**Meals on Wheels and Similar Programs Need Funds to Feed Hungry Seniors**

Minnesota seniors need our help. As the senior population grows, ~~t~~he number of frail older adults is increasing rapidly. Most live independently in their homes and communities. Home-delivered and group meals are essential for people to remain in their homes rather than moving to more expensive institutional settings. Funding for meals is not keeping up with the need.

The Minnesota Association of Area Agencies on Aging projects that, at current funding levels, 487,000 fewer meals will be available to older adults in 2025 than in 2024, a loss of service for 1,900 seniors.

The Senior Meals and Services Coalition (seniorservicesmn.org), a group of 50+ nonprofit organizations, has a bill in front of the legislature to provide $11 million per biennium for the Senior Nutrition Program. The dollar amounts in the original bill have already been reduced to $3.076 in the House version of the bill and even less in the Senate version. Funding at this level will close group dining sites and reduce the number of meals served through Meals on Wheels and other programs. We cannot let this stand.

Meals provided through the Senior Nutrition Program go to the neediest: people with low incomes, in poor health or living in rural areas with limited access to healthy food. People receiving meals often don’t drive, live alone or have physical conditions that prevent them from preparing nutritious meals. Home-delivered and group meals are one of the most cost-effective ways to support older adults, often preventing the need for more expensive care,

One recipient, a caregiver for her 93-year-old husband, notes, “The Meals on Wheels program was essential after my right shoulder replacement. I was unable to cook meals and help with everyday needs. Without the meals delivered to our door twice a week, it would not have been possible!”

**[Add a story here from your own experience or area.]**

The need is urgent. The health of vulnerable older adults in our communities depends upon this critical funding. Please get in touch with your legislators today and ask them to ensure Meals on Wheels and similar services are available to those who need them.