



The Office of
Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison
helping people afford their lives and live with dignity, safety, and respect • www.ag.state.mn.us

April 20, 2026

Representative Kristin Robbins
Chair, House Fraud Prevention and State Agency Oversight Committee
Minnesota House of Representatives
2nd floor, Centennial Office Building
Saint Paul MN 55155

Dear Chair Robbins,

I have received an invitation from your committee to testify next Tuesday, April 21 on “the Feeding our Future/MEALS Act program” and provide “an update on their prosecutions of the FoF cases” and information on “how many cases have been processed, the processes/ procedures for prosecution, etc.”

I find your invitation confusing. As I am certain you already know, the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Minnesota is leading the criminal prosecution of those cases. I testified on this point at your committee on April 28, 2025, nearly one year ago. This has also been amply documented in the news countless times over the past several years. It is hard for me to believe that you do not know this already. Therefore, if you wish to hear testimony on the progress of criminal prosecutions of individuals in the Feeding Our Future matter, I recommend you review my testimony from last year and ask the U.S. Attorney’s Office to testify.

You should already know the reasons why the U.S. Attorney’s Office is prosecuting these cases, because they are well known. First of all, they are prosecuting the Feeding Our Future fraud cases because they have jurisdiction to do so, which my Office does not. As I explained in my April 28, 2025 testimony to your committee, the original criminal jurisdiction of the Attorney General’s Office is limited to Medicaid fraud, and we are more effective and successful at prosecuting Medicaid fraud than other states our size. The Feeding Our Future fraud, however, did not involve Medicaid, so my Office did not have criminal jurisdiction to prosecute it. The federal government, however, does have jurisdiction to prosecute criminal theft of federal funds, and it is of course federal funds that approximately 80 defendants have been accused or convicted of stealing as part of Feeding Our Future.

Under the provisions of Minnesota Statutes Chap. 388, any state-based criminal prosecution of the Feeding Our Future defendants would have to originate with a county attorney and could not by law originate with the Attorney General's Office, a fact you should also remember from my testimony last year. Under Minnesota Statutes Sec. 8.01, a county attorney may refer a case to the attorney general for criminal prosecution — but again, the Attorney General's Office may not initiate a criminal prosecution without this referral, except in the case of Medicaid fraud. And again, the Feeding Our Future fraud did not involve Medicaid.

The federal government also has more robust statutes under which they can charge this type of fraud than a county attorney or the Attorney General would have under state law, and more robust penalties for conviction as well compared to the penalties available in state law. Further, the federal government also has exceedingly more resources to investigate this kind of complex fraud than either a county attorney or the Attorney General's Office has. When the U.S. Attorney for Minnesota first announced indictments in Feeding Our Future in September 2022, he stressed that it took hundreds of agents from four federal agencies many months to piece together the complex fraud across multiple continents.

Finally, the federal government is prosecuting the Feeding Our Future fraud because the Minnesota Department of Education reported their suspicions of fraud to them, not to a county attorney. I will note that regrettably, it took much longer than it should have for the federal government to take MDE seriously: the first Trump Administration's USDA twice ignored MDE's requests for help in the summer and fall of 2020, and it was only the Biden Administration FBI and DOJ that took MDE seriously in the spring of 2021.

It is even more regrettable that the current Trump Administration's unconstitutional and unethical actions during Operation Metro Surge have caused more than a dozen seasoned fraud prosecutors to leave the U.S. Attorney's Office, and that Feeding Our Future and other criminal prosecutions have stalled as a result.

These facts are very well known. Any reasonable person would assume you — as chair of the House Fraud Prevention Committee — had already mastered them when you invited me instead of a representative of the Department of Justice to testify about the status of the Feeding Our Future prosecutions.

Though my office is not directly criminally prosecuting the Feeding Our Future defendants for the reasons above, we have worked hard to hold the Feeding Our Future fraudsters accountable using the tools that we do have under the law. There are five different ways.

First, as I already testified to you and the committee on April 28, 2025, my office defended the Minnesota Department of Education against the spurious civil lawsuit that Feeding Our Future brought against it in a failed attempt to deter MDE from asking questions about Feeding Our Future claims and billing that did not add up. Under state law, it is a mandatory function of the Attorney General's Office to represent all state agencies, boards, and commissions — more than 100 of them — in litigation, as I also testified last April. Feeding Our Future filed its lawsuit in

November 2020, after first threatening it months earlier, and it continued for well over a year. The case was challenging not because Feeding Our Future's claims had any merit — they did not — but because Feeding Our Future had persuaded the court that its claims *did* have merit and the court had found our client MDE in contempt.

