



June 16, 2023

The Honorable Marie Alvarado-Gil
Chair, Senate Human Services Committee
1020 N Street, Room 521
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Chairwoman Alvarado-Gil,

On behalf of the San Diego Hunger Coalition, I am writing in **SUPPORT of Assembly Bill 712 (W. Carrillo)**. AB 712, to the extent of federal law, would allow CalFresh recipients to purchase ready-to-eat hot and prepared foods at grocery stores.

Over 5 million, or 1 in 8, Californians currently receive CalFresh. Many recipients, such as older adults, people with disabilities, or unhoused, who rely on CalFresh face the most significant barriers. These barriers include the lack of kitchen facilities or means of preparing and cooking meals with groceries, special dietary needs, and specific foods required for medications, among other factors that strain the ability of traditional groceries to meet their needs.

Currently, CalFresh recipients can only purchase hot and prepared foods when California is approved for a federal waiver during disasters. Yet recipients have discussed how time and cost-effective buying hot and prepared meals has been and have raised this as a key equity issue. All CalFresh recipients deserve the same grocery shopping experience as everyone else; the dignity to choose what food is best for their family year-round without restrictions. AB 712 will allow households better access to the food they need and benefit from modern-day grocery shopping.

It is for these reasons San Diego Hunger Coalition is pleased to SUPPORT AB 712.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Anahid Brakke".

Anahid Brakke
President & CEO

