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PRESS RELEASE

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Senate Protects SNAP in Strong, Bipartisan Farm Bill Vote

Gayle Carlson, CEO, Montana Food Bank Network

“The U.S. Senate passed their version of the 2018 Farm Bill on June 28th with a strong, bipartisan vote of 86-11. This vote demonstrates that a Farm Bill that affirms our national commitment to reducing hunger is the right way forward. The Montana Food Bank Network applauds the Senate and both of Montana’s Senators for voting in favor of the final bill. We also thank Senator Tester for helping to defeat a harmful amendment that would have severely restricted access to SNAP for Montana families struggling to make ends meet.

The Senate Farm Bill stands in stark contrast to the harsh and partisan House bill, which would cut SNAP by nearly \$19 billion, take away food assistance from people in need, and make SNAP more burdensome and costly to administer. With yesterday’s vote, the Senate rejected this approach and passed a bill that protects access to vital food benefits for children and their parents, seniors, people with disabilities, and working people struggling to make ends meet on low pay and inconsistent hours.

Montana’s food pantries and emergency food providers work every day to reduce hunger in our state but we can’t do it alone. Low-wage jobs, injuries, illness, high housing costs, and other challenges leave many hard-working families and individuals unable to make ends meet. SNAP provides a crucial safety-net, ensuring that families can keep food on the table during hard times. In fact, for every one meal provided by our nationwide network of food banks, SNAP provides twelve, effectively reducing food insecurity, improving health outcomes, and providing stability for nearly 60,000 Montana households each month.

While this Senate bill is an important step forward, we are not done yet. A conference committee will now work to develop a final bill that can pass both the House and Senate. Montana’s families, farmers, and rural communities are counting on Congress to pass a strong, bipartisan Farm Bill that protects SNAP. The Senate Farm Bill meets these criteria. We urge Senators Daines and Tester, Representative Gianforte, and all Congressional leaders to ensure that the final bill does the same.”

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The Montana Food Bank Network, located at 5625 Expressway in Missoula, secures and distributes donated and low cost food to nearly 150 hunger relief agencies throughout Montana. The Network works to meet the immediate need for food while advocating at the local, state, and national level for policy changes to help eliminate hunger and food insecurity in Montana. The Montana Food Bank Network is a member of Feeding America. For more information about the Montana Food Bank Network please visit www.mfbn.org.