To: Members, California State Senate

From: Your Name/Organization

Date: August XX, 2018

**Re: Support AB 1871 (Bonta): Equitable Access to Meals in Charter Schools**

**Opportunity**

All children deserve equitable access to the basic resources necessary for health, learning, and achievement. Free and reduced-price school meals are one such resource. California's charter schools are public schools that enroll more than 340,000 low-income students who are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals. These students are especially vulnerable to the harmful effects of poverty and hunger. And these students – unlike all other low-income students in California public schools – are not guaranteed access to any school meals.

**What Will AB 1871 Do?**

AB 1871 ensures that all low-income students in charter schools have access to at least one free or reduced-price school meal each school day.

**Why Support AB 1871?**

* **Meeting Basic Needs.**School meals are a critical resource for all students in need, no matter which public school they attend. Currently, more than 80,000 low-income students are enrolled in California charter schools that do not offer free and reduced-price meals, or in many cases, any meals at all.
* **Advancing Equity.**Charter schools are intended to expand choice in public education and, by law, should be open to all students, including students who need free and reduced-price school meals. To give all students a fair shot at success, we must ensure that no child goes hungry in a California public school.
* **Available Funding**.Significant federal funding is available to support school meal programs. State costs for AB 1871 are minimal (estimated in the low tens of thousands).
* **Coalition of Support.**AB 1871 is co-sponsored by California Food Policy Advocates, the California State PTA, the California Teachers Association, and the Western Center on Law & Poverty. More than 55 organizations support this legislation, including anti-hunger champions, public education stakeholders, children's welfare advocates, and the California Charter Schools Association.