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**Gleaners Food Bank of Indiana President and CEO Fred Glass Issues Statement on Debt Limit Deal and Impact on Hoosiers Facing Food Insecurity**

We’re pleased Congressional leaders and the White House have reached a tentative agreement to avoid default. Failure to do so would be catastrophic for our country as a whole, and particularly so for our neighbors facing food insecurity.

Without this compromise and the likely government shutdown and default, Gleaners and our hunger-relief partners would see an immediate increase above the already pandemic-level need we’re currently experiencing. Short-term fixes such as cuts to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), unemployment for federal government workers, halts in military pay have led to increases and some general panic during prior shutdowns. Adding default on our national debt would have unimaginable consequences for all of us.

This compromise contains provisions that are less severe than those passed by the House earlier this year. For example, the agreement offers time-limit exemptions for SNAP benefits for extraordinarily vulnerable populations, including veterans, young adults aging out of foster care, and people facing homelessness. We’re thankful for these improvements.

We are concerned, however, regarding SNAP time limit provisions for older adults age 50-54 and the likelihood that this will increase food insecurity within this age group. Withholding food assistance does not foster employment or productivity.

Most SNAP participants already work, or they are seniors, people with a disability, or children. SNAP often helps people when they are between jobs. Past research from Feeding America has found that 74% of non-disabled, non-elderly adult SNAP recipients work. The rate is nearly 90% for families with children.

Gleaners and our network of agency partners will continue to offer increasing access to highly nutritious foods. We call on Congress and the White House to put people facing hunger first, and strengthen federal nutrition programs in the upcoming Farm Bill. In the United States of America, no one should go hungry.

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**About Gleaners Food Bank of Indiana, Inc.***Gleaners was founded in 1980 and is a respected leader within Feeding America, the nation’s food bank network. Since that time, Gleaners has distributed more than 800 million pounds of food and critical grocery products through nearly 300 hunger relief agencies, schools and community partners serving Hoosiers facing food insecurity. In addition to food distribution to agencies, we serve our most vulnerable populations, seniors and children, through specialty programs such as Gleaners2Go, Home Delivery, School-Based Pantries, Mobile Pantries, Summer Meals for Kids, and Senior Hunger Initiative programs. Gleaners is certified as a Good Wages Initiative Employer by EmployIndy. Charity Navigator has recognized Gleaners as a 4-Star organization, the highest rating for charity demonstrating fiscal management and accountability. In addition, Gleaners is an accredited charity with the Better Business Bureau and has earned a Platinum Seal of Transparency from GuideStar. To learn more, visit* [*www.gleaners.org*](http://gleaners.org/)*.*