



**IDFA**  
International  
Dairy Foods Association

April 7, 2025

The Honorable Rob McColley  
Senate President  
Ohio Senate  
Columbus, OH 43215

The Honorable Matt Huffman  
Speaker of the House  
Ohio House of Representatives  
Columbus, OH 43215

The Honorable Nickie Antonio  
Minority Leader  
Ohio Senate  
Columbus, OH 43215

The Honorable C. Allison Russo  
Minority Leader  
Ohio House of Representatives  
Columbus, OH 43215

The Honorable Jerry Cirino  
Chair  
Finance Committee  
Ohio Senate  
Columbus, OH 43215

The Honorable Brian Stewart  
Chair  
Finance Committee  
Ohio House of Representatives  
Columbus, OH 43215

The Honorable Paula Kicks-Hudson  
Ranking Member  
Finance Committee  
Ohio Senate  
Columbus, OH 43215

The Honorable Bride Rose Sweeney  
Ranking Member  
Finance Committee  
Ohio House of Representatives  
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Leaders in the Ohio Legislature:

On behalf of dairy producers, processors, suppliers, truckers, wholesalers and retailers in the state of Ohio and across the United States, the members of the International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA) strongly oppose SB161. This bill, introduced in the Ohio Senate, would unfairly restrict the use of SNAP benefits for purchasing America-grown, American-produced milk, dairy and dairy products – harming both Ohio families and the state's dairy industry

**To avoid any unintentional disruption to Ohioans' access to dairy nutrition, and to prevent economic harm to the dairy farming families and dairy processors in your state, we urge you to include the following language in any legislation that seeks to restrict the use of SNAP benefits on certain foods:**

***“No federal waiver request made to the U.S. Department of Agriculture shall seek authorization to prohibit the use of SNAP benefits for the purchase of any food or beverage that contains milk, milk products or milk proteins.”***



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Dairy foods are essential to public health. Unlike the products this legislation seeks to limit, milk and dairy products provide 13 essential nutrients, including three of the four nutrients identified as most critical to public health—calcium, vitamin D and potassium. Dairy plays a critical role in the diet of children, where milk and dairy are the top source of calcium, potassium, phosphorus, and vitamin D in kids ages 2-18. No other food or beverage provides the same unique combination of nutrients and health benefits including better bone health and lower risk for type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Any restriction on milk, dairy, or milk-containing products stands to negatively impact the health of Ohioans, which is contrary to the goal of this legislation.

SB161 sets a dangerous precedent by unfairly targeting ice cream—a dairy product with real nutritional value. Ice cream contains essential nutrients such as calcium, vitamin D, vitamin A, vitamin B6, and vitamin B12. It also contains healthy fats that help the body absorb essential nutrients and support energy. If Ohioans are looking for a treat, let's encourage options that deliver both enjoyment and nourishment too. By unfairly and incorrectly lumping ice cream in with empty-calorie foods, this legislation disregards the contributions of more than 1,400 dairy farms and 65 dairy processing facilities across the Buckeye State.

IDFA represents the nation's dairy manufacturing and marketing industry, including 22 companies headquartered in the state of Ohio. Our industry is critical to the economic vibrancy of Ohio, supporting 45,000 jobs, \$12 billion in direct wages, and \$35 billion in total economic impact. Importantly, every gallon of milk, block of cheese, or pint of ice cream purchased through SNAP directly supports the milk produced on Ohio dairy farms, processed by Ohio workers, and delivered to grocery stores nationwide. Learn more about the dairy industry's economic impact here: <https://www.idfa.org/dairydelivers>.

We urge you to stand with Ohio's dairy farmers, processors and families by ensuring that dairy products containing milk, milk products or milk proteins are protected from these restrictions and remain accessible to all Ohioans. Thank you for your leadership and commitment to keeping wholesome, nutritious dairy in the diets of all people while being a responsible steward of taxpayer dollars.

Sincerely,

Danielle Quist  
Vice President, Regulatory Affairs and Counsel