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March 12, 2014

The Honorable Kevin De León  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 94249

**Re: Support for SB 1002**

Dear Senator de León,

California Food Policy Advocates (CFPA) is pleased to co-sponsor SB 1002 legislation that will strengthen alignment between Medi-Cal and CalFresh; streamlining benefit retention and ensuring access to federally funded nutrition and health benefits for low-income Californians.

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. To this end, CFPA seeks to increase access to and participation in the federal nutrition programs, including CalFresh.

Reduced hunger and improved access to nutritious foods are fundamental goals of CalFresh. These objectives are strongly linked to supporting the overall health and well-being of the children and adults who receive CalFresh. In an effort to further the connection between nutrition and health and ensure that Californians receive the nutrition benefits to which they are entitled, the link between CalFresh and Medi-Cal should be strengthened.

Furthermore, strategies that promote benefit retention are critical in ensuring continued access and participation among CalFresh eligible individual and families. SB 1002 provides an opportunity to not only improve alignment between Medi-Cal and CalFresh reporting periods, but also boost benefit retention.

Due to overlapping eligibility rules, many low-income Californians receive both Medi-Cal and CalFresh benefits. In order to maintain benefits, individuals and families must meet ongoing reporting requirements for both programs, including the submission of paperwork with necessary information for the annual renewal of benefits. If a household's reporting periods are aligned this will result in a common due date for renewal paperwork; reducing administrative burden for program administrators and

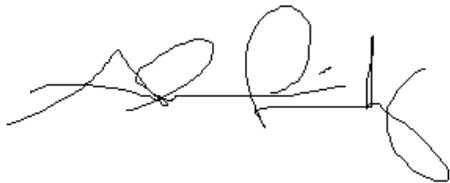
facilitating joint reporting and renewal for recipients. Additionally, individuals and families are less likely to confuse reporting requirements if the paperwork for both programs is due concurrently.

SB 1002 would clarify that a county may, under certain circumstances, align a household's Medi-Cal redetermination date with the household's CalFresh recertification date. Specifically, if a household receiving Medi-Cal submits a CalFresh application or recertification form and the information contained in that application/form does not result in a change in Medi-Cal eligibility, the county shall begin a new Medi-Cal eligibility period that aligns with the CalFresh period.

Doing so would encourage benefit retention and promote Medi-Cal and CalFresh dual enrollment. SB 1002 continues building on the progress California has already made in improving alignment between Medi-Cal and CalFresh and increases access to both health and nutrition benefits for low-income Californians.

For these reasons we thank you for introducing SB 1002 and look forward to working together on this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alexis Fernández', written over a horizontal line.

Alexis Fernández  
Director of Legislation  
California Food Policy Advocates