

MINNESOTA PARTNERS TO END HUNGER FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

2018



Partners to End Hunger works closely with national organizations such as the Food Research and Action Council (FRAC), the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP), Mazon, and Feeding America to advance federal policy changes. We keep our federal delegation informed on the food needs of low-income Minnesotans. Our federal priorities include:

Protecting SNAP

SNAP (the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly food stamps) is the single most effective anti-hunger policy in the country. It helps more than 40 million Americans – and about 476,000 Minnesotans—put food on the table for their families.

Time sensitive!

SNAP is part of the Farm Bill, which is up for reauthorization this year. As Farm Bill negotiations take place, we call on our elected officials to defend SNAP against any cuts to the program that limit the program's ability to help Minnesotans feed themselves and their families. Federal budget proposals would cut \$130 billion from the program. If enacted, these cuts would mean fewer people would be able to afford the food they need to survive – leaving tens of thousands more Minnesotans hungry.

We do not support enacting unfair work requirements that cut off benefits for individuals who struggle with health care challenges or live in areas without sufficient jobs paying living wages.

In addition to protecting SNAP, we support groups working on small farmer funding, including advocating for subsidies for fruit and vegetable growers and urban agriculture development.

Maintaining the safety net

Millions of low-income Americans utilize programs like Medicaid, WIC, and SNAP to meet their basic needs. We must maintain this safety net of programs to alleviate poverty and improve the economic well-being of low income individuals and families.

About Partners to End Hunger

Minnesota Partners to End Hunger is a statewide network of service providers and advocates working to end hunger in Minnesota by motivating decision-makers to take supportive action on state and national hunger policy issues.

MINNESOTA PARTNERS TO END HUNGER STATE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

2018

With a state budget surplus, Minnesota can afford:



Continued mobile food shelf funding

Mobile food shelf programs increase access to nutritious food for individuals who experience barriers to accessing traditional bricks-and-mortar food shelves because of transportation or mobility challenges. Mobile food shelves received \$2 million in funding from the Legislature in 2015. Support continued funding of competitive grants to create new mobile programs or expand existing programs.



Ending school lunch shaming

Minnesota became a leader in addressing the issue of school lunch shaming when it passed legislation to ensure that reminders about lunch payments do not stigmatize or demean students who participate in the free school meals program. Yet some students who are unable to pay are still denied access to the same nutritious lunch given to other students. They are instead given a substitute meal like a cheese sandwich. We support closing the loophole in state law that allows this to happen. We also support universal school meals for all of Minnesota's kids.



Fully funding milk grant to food shelves

Milk is a high-demand item at Minnesota's food shelves, yet purchasing milk directly is cost-prohibitive for many food shelves. The current State Milk Grant helps food shelves afford some of the milk that food shelf clients need. Fully funding the milk grant at \$1.5 million per year guarantees food shelves have the milk they need year round.



Supporting the Good Food Access Program

The Good Food Access Program supports facilities for the sale of healthy, affordable food in areas of the state where better access is needed. The Program provides grants, loans, and technical support for food-related enterprises such as new and improved grocery stores, mobile markets, farmers' markets, fresh food refrigeration, and other innovative community-driven solutions. Following the success in securing \$250,000 over three years in initial funding, we support fully fund the initiative with an ongoing annual \$10M appropriation.

Other priorities

- We support the creation of a Childhood Hunger Caucus of the Minnesota Legislature.
- In addition to our own priorities, we support other groups and organizations working on programs that alleviate poverty and improve economic well-being for low-income Minnesotans. This includes the Child Care Assistance Program.
- We support rural broadband funding.

Contact

Colleen Moriarty
Executive Director, Hunger Solutions Minnesota
Chair, Minnesota Partners to End Hunger

651-789-9840
cmoriarty@hungersolutions.org