



MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION OF  
AREA AGENCIES ON AGING

May 1, 2023

The Honorable Senator John Hoffman  
The Honorable Senator Omar Fateh  
The Honorable Senator Jim Abeler

The Honorable Mohamud Noor  
The Honorable Peter Fischer  
The Honorable Dave Baker

**RE: Senior Meals**

Dear Health and Human Services Conferees:

The Minnesota Association of Area Agencies on Aging and Senior Meals and Services Coalition, representing advocates and senior meals providers across the state, ask that you fund senior meals at the Senate budget amount of \$16 million annually for the upcoming biennium. Funding at this level will eliminate wait lists and give local programs funding to offer meals up to seven days per weeks vs. only four to five meals per month.

The need for funding will not go away after two years. It is absolutely essential that the additional \$16 million for senior meals is added to the base budget of the Department of Human Services. The older adult population is a large and growing cohort of community members.

One in ten older adults lives at or below the poverty level in our state. Many of our senior neighbors do not have enough food to eat due to lack of resources. Food insecurity is often complicated by multiple chronic conditions, lack of mobility and living alone. Home-delivered meals combat life-threatening malnutrition and help older adults remain in their homes. Volunteers and paid drivers maintain frequent contact through the delivery process and help to reduce isolation. Senior meals are cost effective. Older adults who receive them have fewer hospitalizations and are able to remain in their community homes longer, delaying expensive nursing home care and cost to the State.

No one in our state, regardless of age should experience hunger. We urge you to adopt the Senate budget position and increase funding for senior meals by \$16M annually and commit this increase to the base.

Sincerely,

Jason W. Swanson, President, MN Association of Area Agencies on Aging  
Co-chair, Senior Meals and Services Coalition  
Executive Director, Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dawn Simonson".

Dawn Simonson, Co-chair, Senior Meals and Services Coalition  
President and CEO, Trellis (Area Agency on Aging for the Metro Region)

Cc: Kristi Kane, Executive Director, Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging  
Lori Vrolson, Executive Director, Central MN Area Agency on Aging  
Heather Pender, Director, Dancing Sky Area Agency on Aging  
Laurie Brownell, Executive Director, Southeastern MN Area Agency on Aging  
Sherry Munyon, Capitol Access