxing codes to give tax breaks to organic and locally grown market places. This would allow for people to make their own meals using high quality food. I would support localities by lowering taxes overall,

which will allow for more higher paying businesses to move into areas of poverty. Teaming up with larger companies, like Whole Foods, could also bring in their high quality food with seminars on how to make high quality low-cost meals.

District 25

Bill Demora (D)

No response

Chandler Wysocki (R)

No response