



March 12, 2025

Members of the Children and Families Finance and Policy Committee:

As leaders of the five Feeding America food banks serving Minnesota, we write to encourage your support of **HF1112 (Hemmingsen-Jaeger)** and **HF777 (Coulter)**, bills that would appropriate funding to Minnesota's food banks and food shelves amid record demand for emergency food assistance statewide.

HF1112 (Hemmingsen-Jaeger) appropriates \$10 million in new and permanent funding to Minnesota's six food banks and participating Tribal Nations to establish the first-ever Regional Food Bank Grant program. The funding would be used exclusively for sourcing and distributing more food throughout the state, at no cost to food shelves. Currently, food banks receive no direct state support.

HF777 (Coulter) appropriates an additional \$4 million in ongoing funding to the Minnesota Food Shelf Program (MFSP), which supports hundreds of food shelves statewide, ensuring the program has the resources it needs by avoiding a de facto cut following recent one-time investments of state and federal funds. Many food shelves are operating beyond capacity, and these funds provide the flexibility to invest further in equipment, vehicles, food purchasing, and other acute needs.

New data released by Second Harvest Heartland shows that one in five Minnesota households are food insecure, meaning hundreds of thousands of Minnesotans rely on the state's hunger-relief network to provide them with the food they need, including children and seniors. Food banks and food shelves alike require additional state investment to accommodate this dramatic and unsustainable increase in demand if we are going to get closer to meeting this record need.

For these reasons, we strongly encourage your support of both HF1112 (Hemmingsen-Jaeger) and HF777 (Coulter), and we thank you for your support of our work to keep Minnesotans fed.

Sincerely,

Allison O'Toole, CEO
Second Harvest Heartland

Virginia Witherspoon, ED
Channel One Food Bank

Shaye Moris, President/CEO
Second Harvest Northland

Susie Novak Boelter, ED
North Country Food Bank

Melissa Sobolik, CEO
Great Plains Food Bank