When in the course of the litigation, my office learned that MDE had approached the FBI with its suspicions of fraud, attorneys from my office joined MDE in meeting regularly with the FBI. During the course of this cooperation, the FBI shared almost no details of its investigation with MDE or attorneys from my office representing MDE, but asked us to coordinate with them any discovery we were required to produce as part of responding to Feeding Our Future's spurious civil lawsuit, so that it did not in any way reveal or even hint at the existence of a federal criminal investigation. The full cooperation of attorneys from my office in their capacity as MDE's civil legal counsel was an essential component of the success of DOJ's success in holding Feeding Our Future fraudsters criminally accountable.

Second, when the Feeding Our Future indictments were unsealed, they identified nonprofits that had participated in the fraud. Under state law, my office has civil-law oversight of all charities and nonprofits in Minnesota, so when we learned from the indictments which nonprofits had been involved in the fraud, we used that authority to shut down 20 of them and we are in process of shutting down 8 more.

Third, under the same authority, we successfully petitioned the district court to oversee the organizational dissolution of Feeding Our Future. This proceeding has been stayed while the criminal prosecutions continue.

Fourth, on behalf of the State of Minnesota, my office sued Feeding Our Future to recover the State's costs in defending against Feeding Our Future's fraudulent lawsuit against MDE. This proceeding is currently also stayed.

Fifth, in a trial that is beginning tomorrow, April 21 — the very day of the hearing at which you have invited me to testify — my office is beginning a civil trial against Emadeldin Ibrahim, who we allege defrauded the State by claiming to provide meals to children in 2020 that we will prove he did not. This is a civil trial under the False Claims Act, not a criminal trial.

These are the respective roles my office and the U.S. Attorney's Office have played and are playing in holding the Feeding Our Future fraudsters accountable. Given this clear delineation of roles, I wonder whether you have invited me to testify on April 21 not about the serious, bipartisan work of fighting fraud, in which my office has a strong track record, but instead to rehash once again a December 2021 meeting I was misled into attending. I testified about this meeting at your committee last year and answered multiple rounds of your follow-up questions. I testified about it under oath in committees of the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate this year. I have shared transparently about it in a Star Tribune opinion that is now more than one year old and in response to questions from news outlets. You have already heard everything there is to hear about this meeting and you already know that I clearly rejected an offer of help

from the people in that meeting. I took nothing from them and did nothing for them. Instead, my office helped federal law enforcement hold the Feeding Our Future fraudsters accountable.

I will add only that some have continued to assert that I received campaign contributions from people who were part of that meeting. This is false. Minnesotans should be able to trust that you will not allow these falsehoods to be repeated.

It cannot be a coincidence that your invitation to me to testify arrived on the same day that the House Rules Committee failed to advance a resolution that would have sent a flagrantly partisan impeachment "investigation" of Governor Walz and me to your committee. As this year's election season comes into full swing, I would remind you that it is a violation of the legislative ethics code and Minnesota law to use State resources in furtherance of an election campaign.

I cannot help but further note the juxtaposition of my office's taking effective action against fraud tomorrow by beginning a civil trial to recover fraud dollars on the same day that you will hold a hearing to drive a political agenda.

In the course of the past two legislative sessions, the committee you chair has advanced exactly one minor piece of legislation to fight fraud against government programs in Minnesota. One. By any objective measure, your committee has not taken on the important work of preventing, interrupting, and sanctioning fraudsters that Minnesotans expect of us. Minnesotans must ask themselves whether you view fraud as a partisan weapon and not a problem they want solved.

I decline your offer to testify on April 21. But if you ever get serious about stopping fraud, let me know.



Keith Ellison
Minnesota Attorney General

cc: Rep. Patti Anderson, Vice Chair
Rep. Pam Altendorf
Rep. Emma Greenman
Rep. Isaac Schultz

Rep. Dave Pinto, DFL Lead
Rep. Steve Elkins
Rep. Jim Nash