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News for Immediate Release

Jan. 18, 2019

Auditor General DePasquale Urges Pennsylvanians to Support Food Banks as Federal Shutdown's Impact on Workers, Families Worsens

HARRISBURG – Auditor General Eugene DePasquale today urged Pennsylvanians to support local food banks to help individuals and families who are struggling as a result of the federal government shutdown.

“The shutdown, now the longest in history, is having a significant impact on Pennsylvanians,” DePasquale said during a visit to the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank in Harrisburg. “I want federal workers, contract employees and other affected residents of Pennsylvania to know that your neighbors have got your back and we’re going to help you get through this.”

This week, the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank started offering services to affected federal employees at its Harrisburg and Williamsport Healthy Food Hubs. The organization serves residents of 27 counties with the help of local partner agencies. Other food banks in the state have begun similar initiatives.

“Federal workers and contracted employees who are not being paid are facing hard decisions about how to house and feed their families,” DePasquale said. “Demand for help from food banks was already high, and the shutdown has only increased the level of need that exists.”

DePasquale urged Pennsylvanians to consider making a donation to their local food bank or pantry.

“While all types of donations are appreciated, monetary donations do the most good and can be stretched to serve the greatest number of people in need,” DePasquale added. “If you need a reason to act, just think about what would happen to your own family if the paychecks suddenly stopped coming.”

DePasquale noted that food banks may need even more support in the near future if the federal shutdown continues. The Pennsylvania Department of Human Services has begun an early distribution of February’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits, but funding for March is uncertain without a resolution to the budget standoff in Washington.

“Pennsylvania’s 1.8 million SNAP recipients will need to carefully stretch those resources as long as possible – possibly beyond February, depending on how long the shutdown lasts,” DePasquale added. “If SNAP funding ends due to the shutdown, we’ll begin to see a humanitarian crisis unfold in our own country – a potential outcome that should concern every American.”

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