



March 9, 2021

House Human Services Finance and Policy Committee
597 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Schultz and Committee members:

We are writing in support of HF611 to increase the gross income threshold on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) from 165% to 200% of federal poverty.

SNAP is the largest federal nutrition assistance program and the first line of defense against hunger. SNAP supplements low-income family food budgets so they can purchase food that meets their needs. For every meal provided by food banks and food shelves, SNAP provides 9, making it by far the most efficient solution.

Hunger has reached unprecedented levels, including approximately 1 in 5 Minnesotans experiencing food insecurity and nearly double that rate for communities of color. In tough times, Minnesotans take pride in taking care of one another. In 2020, food shelves across Minnesota served a record level of over 3.8 million visits. History tells us that those hit hardest by the current economic downturn will be the last to recover, and we must continue to rise to the occasion and leverage the resources necessary to help families struggling to make ends meet.

We have heard first-hand from families with incomes between 165% - 200% of poverty that are struggling to afford the essentials including food, housing, childcare and other daily living expenses. Increasing the income eligibility limit would 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.

During a time of increased need, we urge your support of HF611.

Sincerely,

Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency

Catholic Charities of St. Paul and Minneapolis

Children's Defense Fund - Minnesota

Family Pathways Food Shelves

Hunger Solutions Minnesota

Legal Services Advocacy Project

Minnesota Budget Project

Neighborhood House

PRISM

Second Harvest Heartland

Seward Community Co-op

Takoda

The Food Group

Tri-County Action Program, Inc.

Tri-Valley Opportunity Council

Twin Cities Medical Society

United Community Action Partnership

For further information, please contact Peter Woitock, 651-789-9854, pwoitock@hungersolutions.org