



# Fund Preschool and Child Care Meals

May 13, 2019

The Honorable Anthony Rendon  
Assembly Speaker  
California State Assembly, State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Holly Mitchell  
Chair, Senate Budget Committee  
California State Assembly, State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Toni Atkins  
Senate President Pro Tem  
California State Senate, State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Phil Ting  
Chair, Assembly Budget Committee  
California State Senate, State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

## Re: Support for Investment in Early Care Nutrition

Dear Mr. Speaker, President Pro Tem Atkins, Chair Ting and Chair Mitchell:

For decades, California has supported access to nutrition for K-12th grade public school students by supplementing the federal reimbursement for school meals, but our youngest learners have continued to be ignored. As California works toward universal preschool and expanded access to child care, we must ensure the state's early care and education programs meet low-income children's basic needs, including access to healthy meals.

We therefore respectfully submit this request for \$16.6 million (\$14.6 million General Fund) in the 2019-20 State Budget in order to guarantee access to healthy meals for low-income children. These funds would supplement the federal reimbursement for serving meals to eligible, low-income children in preschool and child care at the same rate that school districts currently are reimbursed by the state for serving school meals.

We commend the Governor's priorities and goals to significantly increase access to preschool, and respectfully request the Committees and the Administration extend support to increase access to meals for children participating in California's early care and education programs. Providing food in child care is not optional for providers and families – state investments must support preschool and childcare providers in meeting that need. We know that children who start life with nutritious diets fare better, both physically and academically, and are more likely to thrive in school and later in life. But nearly one quarter of California's families can't afford to meet their basic needs. California's early care and education programs have a unique opportunity to support low-income families by guaranteeing that young children have access to nutritious meals during a critical stage of their development.

We look forward to working with the Budget Committees and the Administration to make healthy meals more justly and equitably accessible for our state's youngest learners.

Sincerely,

Alameda County Community Food Bank,  
All Five,  
Alma Family Services,  
American Heart Association,  
Angels Child Care Food Program,  
California Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics,  
California Association of Food Banks,  
California Alternative Payment Program Association,  
California Family Child Care Network,  
California Food Policy Advocates,  
California Resource and Referral Network,  
Child Care Food Program Roundtable,  
Child Development Associates,  
Children's Council San Francisco,  
Choices for Children,  
CocoKids,  
Community Action Marin,  
Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo County Inc.,  
Community Child Care Council of Sonoma County,  
Corona-Norco Family YMCA,  
Evergreen Inc.,  
Family Resource and Referral Center San Joaquin,  
Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano,  
FRAMAX,  
Healthy and Active Before 5,  
Kidango,

KinderCare Education,  
Korean American Family Services,  
LA CAN,  
Long Beach Alliance for Food and Fitness,  
Mission Neighborhood Centers, Inc.,  
MomsRising,  
Nihonmachi,  
Options For Learning,  
Second Harvest Food bank of Santa Clara and  
San Mateo Counties,  
Slow Food California,  
Solano Family and Children's Services,  
Venutra Child Care Food Program