



• SAN FRANCISCO •
WOMEN'S POLITICAL COMMITTEE

SFWPC Support for SB-600
related to CalFresh Minimum Benefit Adequacy

July 7, 2023

The Honorable Assembly Member Corey Jackson
Chair, Committee on Human Services
1020 N Street, Room 124
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB-600 (Menjivar) - California CalFresh Minimum Benefit Adequacy Act of 2023

Dear Assembly Member Corey Jackson,

On behalf of the San Francisco Women's Political Committee (SFWPC), we are writing in strong support of SB-600, which will require the State Department of Social Services to establish a Minimum Nutrition Benefit (MNB) for households to ensure that they receive a minimum of \$50/month in CalFresh benefits.

As an organization who champions policies that advance racial justice, wellness, and equity, we recognize how critical it is for families and individuals across California to afford their basic needs, like food. Food insecurity is a widespread issue in California, with approximately 2.6 million impacted individuals, which includes 1 in 7 children¹. Women are particularly at risk of food insecurity with 24.3% of households headed by single mothers being affected versus 16.2% of male-headed households and 7.4% of married couples². It is important to provide additional support for women and their families, in order to curb hunger in California.

This bill is critical as COVID-19 related programs by the US Department of Agriculture have ended. Indeed, most beneficiaries have lost on average \$160/month in food

¹ Hunger in California. Feeding America. (n.d.). <https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/california>

² Household food security in the United States in 2021 - USDA ERS. (n.d.).

<https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/104656/err-309.pdf?v=3584.2>



• SAN FRANCISCO •
WOMEN'S POLITICAL COMMITTEE

stamps; this is especially difficult at a time when inflation is rampant. Food prices have risen 6.4% since last year³ and groceries represent an expense of approximately \$773/month for a family of 4⁴. In these economic conditions, it is increasingly harder for families to make ends meet. Food banks all over the state have been experiencing a rise in demand: the SF-Marin Food Bank has seen an increase in individuals they serve by 75% since 2020⁵.

Thanks to SB-600, California has the opportunity to guarantee a minimum threshold for nutrition benefits to ensure that no CalFresh recipient will receive less than \$50/month. Currently, the minimum allotment under CalFresh is \$23/month, and it is estimated that the complement provided by the State Department of Social Services (MNB) will support almost one million people out of the 4.8 million beneficiaries⁶. This additional allotment can make a great impact in the context of high inflation and growing food insecurity across California.

We urge you to support SB-600. By doing so, we can show our commitment to Californians during these difficult times and fight hunger in our state.

Sincerely,

SFWPC Board of Directors

³ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2023, June 13). Consumer price index, West Region - May 2023.

https://www.bls.gov/regions/west/news-release/consumerpriceindex_west.htm

⁴ Making ends meet: How much does it cost to support a family in California?. California Budget and Policy Center. (2022, January 22).

<https://calbudgetcenter.org/resources/making-ends-meet-much-cost-support-family-california/>

⁵ Jetha, R. (2023, June 9). A catastrophic hunger crisis? California food banks are being flooded by families seeking help. CalMatters. <https://calmatters.org/california-divide/2023/06/california-food-banks/>

⁶ Person, Danielson, C., & Thorman, T. (2023, April 11). The role of calfresh in stabilizing family incomes. Public Policy Institute of California.

<https://www.ppic.org/publication/the-role-of-calfresh-in-stabilizing-family-incomes/>