

Floor Alert

To: Members, California State Senate
From: Elyse Homel Vitale, California Food Policy Advocates
Date: September 3, 2013
Subject: **Support AB 290 (Alejo) – Foundations for Healthy Nutrition in Child Care**



Opportunity

Research indicates that child care provider training has the greatest impact on the quality of child care programs. Yet, California's child care licensing laws do not require providers to undergo nutrition training. With more than 45,000 licensed child care facilities in California serving over one-million children, child care providers are uniquely positioned to influence the health of our youngest residents

What does AB 290 do?

- ▶ **Educates child care providers about early childhood nutrition.** AB 290 would amend child care licensing laws to increase the required hours of the Preventive Health and Safety Training to include one hour on the importance of childhood nutrition. Children who practice healthy eating habits during the first 5 years of life are more likely to extend those healthy habits into adulthood.
- ▶ **Ensures child care providers have full knowledge of federally-funded nutrition resources.** The federally funded Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) offers reimbursements and other nutrition resources that result in healthier foods being served to preschoolers and greater economic stability for child care programs. Unfortunately, about only half of all licensed child care providers in California participate in CACFP. Commonly reported barriers to enrollment include lack of awareness and misconceptions about CACFP eligibility, enrollment, and reimbursement procedures. AB 290 would require the Preventive Health and Safety Training to include basic information about CACFP and direct interested providers to the state department.

Why Support AB 290?

- ▶ 1 in 4 low-income preschool-aged children are overweight or obese.
- ▶ Healthy eating habits are developed in the first 5 years of life.
- ▶ Child care providers are uniquely positioned to influence the health of our youngest residents.
- ▶ Provider education is a fundamental strategy to improve the nutritional quality of foods served in child care.
- ▶ Eating healthy foods in child care prepares preschoolers to embrace the healthy foods being served in elementary school and beyond.
- ▶ Child care providers deserve to know about the benefits of CACFP.
- ▶ AB 290 is a bi-partisan supported effort to improve the nutrition environments in California's licensed child care.

Healthy eating in child care starts with training providers on the foundations of healthy nutrition.

For more information on AB 290 contact:

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