

January 25, 2018

Senator Amy Klobuchar
302 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Tina Smith
309 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Representative Tim Walz
2313 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Jason Lewis
418 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Erik Paulsen
127 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Betty McCollum
2256 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Keith Ellison
2263 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Tom Emmer
315 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Collin Peterson
2204 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Rick Nolan
2366 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators and Representatives:

We the undersigned organizations urge you to reject calls to cut critical nutrition programs, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), oppose efforts to eliminate necessary funding for these investments and pass a Farm Bill that works for all Minnesotans.

Too many Minnesotans continue struggling to meet their basic needs for hunger. The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and SNAP are critical to alleviating hunger in our urban, suburban and rural communities. Severe cuts to SNAP and TEFAP will force already struggling families in our state to go hungry and fall further into poverty.

The Nutrition Title of the Farm Bill provides access to food to hundreds of thousands of low- and middle-income Minnesotans. Specifically, investments in SNAP have increased the number of Minnesota children and seniors able to access foods, prevented financial ruin for families faced with the challenges of job loss or unexpected health care costs and provided much needed economic activity for Main Street grocery retailers in every corner of the state. In addition, food insecurity is strongly associated with increases in the risk of adverse health outcomes, which may complicate the ability to manage illness, and could lead to higher health care costs. SNAP improves food security and offers benefits that enable families to purchase healthier foods.

While the Farm Bill is a vital safety net for many Minnesotans in need of food support, it also provides crucial resources to small, new and emerging farmers as well as community-based organizations creating strong and sustainable food systems that meet the needs of rural and urban communities. These resources include but are not limited to:

- National Institute of Food and Agriculture grant funding (e.g. Community Food Project and Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive);

- Agriculture Marketing Service programming (e.g. Specialty Crop Block Grants, Local Food Promotion and Farmers Market Promotion); and
- Food and Nutrition Service funding (e.g. Farm to School and WIC Farmer's Market Nutrition Program).

We urge you to support a strong Nutrition Title in the Farm Bill, oppose efforts to eliminate necessary funding for these investments and pass a Farm Bill that works for all Minnesotans.

On behalf of our organizations and all the Minnesotans we serve or represent, thank you for your public service and for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Appetite For Change, Inc.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota

Hmong American Farmers Association

Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council

Hunger Solutions Minnesota

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy

Minnesota Farmers Union

Second Harvest Heartland

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