

April 4, 2025

The Honorable Senator Hoffman
2111 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Senator Hoffman,

We are writing to express our sincere gratitude for giving us the opportunity for a hearing of State Senate File 2144, which proposes funding to Catholic Charities of the Diocese of St. Cloud Senior Nutrition. It was greatly appreciated.

The situation around Senior Nutrition funding has changed, and we wanted to give you some background. This week the Minnesota Board on Aging released senior nutrition funding allocated to them in a 2023 Human Services Appropriation Bill. A portion of these dollars will be available in our region for senior meals. The amount available through the appropriation is not as much as the Bill that you sponsored for us. However, given the current realities of the budget for the state of Minnesota, we feel it would be best to remove our bill from consideration, with one significant caveat. That caveat is to request DHS for the appropriated funds made available to be allocated to Catholic Charities without restrictions. The current Title III funding rules and increasing administrative requirements, along with service model constraints, limit our ability to be innovative. Declining Title III funds at the state and federal level makes it imperative to think creatively about how these programs are best delivered.

We hope for your continued support in advocating for the needs of community-dwelling seniors who rely on these vital services. Providing meals to vulnerable older adults is not only a moral responsibility but also a critical investment in their well-being and dignity.

Thank you for championing this important cause. Your commitment to supporting older adults in need is deeply valued and appreciated.

Sincerely,



Aaron Fisk, President and CEO, Catholic Charities of the Diocese of St. Cloud



Stacy Lund, Director of Community Services, Catholic Charities of the Diocese of St. Cloud