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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 Becky Nordin and I am Dean of Students at Minneapolis Community and Technical College. I am writing in support of SF 2647, which would provide ongoing funds to support the distribution of prepared meals to Minnesotans in need.

We have partnered with Second Harvest Heartland through their Kitchen Coalition program to provide a food pantry and Kitchen Coalition meals to our students. These efforts combined with the other wrap around services we provide give our students more of the support they need to finish their degree. A 2019 survey of Minneapolis College students found 69% of those who responded were concerned about a roof over their head and where their next meal was going to come from, so the support from Second Harvest that will be enabled through adequate funding of their Kitchen Coalition program is crucial for our students.

Kitchen Coalition meals are tailored to meet the cultural, religious, and dietary needs of the people served, 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.

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 even 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Becky Nordin".

Becky Nordin  
Dean of Students & TRIO Director

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