

Floor Alert

To: Members, California State Assembly

Date: August 18, 2014

Subject: **Support SB 1002 (De León) – Aligning Opportunities for Health**



Opportunity

According to the California Department of Social Services, in the fourth quarter of 2012, 65.9% of Medi-Cal participants received CalFresh and 77% of CalFresh participants received Medi-Cal. The overlap in participation confirms that, due to similar eligibility rules, many Californians receive both CalFresh and Medi-Cal.

Currently, CalFresh and Medi-Cal are integrated at the county level via the State Automated Welfare System (SAWS). This enables eligible individuals and families to enroll in both programs simultaneously. Recent efforts to promote horizontal integration between public benefit programs, such as CalFresh and Medi-Cal, have encouraged and supported dual enrollment at the initial point of application. This bill would build on these efforts to improve Medi-Cal and CalFresh program efficiency.

California has taken strides to improve dual enrollment and improve alignment between CalFresh and Medi-Cal. SB 1002 seeks to extend that work by reducing paperwork burdens on clients, enhancing worker efficiency, and improving the likelihood of successful dual enrollment between Medi-Cal and CalFresh.

What does SB 1002 do?

- ▶ **SB 1002 would strengthen alignment between Medi-Cal and CalFresh.**
In an effort to further the connection between nutrition and health and ensure that Californians receive the federal benefits to which they are entitled, SB 1002 strengthens the connection between CalFresh and Medi-Cal by facilitating joint reporting.
- ▶ **SB 1002 provides that a county may renew a person's Medi-Cal coverage if they are enrolled in CalFresh. Additionally, SB 1002 requires that the Department of Social Services seek federal approval to use Medi-Cal enrollment to grant eligibility for CalFresh.** This will improve program efficiencies for both administrators and the low-income families they serve.

Why Support SB 1002?

- ▶ **SB 1002 streamlines benefit delivery and promotes benefit retention.**
By increasing the likelihood that families with both Medi-Cal and CalFresh renew their eligibility for both programs at the same time, SB 1002 promotes benefit retention. Additionally, SB 1002 reduces opportunities for families to inadvertently lose eligibility and return to the program shortly thereafter, also known as churn.
- ▶ **SB 1002 builds on efforts to improve dual enrollment and alignment between Medi-Cal & CalFresh.** California has already taken steps to improve alignment between Medi-Cal and CalFresh, for example, by furthering horizontal integration and through passage of AB 191. SB 1002 will extend that work by improving coordination between nutrition and health benefits.
- ▶ **SB 1002 has received bipartisan support and has no opposition.**

SB 1002 is co-sponsored by California Food Policy Advocates and Western Center on Law and Poverty.

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