

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,

AJB Consulting, LLC
Akeley Nevis Food Shelf
American Heart Association
Amherst H. Wilder Foundation
Appetite For Change, Inc.
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota
CAER Food Shelf
Catholic Charities of St. Paul and Minneapolis
CentraCare Health
CentraCare Health
Channel One Regional Food Bank
Children's Minnesota
Clover Valley Farms
Community Stabilization Project
Dreams United/Suenos Unidos, Inc.
Family Pathways Food Shelves
Fare Table
Farmers Market Place
Feeling Good MN
Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Elderly Nutrition Program
Great Plains Food Bank
Growing West Side
HealthPartners
Hmong American Farmers Association
Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council
Hope for The Community
Hunger Solutions Minnesota
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
Intercongregation Communities Association
Jericho Road Ministries
Jewish Family and Children's Service of Minneapolis
Legal Services Advocacy Project
MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger
Midwest Food Connection
Mill City Farmers Market
Minnesota Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

Minnesota Farmers' Market Association
Minnesota Farmers Union
Minnesota FoodShare | Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches
Minnesota Public Health Association
Minnesota School Nutrition Association
Mississippi Market Natural Foods
MN Community Action Partnership
Neighborhood House
North Anoka County Emergency Foodshelf-NACE
North Country Food Bank
Pine Island Sharing Shelves
Pine River-Backus Family Center
PROP Food Shelf
Renewing the Countryside
Sam Kedem Nursery & Garden
Scott Carver Dakota CAP Agency, Inc.
Second Harvest Heartland
Second Harvest North Central Food Bank
Second Harvest Northern Lakes Food Bank
Slow Food MN-Twin Cities
St. Luke's Farmers' Market
St. Paul Growers' Association
The Food Group
The Good Acre
The Salvation Army Brainerd
Tri-Community Food Shelf
University of Minnesota Extension
Waconia United Food Shelf
West Side Farmers Market/Growing West Side