



April 26, 2023

The Honorable Anthony Portantino
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
1021 O Street, Ste. 7630
Sacramento CA 95814

Dear Chair Portantino,

On behalf of the San Diego Hunger Coalition, I am writing in **SUPPORT of Senate Bill 600 (Menjivar) – CalFresh Minimum Benefit Adequacy Act of 2023**. At a time when CalFresh recipients are facing the dual burden of elevated food costs and a looming hunger cliff, it is critical that the state does everything it can to boost CalFresh benefits, particularly for those who receive meager and wholly inadequate allotments below \$50 per month.

More than five million Californians will experience a devastating cut to their CalFresh benefits as federally funded Emergency Allotments end in March 2023. The average CalFresh household will lose \$200 per month. Many households, such as older adults living alone, will see their benefits slashed from \$281 to the federally-set minimum allotment of \$23 per month. California can — and should — join several other states that have already taken this action to help mitigate poverty and food insecurity.

Not only is this critical to mitigate the looming hunger cliff, but it will bring significant economic return throughout our vital food economy. Every \$1 in CalFresh benefits generates as much as \$1.80 in GDP during an economic downturn, creating jobs for our farmers, transportation, grocery, and other sectors. Additionally, an investment in CalFresh is linked to healthcare cost savings since more adequate benefits improve food security, nutrition, and health. Investing in SB 600 creates an economic boost while putting money in people's pockets so that they can feed themselves and their families.

It is for these reason San Diego Hunger Coalition is pleased to SUPPORT SB 600.

Sincerely,

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

Anahid Brakke
President & CEO

