

Sample Emotional Op-Ed

The crunch of a celery stalk. The crisp sweetness of a red bell pepper. The warmth of a freshly baked loaf of bread. We don't just eat healthy food because we know it's good for us—we eat it because it makes us feel good too.

But for 29.7 million people living in the United States, enjoying healthy food is difficult at best and impossible at worst. In fact, Ohio ranks 6th among states with the least access to grocery stores, according to the United States Treasury Department's CDFI Fund.

Not having a local grocery store can have far-ranging impacts on people's lives. Families who live in communities where they can't find a bag of apples or a head of lettuce are at greater risk of becoming overweight and obese. Studies show that the closer we are to neighborhood supermarkets, the more likely we are to have healthier lives and lower body weight too.

We can't sit back while tens of millions of people in America lack access to the kinds of foods that keep us all healthy. Now is the time for families, community leaders, health advocates, business owners and elected officials to come together and find ways to improve access to healthy, affordable foods.

Right now, in many places across the country, public-private partnerships that support healthy food financing initiatives are working to bring full-service grocery stores or supermarkets into the communities that need them most. These efforts are addressing the immediate need for quality produce, low-fat dairy, whole grains, lean meats and other nutritious foods, and they're helping evaluate just how food access impacts the future for our children and our communities.

Join me in taking action by urging the Ohio Legislature to support a healthy food financing initiative with state funding. Together, we can ensure that what's in store for our neighbors across Ohio is happier, healthier lives. To learn more about the effort and how you can support efforts, visit www.financefund.org.

Sample Rational Op-Ed

Going to the grocery store is something most of us take for granted. In Ohio, too many communities have few places to purchase fresh produce, lean protein and dairy. In fact, over 2 million lower income residents, including more than 500,000 children, are at risk for chronic disease and diet-related death due to a lack of access to healthy foods. A simple trip to the grocery store in these communities is anything but easy.

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Fortunately, there's a solution to these problems: healthy food financing. Healthy food financing programs create public-private partnerships that make a real difference for individuals, communities and even entire states. This critical loan and grant financing helps healthy and affordable food retailers overcome the higher initial barriers to entry into low-income and underserved communities—barriers like land acquisition financing, construction and workforce development.

Once grocery stores have been built in underserved communities, the results are dramatic. In Pennsylvania, an initial grant of \$30 million in state dollars was leveraged with private funding and created 88 new grocery stores, 5,000 new jobs and \$190 million in total investment. What's more, it brought healthy food choices to 400,000 Pennsylvanians who wouldn't otherwise be able to access healthy produce, lean protein and whole grains.

It's time for Ohio to consider a healthy food financing program. Join me in urging state legislative support to establish a healthy food financing initiative. To learn more about the effort and how you can support efforts, visit www.financefund.org.