

March 13, 2017

Assemblymember Blanca Rubio, Chair
Human Services Committee, California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 5175
Sacramento, CA 95814



Re: Assembly Bill 607 (Gloria) – SUPPORT

Dear Chairperson Rubio,

California Food Policy Advocates (CFPA) is writing in support of AB 607 (Gloria), which will mitigate increased hunger and hardship of low-income families, people with disabilities and elderly Californians during a disaster. With so many Californians already experiencing economic insecurity and hunger, community resiliency in the event of a disaster is already compromised. Ensuring a strong disaster response from government-administered programs is especially important for low-income people and the communities they live in.

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. Disasters and emergencies that disrupt the livelihoods of low-income families can have long-lasting damage. It is critical that the state and California counties make preparations for an effective emergency response- well in advance of a disaster event.

AB 607 will improve resiliency of low-income people and their communities following a disaster by codifying Disaster-CalFresh (D-CalFresh) in state law. It will maximize CalFresh replacement benefit options, which allow Californians whose food was spoiled during an emergency to replace what was purchased with CalFresh funds. AB 607 also requires additional budget resources to be triggered in the case of a disaster declared by the Governor to improve success of a federal request for disaster anti-hunger assistance. It will improve State & County D-CalFresh outreach and operations based on learnings from prior disaster experiences, by requiring portable EBT issuance machines to be made available and for the computer systems to be programmed to accommodate remote application and issuance.

AB 607 will also clarify the rights of disaster victims who rely on CalWORKs by establishing that disaster victims would qualify for good cause in the CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work program; waiving the county residency requirement to apply for or receive CalWORKs when the person has been temporarily relocated as a condition of a disaster; and requiring that County Human Services Agencies participate with Disaster Response teams to make sure that CalWORKs recipient households are aware of housing assistance through the program.

For these reasons, CFPA supports AB 607 and urges your 'aye' vote.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tracey Patterson", is written over a white background.

Tracey Patterson
Director of Legislation

cc: The Honorable Todd Gloria, California State Assembly (Author)
Members of the Assembly Human Services Committee
California Association of Food Banks, Western Center on Law & Poverty, San Diego Food Bank (Sponsors)