



Food for today. Change for tomorrow.

March 3, 2025

Chair Wiklund and Members of the Health and Human Services Committee,

We are writing to ask for your support for SF1858, which builds off the success of the longstanding Market Bucks program and expands this proven nutrition incentive model to grocery stores through a Fresh Bucks pilot program.

Market Bucks has been instrumental in helping low-income customers who use SNAP stretch their food budgets by providing matching funds at over 100 farmers markets across Minnesota. This program not only increases access to fresh, healthy food but also supports local growers and strengthens our agricultural economy.

The Fresh Bucks pilot offers an exciting opportunity to expand this model to grocery stores and other retail settings that are open year-round. By offering a 50% discount on produce to SNAP customers at participating stores, we can improve access to healthy foods for low-income Minnesotans.

Access to nutritious food is essential for preventing chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease, and obesity, conditions that disproportionately affect low-income communities. Research shows that SNAP participants who can afford more fruits and vegetables have better health outcomes, reducing long-term healthcare costs and improving overall well-being. Fresh Bucks not only helps families stretch their food budgets but also empowers them to make healthier choices, leading to stronger, healthier communities across Minnesota.

The Fresh Bucks model is a win-win-win:

- Customers win with more buying power for affordable, healthy foods.
- Local retailers win by attracting more SNAP shoppers and boosting sales.
- Communities win with stronger economies and healthier people.

As our neighbors continue to struggle with food insecurity and the high cost of food, we urge your support for Fresh Bucks to ensure low-income families can put healthy food on the table and our local grocers can stay afloat.

Please contact Leah Gardner lgardner@thefoodgroupmn.org or 651-789-9850 with any questions.

Sincerely,

Advocates for Better Health
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota
City of Minneapolis
Fairview Health Services
The Food Group
Legal Services Advocacy Project

MN350
Minnesota Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
Minnesota Grocers Association
Pillsbury United Communities
Second Harvest Heartland