**Letters of Support Needed for AB 69 to Senate Appropriations Committee**

*AB 69 is currently on suspense in the Senate Appropriations Committee. On August 22nd, the committee will announce whether AB 69 has passed out of the suspense file. In order for the bill to pass out, we are asking you to fax letters of support to CFPA by 8/12. We will hand-deliver your letter to the committee staff.*

AB 69, Senior Nutrition Benefits, directs the California Department of Social Services to permit counties to work in conjunction with the Social Security Administration to simplify CalFresh enrollment for eligible Social Security recipients.

 AB 69 proposes to:

* Increase senior enrollment in CalFresh
* Draw in federal dollars to boost the State economy
* Become a national model for senior enrollment by focusing on a new senior population: Social Security recipients

**Please use the following template to draft a letter, and either fax it to CFPA at (510) 433-1131**

**or email a copy of it to** **Kerry@cfpa.net****.**

[Date]

The Honorable Senator Kehoe

Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee

State Capitol, Room 2206

Sacramento, CA 94249-0039

**Re: Support for AB 69 (Beall) - Senior Nutrition Benefits**

Dear Chairwoman Kehoe,

 [Please insert name of your organization] writes in support of AB 69, legislation that directs the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to permit counties to work in conjunction with the Social Security Administration (SSA) to enroll eligible Social Security recipients into CalFresh (federally known as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program- SNAP). Through data sharing, standardized benefits, and simplified applications, this bill could improve senior enrollment in CalFresh.

[Please insert a sentence about what your organization does and why this issue is important to you.]

AB 69 targets a senior population that is widely under-participating in CalFresh. There are 444,000 CalFresh-eligible households in California that include at least one Social Security recipient over the age of 60. Only five percent of such households participate in CalFresh. This means that the CalFresh participation rate among Social Security recipients is even worse than the 10 percent participation rate among all eligible seniors. Social Security recipients are, therefore, an ideal target for improved CalFresh enrollment.

AB 69 employs strategies that have effectively simplified senior enrollment in Pennsylvania, New York, Florida, Washington, and other states. Data sharing, standardized benefits, and simplified applications have boosted SNAP enrollment among senior in other states through different demonstration projects. AB 69 proposes to build on the success of those projects by applying the same enrollment strategies to Social Security recipients in California.

By bringing more federal dollars into the California economy, AB 69 would not only benefit seniors but the state at large. According to the Unites States Department of Agriculture (USDA), every dollar in CalFresh expenditures generates $1.79 in economic activity. AB 69 presents a great opportunity to bring in more than $425 million federal dollars into California during tough economic times, while also ensuring that seniors receive proper nutrition.

AB 69 can help seniors in my community. [Insert your county name] could benefit from AB 69 because [there is a large senior population, seniors have specific difficulties completing the application, seniors have difficulty providing the necessary paperwork to apply, etc.] .

We urge this committee to pass AB 69. California seniors cannot afford to lose out on valuable federal nutrition assistance.

Sincerely,

Your name

Your organization

CC: California Food Policy Advocates- Fax 510-433-1131