

# CHAD MAYES

MEMBER FOR THE 42ND ASSEMBLY DISTRICT



## **AB 1952 (Mayes/Arambula/Steinorth) Fact Sheet Envision a Hunger Free California Act of 2018**

### **PURPOSE OF THE BILL**

AB 1952 establishes a workgroup responsible for drafting broad-based plan for a hunger free California. Specifically, it creates a process to bring together food system stakeholders to engage and collaborate at the local, regional and state levels to remove barriers to adequate, nutritious food choices and ensure that a vibrant and sustainable food system is available across all communities statewide.

Food insecurity is primarily a symptom of poverty. Research tells us that even one experience of hunger as a child can impact the health and mental well-being of a person into their adult years. Hunger, food insecurity and lack of nourishing food choices contribute to our state's high childhood obesity rate and increases the likelihood of diabetes and prediabetes, affecting nearly 15 million Californians and costing an estimated \$37.1 billion. Access to adequate nutritious food benefits the health and welfare of all Californians at every income level.

### **SUMMARY**

AB 1952 directs the State Department of Social Services (CDSS), the State Department of Public Health (CDPH), the State Department of Education (CDE), and the State Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), with the consultation of a robust stakeholder group, to jointly develop a plan to for a hunger-free California and distribute this plan to the Legislature by January 1, 2020. At a minimum, this plan would:

- Identify food deserts and provide maps of these areas to be available online;
- Identify barriers for retailers to locate in food deserts or other locations;
- Identify infrastructure needs, conduct an inventory of state-owned property suitable for food hub locations, including state fairgrounds;
- Subject to a budgetary appropriation, provide grants to enhance rural economies through rural-urban connections strategies;
- Encourage the use of electronic benefit transfer (EBT) at farmers markets, retailers in a food desert, or retailers that could ship to a food desert, for the purchase of fruits and vegetables.
- Contemplate a comprehensive statewide child hunger amelioration plan, including a universal school feeding program and a summer lunch EBT program serving children in food deserts. The plan must measure outcomes such as increased time spent in school through enrollment, attendance, and reduced drop-out rates, as well as an increase in cognition and improved learning and better health outcomes and fewer days of school missed due to illness;
- Report to the Assembly Select Committee on Campus Climate progress made by UC, CSU and Community Colleges to develop systems that allow EBT cards to be used on campus.

### **BACKGROUND**

California can reduce food insecurity among our vulnerable populations. California produces about 25% of the world's food but does little to address the limited statewide access to quality food right here in California, which effects those near the poverty line, cash poor college graduates, working families, single parents, and

communities of color. We can deliver nutritious food options for children and poor families, make healthcare cheaper, and increase the earning potential for millions of Californians to lift them out of poverty.

California's diverse geography and demographics unfortunately promote the prevalence of food deserts that limit food access for hundreds of thousands of California residents, and the high health risks associated with them. High-cost and congested areas of the state also experience limited access to quality food and can provide little incentives for food businesses to relocate to these "food poor" areas. Affluent areas also suffer from poor access to quality food due to traffic congestion, high urban densities, and greater use of online services that shift commerce away from traditional brick and mortar grocery stores.

AB 1952 will provide the forum for officials whose administrative policy making impacts various parts of the food system to hear from stakeholders within the system, reimagine the way things work, and to launch an action plan that will improve the distribution of fresh produce and help low-income consumer's access food, so that one day, we will be a hunger-free California.

## **SUPPORT**

### *Sponsors*

Western Center on Law and Poverty

Coalition of California Welfare Rights Organizations

## **OPPOSITION**

*None on File*