



April 7, 2022

Dear Chair Schultz and Members of the House Human Services Finance and Policy Committee:

We write to you today to thank you for including language to increase the gross income threshold on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) from 165% to 200% of federal poverty in the House Human Services Finance and Policy Omnibus bill. This policy change will help many Minnesotans who are struggling to put food on the table. It will also leverage federal funds we are currently leaving on the table and allow more low-income Minnesota families to work, provide food for their families, and continue to move toward economic stability.

We also appreciate the inclusion of food support funding and capital improvement grants. Since the rise of the COVID-19 pandemic, food shelves in Minnesota have seen record high numbers of visits - topping at 3.8 million visits a year. With many COVID relief measures phasing out, we are already starting to see a rise in food shelf visits and indicators of more significant food insecurity to come. Currently, 1 in 9 Minnesotans are facing food insecurity, and Minnesota's network of over 300 food shelves throughout the state are often the first line of defense against hunger, helping put over 92 million pounds of food on the tables of low-income households each year.

By investing in food shelves, food banks and tribal nations in our state, we can ensure that they are able to keep their shelves stocked with food despite rising food costs; are able to transport and deliver food to many who need it, including the growing number of seniors who depend on their local food shelves; and ensure that food shelves are set up with the appropriate storage, equipment and infrastructure to meet the growing demand in our state.

We thank you again for including these items in your omnibus budget. On behalf of Minnesotans struggling to put food on the table, we are grateful for your support.

Sincerely,

Colleen Moriarty, Director, Hunger Solutions Minnesota