SF 2868
March 17, 2026

Chair Wiklund and members of the committee,

The Minnesota Justice Research Center writes in support of SF 2868, a bill to adjust the eligibility requirements for public assistance under the state Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to remove the 10-year random drug testing provision for people with a prior drug felony conviction.

The Minnesota Justice Research Center has consistently advocated to reduce the collateral consequences of criminal convictions. Collateral consequences are legal and regulatory restrictions that limit or prohibit people convicted of crimes from accessing employment, business and occupational licensing, housing, voting, education, and other rights, benefits, and opportunities. SNAP is one of these benefits that can be denied due to collateral consequences.

Collateral consequences can perpetuate poverty, increase recidivism by limiting mainstream opportunities, and negatively impact families long after a conviction. Many of these consequences are about excessive punishment rather than promoting public safety.

The provision linking drug tests to SNAP exemplifies the overreach of the War on Drugs era. It is the only type of felony conviction that carries this requirement related to food security. By removing this counterproductive provision, SF 2868 will reduce barriers to benefits for families and children.

-Will Cooley, Policy Director, Minnesota Justice Research Center