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March 17, 2014

Assemblymember Susan Talamantes Eggman
Chair, Assembly Agriculture Committee
State Capitol, Room 2003
Sacramento, CA 94249-0013

Re: AB 2602 (Eggman)-Support

Dear Assemblymember Eggman:

California Food Policy Advocates (CFPA) is writing in support of AB 2602 which would assist schools in securing additional resources to improve the nutritional value of school meals through the establishment of Farm to School Programs.

CFPA is a statewide nonprofit policy and advocacy organization whose mission is to improve the health and well-being of low-income Californians by increasing their access to nutritious, affordable food. As an organization working to increase the appeal of school meals and participation in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), CFPA supports the bill's effort to provide schools with much needed resources to prepare a greater proportion and variety of healthy food to the students. Additionally, the resources provided through AB 2602 would allow schools the opportunity to update their kitchen supplies to meet new federal guidelines and provide technical assistance on the implementation of new menu options.

According to a survey conducted by the Kid's Safe and Healthful Food Projects, 1 in 3 school districts reported a lack of adequate kitchen supplies to prepare a greater variety of fruits and vegetables. Additional resources for this purpose will support innovation in the cafeteria.

CFPA is also encouraged by the opportunity to support the introduction of new menu options in schools across California. Based on our previous experience, new menu options are effective in encouraging improved participation in school meals. This is particularly true when students are involved in the selection through taste tests and surveys; ensuring that the new items reflect the taste preferences of our customers.

For these reasons, CFPA supports AB 2602 and thanks you for introducing this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeannie Wakamatsu".

Jeannie Wakamatsu, MPH, RD
Nutrition Policy Advocate