



April 26, 2019

Assemblymember Autumn Burke
Chair, Assembly Revenue and Taxation Committee
California State Capitol Office 5150

RE: Support for AB 1593 EITC Immigrant Equity Act

Dear Chair Burke,

California Food Policy Advocates (CFPA) is proud to support AB 1593 (Reyes). This bill extends eligibility for the existing California Earned Income Tax Credit (CalEITC) to some of the most vulnerable working Californians, including all working Californians who file taxes and are income eligible.

California Food Policy Advocates (CFPA) is a statewide policy and advocacy organization dedicated to improving the health and well-being of low-income Californians by increasing their access to nutritious, affordable food. For over twenty-five years, we have advocated for improved access and participation in the federal nutrition programs, including CalFresh, the state's largest and most effective food assistance program.

The federal government's Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is a long-running refundable tax credit targeted at low- to middle-income working households. Researchers cite the federal EITC as among the most effective tools for reducing poverty across the nation. Although widely thought of as a success, the federal EITC does not reach all low-income workers.

In response to a continued need to support the working poor, the Legislature in 2015 enacted CalEITC which provides a tax credit to working adult households with incomes up to \$24,950 per year and allowing eligible families with children to receive a credit of up to \$2,879. The CalEITC helps mitigate California's high cost of living for people who live in poverty.

While the enactment of CalEITC was critical, there are categories of people who continue to be left behind in some of the poorest communities in California. An example of this are members of immigrant communities who are excluded from federal EITC as well as CalEITC if they use an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) to file their taxes. This number, assigned to an individual regardless of their immigration status, ensures that all members of communities across the state pay taxes. Individuals with an ITIN but no social

security number are tax payers who despite being contributing members of their local economies, cannot access a critical tool to help them make their way out of poverty.

The rules regarding ITIN recipients participating in state level EITCs however are nonbinding and California has an opportunity to improve the state's design for a more equitable and inclusive policy. Between 230,000-460,000 households would stand to benefit from inclusion in this successful program including up to 1.1 million workers and children.

For these reasons, CFPA is pleased to support AB 1593. If you have any questions regarding our support please contact us at jared@cfpa.net.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jared Call".

Jared Call, Managing Policy Advocate
California Food Policy Advocates