



Fairview



April 9, 2025

Dear Chair Wiklund and Members of the Senate HHS Committee:

We would like to thank you for including funding for prepared meals in your omnibus budget bill (SF 2669). The prepared meals programs supported by this funding would benefit Minnesotans who experience both food insecurity and the inability to reliably cook for themselves, whether due to disability, chronic illness, limited mobility, a family crisis, and/or lack of access to a kitchen.

Demand for prepared meals for food insecure individuals has grown considerably amid rising hunger rates in Minnesota. In 2024, Fairview Health Services saw 33,000 patients who screened positive for food insecurity. Channel One distributed 66,062 total meals in 2024--of those meals, 50,427 were made and distributed by rural-for-rural partners in Faribault and Austin. Second Harvest Heartland's Kitchen Coalition program distributed 1.32 million prepared meals using privately raised funds, but that served a fraction of our neighbors who needed them. According to new data, **1 in 5 Minnesota families are experiencing food insecurity, with 15% expressing a need for prepared meals.**

Hunger is also a statewide challenge, with food insecurity rates at record highs and virtually identical across the state. Funding the prepared meals grant program would help provide an effective, tested, and transparent statewide response. While we continue to advocate for ongoing funding for this program, we know that any support is helpful in this difficult time for food insecure Minnesotans across the state.

Thank you,

Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency
Channel One Food Bank
Fairview Health Services
Kitchen Coalition

Open Arms of Minnesota
Prairie Five Community Action
The Sanneh Foundation
Second Harvest Heartland