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March 8, 2023

To: Members of the House Human Services Finance Committee

**Re: AARP Support of HF 2523; Senior Nutrition Program**

Dear Chair Noor and Members of the Committee,

AARP strongly supports Representative Fischer's House File 2523, which increases senior nutrition program funding. This funding would reduce food insecurity and poverty and would improve health outcomes, including reduced hospitalizations among low-income older adults.

AARP has repeatedly called for state lawmakers to support senior nutrition programs and urge you to pass additional funding this year. Financial resources are declining for senior meals with the lack of federal COVID funds and state funding has stayed flat for the last ten years.

New state funding is needed to address food security for older Minnesotans including for aging Black and Hispanic households. Due to inflation, the cost of food and gas, utilities, and supplies has increased between 10% to 40%, making it even more difficult for older Minnesotans to afford meals.

The benefits of passing increased funding for the senior nutrition program:

- Decreases the rate of Minnesotans seniors who are in food insecurity
- Addresses the growing concern toward increased health emergencies
- Helps Minnesotans afford necessities such as prescription drugs, housing, and utilities.

Passing legislation that promotes an increase in funding for the senior nutrition program is essential in promoting the health and well-being of all Minnesotans. Thank you in advance for your support of this critical piece of legislation. If you have questions, please get in touch with AARP Advocacy's Director, Mary Jo George, at [mjgeorge@aarp.org](mailto:mjgeorge@aarp.org) or 651-271-6586.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cathy McLeer".

Cathy McLeer  
State Director, AARP Minnesota

