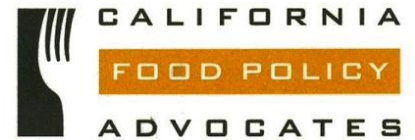


Floor Alert



To: *Members, California State Senate*
From: Alexis Fernández, California Food Policy Advocates
Date: August 25, 2011
Subject: **Support AB 6 (Fuentes)— The CalFresh Act of 2011**

Problem: Too many California families struggle to put food on the table. Yet, only 50% of eligible Californians participate in CalFresh (formerly the Food Stamp Program), ranking California second to last among states. Improving participation improves the health of low-income Californians and the health of our economy.

What does AB 6 do?

- ▶ **Reduces paperwork:** *AB 6 would move California to a simplified reporting system, such as that used in every other state. This means less paperwork for administrators and low-income participants.*
- ▶ **Removes barriers to participation:** *AB 6 removes the finger print requirement for all CalFresh households. California will join all but one other state and city in effectively fighting fraud without finger imaging.*
- ▶ **Removes utility paperwork and increases benefits:** *AB 6 implements a “Heat and Eat” program which will streamline the paperwork requirements and increase federal benefits for a significant number of households.*

Why Support AB 6?

- ▶ **AB 6 is a fiscally-responsible bill.** AB 6 would increase access to and participation in CalFresh; providing low-income Californians with critical federal nutrition benefits while simultaneously streamlining administration and providing significant ongoing savings.
- ▶ **AB 6 has broad support.** There is wide support from the agriculture, business, public health, nutrition, and anti-hunger communities.
- ▶ **AB 6 helps meet federal demands.** AB 6 acts as the legislative vehicle for California to meet the recommendations and timeline set by the federal government in implementing a simplified reporting system for CalFresh.
- ▶ **AB 6 brings California in line with other states.** California is the last state using a modified quarterly reporting system and one of only 2 states and one city requiring a finger image.
- ▶ **AB 6 provides an opportunity for significant ongoing savings.** Together a move to semi-annual reporting, the elimination of finger imaging for CalFresh and the implementation of a “Heat and Eat” program can save California tens of millions of dollars per year on an ongoing basis.
- ▶ **AB 6 generates much needed economic activity.** For every \$1 in CalFresh benefits allotted to low-income families, \$1.79 is generated in economic activity. If implemented AB 6 could bring in an additional \$1.6 billion in federal CalFresh benefits, resulting in more than \$2.8 billion in additional economic activity.

In times like these, we simply cannot afford to turn away valuable federal nutrition benefits for low-income families and the related economic activity that benefits all Californians; AB 6 ensures that the state maximizes federal nutrition assistance, while delivering benefits in an effective and cost efficient manner.

For more information on AB 6, contact Alexis Fernández, alexis@cfpa.net , 510-433-1122 x 111
