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Contact: Nicole Williams, Communications & Public Relations Manager
nwilliams@cfbnj.org / 732-798-5213

STATEMENT FROM CARLOS M. RODRIGUEZ, PRESIDENT & CEO OF THE COMMUNITY FOODBANK OF NEW JERSEY, ON
FUNDS TO FIGHT HUNGER INCLUDED IN NEW JERSEY STATE BUDGET
Provisions will support continued response to heightened need caused by COVID-19

HILLSIDE, NJ—June 29, 2021

At a time when our neighbors are struggling and our state is experiencing disproportionate increases in food insecurity, this state budget provides unprecedented resources to ensure our fellow New Jerseyans have access to the food they need to survive and thrive. A decade of progress in the fight against hunger has been wiped out, as the pandemic has thrust hundreds of thousands of New Jerseyans into food insecurity and deepened the need of those who were already struggling to put food on the table. For many, the path ahead remains uncertain, and rising food prices will continue to exacerbate need, making it even more difficult for struggling households to get the food that they need.

We are grateful that our state leaders have recognized in this budget that recovery from the pandemic is far from over, and have invested resources to ensure that hunger does not hold our neighbors back from a return to work, school, and community. I commend Governor Murphy, Speaker Coughlin, and Senate President Sweeney for the unprecedented investment of nearly \$50 million in this budget to ensure access to nutritious food remains a priority for all New Jerseyans. From direct food assistance to needed improvements to boost participation in vital programs like SNAP, school breakfast, and summer meals, this budget addresses immediate needs while strengthening our state's longer-term response to hunger – all this on the heels of a recent \$10 million allocation of federal funds to sustain the food banks' ongoing pandemic response. Their leadership shows that, together, we can achieve a hunger-free Garden State.

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[The Community FoodBank of New Jersey \(CFBNJ\)](https://www.cfbnj.org/), a member of Feeding America®, has been delivering food, help and hope across the state for over 45 years. Last year, CFBNJ provided nutritious food for over 66 million meals through its network of more than 1,000 community partners including pantries, soup kitchens, emergency shelters, mobile pantries, and child and senior feeding programs throughout the 15 New Jersey counties it serves. For our hungry neighbors, the Community FoodBank of New Jersey is the powerful agent of change that fills the emptiness caused by hunger and provides resources that are essential to earning a sustainable living.