

March 22, 2023

Minnesota Senate  
Health and Human Services Committee  
2107 Minnesota Senate Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Wiklund and Committee Members:

My name is Miguel Lopez and I'm the Executive Chef and Owner of Homi Restaurant in St. Paul, Minnesota. I am writing in support of SF 2647, which would provide ongoing funds to support the distribution of prepared meals to Minnesotans in need.

Since 2022, we have partnered with Second Harvest Heartland through their Kitchen Coalition program, making around 400 meals each week to distribute in the Frogtown neighborhood of St. Paul. To date, we've prepared over 19,000 meals that have been served to people facing food insecurity.

Our chefs tailor these meals to meet the cultural, religious, and dietary needs of the people we serve, knowing that too many of those facing food insecurity don't have the home, health or ability to cook for themselves with food available at their local food shelf. We are proud to help fill this gap in the emergency food landscape and know that our efforts are contributing to Minnesota's hunger fight.

We have seen the benefit these meals provide to our community, and our hope is that more kitchen partners like us will get the chance to take part in this work, and ongoing state funding would make that a reality. SF 2647 would allow organizations like Second Harvest Heartland to grow operations in the communities they serve, or allow this model to expand into new towns and cities across Minnesota where the greatest disparities in food insecurity exist.

It is vital that this year's budget supports our state's emergency food system to help us end hunger in Minnesota. SF 2647 will ensure that every neighbor has a meal that's right for them.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill and your support for Minnesotans experiencing food insecurity.

Sincerely,

Miguel Lopez  
Executive Chef and Owner  
Homi Restaurant

*864 University Ave W  
St. Paul, MN 55104  
651-222-0655*