

**Dale Doll, Manchester Area Conference of Churches**  
**Testimony in support of SB 1381: AAC Appropriations to the Departments of**  
**Social Services and Agriculture**  
March 13, 2007

Dear Senators and Representatives,

I am Dale Doll, Director of Food Services for the Manchester Area Conference of Churches, Inc. (MACC Charities). Our food programs are funded mainly through private donations. Our budget for food is limited. **We depend on our allotment from the SSNAP program to provide us with protein foods for the individuals and families who turn to us for help with their food needs.** The reality of donated food is "hit or miss." That is why it is so important for me to be able to order food in advance, have it come in a predictable manner and provide a base inventory that I can count on. People are counting on my programs to help them in times of crises and the SSNAP program affords me some security in this time of insecurity for so many people.

MACC provides a week of groceries to over 1,000 people a month in the pantry and serves over 3,000 meals a month in our soup kitchen. I cannot afford to buy meats at retail prices to help all these people and meats are rarely donated. Most of the meat I get is through our SSNAP distribution, without it, too many meals would consist of pasta and other starches which is not a healthy alternative for the people we serve.

It is hard for me to believe that twelve years ago, when I started work at MACC, we served an average of 325 people a month in the pantry; now we serve an average of 1,020 a month. It is equally troubling that 12 years ago, we served about 10 elderly people a month in our pantry; now we average over 100 seniors a month. Our allotment from SSNAP has been flat funded while the need has risen over 200%.

Every 2 weeks in Manchester over 100 people line up to get food from the Mobile Foodshare truck. This is in addition to the food they get from our pantry. They stand in the rain, in the cold and in the heat. How hungry would you have to be to stand in line for half an hour in 8° weather (or 95° weather) waiting for a box of food? **Your constituents are struggling to feed themselves and their families.**

I urge you to increase the funding for the State Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SSNAP) and to increase the funding for the Seniors Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP). This high protein food and fresh produce are vitally important to our low-income neighbors.

Thank you for your time and your attention on this important matter. We need your help and support to ensure food programs like those MACC administers remain quality programs that help people maintain good nutrition during hard times. Good health helps people reclaim and sustain employment which is often the key to being self sufficient.