



SPRINGFIELD NEWS-SUN

TRUSTED SINCE 1898 | SPRINGFIELDNEWSUN.COM | A PRODUCT OF THE DAYTON DAILY NEWS

\$2.00

**EMERGING
YOUTH
LEADERS,
PROGRAM
HONORED. A2**



**BENGALS' TOP
PICK STEWART
GRATEFUL TO BE
ON THE FIELD. D1**

**OBESITY
DRUG COSTS
DOWN, BUT
ACCESS
IS IFFY. C1**

TOP STATE STORY

Is excluding soda from food stamps feasible?

Task force must figure out how to implement the initiative without causing more problems.

By Avery Kreemer
Staff Writer

A governor's task force composed of retailers, medical professionals and government offi-

cials has begun its work to help Ohio achieve its not-so-straight-forward goal of excluding sugary, low-nutritional drinks from food stamp eligibility.

The working group, created by an executive order from Republican Gov. Mike DeWine, is asked to consider how the state can effectively exclude food stamps from being used on drinks that "do not alleviate hunger, have minimal nutritional value, and

have been shown to drive obesity, type 2 diabetes, and hypertension health impacts."

Ohio will first need to get permission from the United States Department of Agriculture before making any changes to how the state administers the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program, or SNAP. This request comes in the form of a waiver

Soda continued on A8



Ohio could prevent some drinks from being SNAP-eligible.

NEWS-SUN IN-DEPTH

Ohio's expanded sales tax holiday kicks off Friday

This year's event to last 14 days, up from 10 days in 2024.

By Eric Schwartzberg
Staff Writer

Ohio's newly expanded sales tax holiday starts Friday and gives shoppers more time and ways to save money.

Set to launch at midnight Friday and run through 11:59 p.m. Aug. 14, the two-week event is a step up from last year's 10 days, and a much larger leap from the single weekend it used to be.

That's welcome news to Ohio shoppers, including lifelong Middletown resident Connie Hamilton.

"I think it's great," Hamilton told this news outlet as she shopped Meijer in Middletown. "Since I'm a grandma, I usually shop for the clothing, because they want me to take them shopping."

Hamilton said she not only uses the sales tax holiday to score discounts on back-to-school clothing, but also does her Christmas shopping then, as well.

That's because she and other shoppers across the state also can skip the tax on not just school supplies and youth clothing, but most tangible personal property items, including electronics like computers and TVs, books, home goods, furniture, kitchenware, décor, indoor and outdoor plants, sporting equipment, athletic apparel clothing of all kinds and even food and beverages, including dine-in meals, supplements and soft drinks.

Also, last year, the limits of \$20-per-school-supply and \$75-per-clothing-item were upped



Kayla Owens, of Springfield, looks for supplies at the Springfield Meijer on Friday.
JOSEPH COOKE/STAFF

to \$500 or less for each individual item.

Gov. Mike DeWine, upon announcing the expansion of the sales tax holiday earlier this year, said it is designed to provide "meaningful savings for families across the state."

"The timing of this year's sales tax holiday not only supports families preparing for back-to-school, but also provides relief on other important household needs," DeWine previously said.

Sarah Derringer said lengthening the sales tax holiday means expanding opportunity

"I like it because some people live on a Social Security or ... just having low income," Derringer said as she shopped Meijer in Springfield with her two sons on Friday. "It just gives them a little bit more time to get the supplies at a little bit of a cheaper cost."

Cameron Garczyk, the interim state director at the National Federation of Independent Business' Ohio chapter, said for most of its decade-long existence, the holiday was only three days long and "very limited in scope," but recent changes have made the event "a major opportunity for

Ohio's small businesses."

Expanding it to 14 days will be "significant boost" for businesses, because it opens up many more kinds of businesses that can take advantage," Garczyk said.

"A lot of our members are very excited about this expanded sales tax holiday, and they're looking at different ways they can promote their products and their business, along with the holiday," he said. "It's a great marketing tool for them to promote their products in a new and unique way

Sales continued on A8

CLOSER LOOK

Medical debt relief focus of county campaign

Effort aims to wipe out \$9.1 million owed by local residents.

By Kristen Wicker
Staff Writer

With numerous health issues and little to no insurance coverage, Springfield resident Brian Dobyns accumulated around \$15,000 in medical debt from his mid-20s to mid-30s. Slowly, he was able to pay off some while portions of it went to collections and, after 10 years, fell off his credit history. At many points, he had to forego some of the nearly dozen medications he needs because they cost an estimated \$1,500 per month.

"I put off addressing a lot of medical needs because of it," said Dobyns, now 40 and an AmeriCorps VISTA program participant. "It puts you under such an amount of stress, constantly milling over whether or not you can afford to have food for a week or if you can get rid of your cold. One of my biggest struggles was, with my asthma, colds became an upper respiratory infection that would turn into bronchitis, and I'd have it all winter."

In Clark County, more than 5,200 residents owe \$9.1 million in such debt. Now, however, community leaders and organizations have launched the Clark County Medical Debt Relief Campaign to help these citizens.

Campaign continued on A8

THE LATEST

Female lawmakers across U.S. fighting for more bathrooms. **B1**

Russia scales down navy festivities amid drone attacks. **B2**

IN YOUR EPAPER

Read your newspaper anywhere, any time with bonus and updated content at SpringfieldNewsSun.com/epaper.

INDEX

BUSINESSB4
CLASSIFIEDS C6
IDEAS & VOICESA7
PUZZLESC5



THE MOST
COMPLETE SOURCE
OF
LOCAL NEWS

SPRINGFIELD NEWS-SUN