

**Contact:**  
**Lorianne Burhop**  
Montana Food Bank Network  
(406) 215-1773  
Email: [lburhop@mfbn.org](mailto:lburhop@mfbn.org)



---

PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** October 22, 2018

## News Release: 130 Montana organizations and leaders urge Congressional Leaders to Protect Food Assistance in the Farm Bill

More than 130 organizations and leaders from across Montana, including food pantries, healthcare associations, disability advocates, faith leaders, farmers, local food advocates, social service providers, and others publicly urged our Congressional leaders to join the fight against hunger in Montana by supporting food assistance programs in the Farm Bill. Specifically, signers urged support for SNAP, our nation's most effective anti-hunger program, and TEFAP (the Emergency Food Assistance Program), which helps provide nutritious food items to our pantries and meal programs, while also supporting America's farmers.

The signers of the message used ads printed in the Sunday editions of the Bozeman Daily Chronicle, Great Falls Tribune, and Billings Gazette to call on Senator Daines, Senator Tester, and Congressman Gianforte to support the Senate-passed SNAP provisions and provide strong support for TEFAP in the final Farm Bill, which Congress is working to pass by the end of 2018. The list of organizations and community leaders signed on to the ad is a powerful demonstration of the deep and diverse support for protecting food assistance programs in the Farm Bill. The Farm Bill provides support and security for those who produce our food, while also providing security for consumers, ensuring that families can afford to keep food on the table during hard times.

Historically, passage of the Farm Bill has been a bipartisan effort, with lawmakers from all sides working together to maintain and strengthen SNAP. The Senate adhered to this long-standing bipartisan tradition and passed a bill that protects SNAP and makes important improvements to program operations. Both Sen. Daines and Sen. Tester voted in support of the Senate bill, which passed the Senate by a wide margin of 86-11. The House diverged from this tradition and pursued a partisan bill that would take away food assistance from more than 2 million Americans and create enormous new administrative burden at a time when our state is already struggling under recent budget cuts. The signers on the ad urge Montana's Congressional delegation to reject this approach and support the Senate-passed SNAP provisions.

Lorianne Burhop, Chief Policy Officer with Montana Food Bank Network says, "SNAP is effectively reducing hunger in Montana and across our country, helping our kids succeed in school and our seniors live healthy, independent lives. SNAP is also vital for Montana workers, allowing them to make ends meet on low wages, limited hours, or time between jobs. The signers on this ad, along with many other voices across the state are asking our Congressional leaders to join us in the fight against hunger in Montana by passing a final Farm Bill that protects SNAP and invests in TEFAP."

The current Farm Bill expired September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2018. Congress will need to pass a new Farm Bill or a short-term extension by the end of the December.

[Here is the text of the ad and the full list of signers.](#)

###

**The Montana Food Bank Network**, located at 5625 Expressway in Missoula, secures and distributes donated and low cost food to 280 network partners 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](http://www.mfbn.org).