



April 2, 2024

Dear Members of the Health and Human Services Committee,

The Food Group is writing in support of SF 4185, which would establish a new Minnesota Food Bank Program and provide additional funding to food shelves to help meet the high demand. Last year Minnesota had a record 7.5 million food shelf visits—2 million more than the previous year. This has caused a strain on food shelves trying to keep up with unprecedented demand due to the high cost of food and ending of the SNAP emergency allotments, which led households to rely more heavily on their local food shelf for help.

This investment in the emergency food system would ensure that food shelves are able to keep their shelves stocked despite rising food costs, are able to transport and deliver food to many who need it, and are set up with the appropriate storage and equipment to meet the growing demand across Minnesota.

We are also writing in support of SF 3968 the SNAP as Medicine Program, and SF 3969, the 1115 Waiver for Medically Tailored Meals. SF 3969 would create a bridge for Minnesota adults to continue accessing state-funded food support while attempting to re-connect to federal SNAP benefits. This legislation would provide a temporary solution for thousands of Minnesotans who are out of work and are striving for stability and access to food support.

SF 3969 would give Minnesota the flexibility to reimburse for nutrition supports that could include nutrition counseling, medically-tailored meals, and home delivered meals. This would help to expand access to food for many who are struggling to make ends meet.

As hunger in our state continues to rise, we urge your support.

Sincerely,

Sophia Lenarz-Coy
Executive Director