September 21, 2019

The Honorable Sonny Perdue  
Secretary of Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Mr. Secretary,

The Minnesota Leadership Council on Aging sends this letter in strong opposition to the US Department of Agriculture’s proposed rule to eliminate broad-based categorical eligibility in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The food security of 35,500 Minnesotans including at least 3,200 older Minnesotans will be impacted if this rule goes into effect.

This critical policy has been successful in helping low-income older Minnesotans access food. Only 28% of low-income older Minnesotans received SNAP benefits before the state adopted the policy. Today, almost 60% of low-income older Minnesotans receive them.

In addition, older Minnesotans would be disproportionately impacted by asset tests because they are more likely to have low incomes but some savings. Broad-based categorical eligibility allows them to retain their assets in order to live independently. The number of older Minnesotans that would lose benefits may be substantially higher as the assets of those that are eligible is not available.

Our members who represent nearly 1 million older Minnesotans and family caregivers and over 100,000 direct care workers are deeply concerned about the negative impacts of this proposed rule.

Sincerely,

Rajean P. Moone, Ph.D.
Executive Director

CC: Minnesota’s Congressional Delegation