



HF 1900

March 24, 2026

Chair West and Chair Kotyza-Witthuhn and members of the committee,

The Minnesota Justice Research Center writes in support of HF 1900, a bill to adjust the eligibility requirements for public assistance under the state Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to remove the 10-year random drug testing provision for people with a prior drug felony conviction.

The Minnesota Justice Research Center has consistently advocated to reduce the collateral consequences of criminal convictions. Collateral consequences are legal and regulatory restrictions that limit or prohibit people convicted of crimes from accessing employment, business and occupational licensing, housing, voting, education, and other rights, benefits, and opportunities. SNAP is one of these benefits that can be denied due to collateral consequences.

Collateral consequences can perpetuate poverty, increase recidivism by limiting mainstream opportunities, and negatively impact families long after a conviction. Many of these consequences are about punishment rather than public safety.

The provision is the only type of felony conviction that carries this requirement related to food security. By removing this counterproductive provision, HF 1900 will reduce barriers to benefits for families and children.

-Will Cooley, Policy Director, Minnesota Justice Research Center

HF 1900 (Nadeau)/SF 2868 (Clark)

Ensuring Food Security for Minnesota Families in Need

2025-26 LEGISLATIVE SESSION



BILL SUMMARY:

HF 1900 (Nadeau)/SF2868 (Clark) adjusts the eligibility requirements for public assistance under the state Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to remove the 10-year random drug testing provision for people with a prior drug felony conviction.

The Importance of SNAP for Agriculture:



Increases Food Security: In 2024, Minnesota SNAP participants spent \$857 million on food creating a consistent demand for agricultural products from both rural and urban areas.

Supports Farm Income: By boosting food demand, SNAP helps increase the income of farmers and is linked to slightly higher farm commodity prices.

Supports Rural Economies: Every \$1 in SNAP spending generates \$1.50 in local economic activity — helping local grocers stay open, supporting jobs, and maintaining rural economic stability.

Creates Jobs: SNAP outlays can support a significant number of jobs in the agriculture industry. Research shows a \$1 billion increase in SNAP benefits can support around 480 full-time agriculture jobs.

Reduces Errors: Clear and consistent eligibility rules for SNAP benefits can help reduce error rate levels, which will impact state costs as H.R.1 takes effect. Minnesota's patchwork system of drug testing results in complex, error-prone eligibility determinations. Removing drug testing is an effective way to reduce the error rate and prevent costly penalties.

In a recent statewide survey, **61% of Minnesotans support removing federal and state restrictions, including for past drug offenses, on providing temporary government assistance** such as the SNAP program to individuals and minor children who qualify based on financial need.

SOURCE: UP ONE INSIGHTS, OCT/NOV 2025 (600 LIKELY VOTERS)

WHY DO WE NEED THIS BILL?

Under current state law, a person convicted of a drug felony within ten years of their SNAP application date or recertification date may be subject to random drug testing. No other type of felony conviction carries this requirement. By removing this outdated provision, the bill will reduce barriers to benefits for families and children in need and eliminate errors in determining eligibility.

Here's what's happening:

- In states that previously have fully ended the SNAP drug felony ban, **rates of substance use disorder were lower** than states with the felony drug SNAP ban still in place, showing that fewer barriers to supports like SNAP improve outcomes.
- It is harder for people who are going hungry to find a job, secure stable housing, or be able to give back to their community. **One in five of all formerly incarcerated people suffer from food insecurity**—twice the rate of the general population.
- Barriers to SNAP participation also subject families to hunger. Families with an adult who faces barriers to food benefits have fewer ways to meet their basic food needs, contributing to family food insecurity.

3 out of 4

Minnesota voters prefer approaching drug use as a **public health issue with a focus on reducing the harms of addiction**, rather than a criminal problem with a focus on arrests and incarceration. Majorities of Democrats (90%), Independents (73%), and Republicans (63%) in the state prefer the public health approach.

SOURCE: DATA FOR PROGRESS SURVEY IN MINNESOTA, 2023 (616 LIKELY VOTERS)

SUPPORTERS:



March 23, 2026

Dear Members of the Children and Families Finance and Policy Committee:

We are writing to offer our endorsement of HF1900 and strong opposition to HF3831 and HF3603—all based on the same principle that at a time of record high food insecurity, we should be removing barriers to food assistance, not adding them.

- HF1900 removes the outdated provision subjecting SNAP participants to random drug testing. By removing this provision, Minnesota will be following the lead of other states that have ended SNAP drug felony restrictions and achieved lower rates of substance use disorders.
- HF3831 would add an asset limit to SNAP eligibility, which penalizes households attempting to achieve financial stability and disproportionately impacts seniors and people with disabilities—creating greater food insecurity and weakening nutrition outcomes. In addition, asset limits are extremely complex to administer and risk increasing Minnesota’s SNAP payment error rate and adding costs that would significantly outweigh any prospect of savings.
- HF3603 would prohibit using SNAP to purchase certain foods, undermining the dignity of participant choice without proof that these changes will improve diets. It will lead to significant red tape for local retailers—risking the loss of local grocers accepting SNAP and thus an overall loss of access to food for those who need it most.

As the Minnesota hunger relief system is facing ongoing strain with more than 9 million food shelf visits in 2025 – a new record for the 4th consecutive year— now is the time to protect and strengthen SNAP as our most effective tool to address food insecurity. SNAP provides nine meals for every one meal provided by the state’s existing hunger relief systems.

We ask for your support for HF1900, which honors Minnesota’s long history of caring for our neighbors when they are struggling and urge your opposition to HF3831 and HF3603, which create unnecessary barriers to food assistance and additional red tape.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration,

Advocates for Better Health

Children’s Defense Fund Minnesota

City of Minneapolis

CLUES- Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio

Community Emergency Services, Inc.

Fairview Health Services

Friendly Hmong Farms

ICA Food Shelf

Jewish Family & Children’s Services of MN

Keystone Community Services

Legal Services Advocacy Project

MN Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (MAND)

Minnesota Budget Project

Minnesota Grocers Association

PRISM

Second Harvest Heartland

Second Harvest Northland

The Center for Victims of Torture

The Food Group

The Open Door

Valley Outreach