AB 826 (Santiago)
Emergency Food Assistance for Undocumented Immigrants

Bill Summary
AB 826 establishes a one-time fund to provide emergency food assistance for undocumented immigrants negatively impacted by COVID-19.

Existing Law
Establishes a Statewide Director of Immigrant Integration to serve as the statewide liaison for the planning and coordination of immigrant services and policies (Government Code Section 65050).

Establishes the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), known in California as CalFresh, to provide low-income Americans with assistance to purchase nutritional foods (7 U.S. Code Section 2011).

Background
The novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has impacted all communities in California but has disproportionately affected certain groups, particularly our community of over two million undocumented immigrants that live and work in California.

While our state has taken proactive measures to mitigate the consequences of COVID-19, including a one-time allocation of $500 per undocumented immigrant for the first 150,000 applicants, California still lacks sufficient protections for our undocumented immigrants, many of whom have faced job loss or illness and are ineligible for most state or federal social service benefits.

California’s two million undocumented immigrants are an integral part of our society who pay taxes and are risking their lives to continue performing essential services.

However, there are no protections in place to support them should they or someone in their family contract COVID-19 or lose their job.

Currently, certain citizens are eligible for CalFresh, a federally funded program which provides monthly food benefits to low-income individuals and families. It is imperative that California extend similar food assistance to undocumented immigrants, many of whom face severe food insecurity due to the pandemic.

Need for AB 826
California must do more for our undocumented neighbors that have faced job loss, illness, and continue to support our state during the COVID-19 crisis.

In order to provide undocumented immigrants and their families with enough support to withstand this crisis, AB 826 would establish an emergency food assistance fund for this population. Specifically, this bill would establish a one-time fund to provide six months of emergency food assistance for undocumented immigrants impacted by COVID-19. Each eligible person would receive $300 per month and up to $600 per household to use only for approved food items.

As the state with the country’s largest immigrant and refugee population, it is imperative that California provide these communities with necessary resources and protections during this crisis.
Support
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights
(Sponsor)
ACCESS Women’s Health Justice
ACT for Women and Girls
API Equality-LA
API Forward Movement
Asian Americans Advancing Justice, California
Asian Resources, Inc.
Black Women for Wellness
California Association of Food Banks
California Black Women’s Health Project
California Domestic Workers Coalition
California Immigrant Policy Center
California Latinas for Reproductive Justice
California Pan-Ethnic Health Network
California Rural Legal Aid Foundation
Central American Resource Center
Central Valley Immigrant Integration Collaborative
Centro Binacional para el Desarrollo Indigena Oaxaqueno
Community Health Councils
Fathers and Families of San Joaquin
Korean Community Center of the East Bay
Korean Resource Center
Koreatown Youth and Community Center
Latino Coalition for a Healthy California
Little Tokyo Service Center
Madera Coalition for Community Justice
Mexican American Opportunity Foundation
Mid-City Community Advocacy Network
Mi Familia Vota
Mixteco/Indigena Community Organizing Project
National Association of Social Workers, California
PALS for Health
Roots Community Health Center Services, Immigrant Rights, and Education Network
South Asian Network
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center
St. James Infirmary
Street Level Health Project

The Cambodian Family
The Fresno Center
The Los Angeles Trust for Children’s Health Village-Connect
Vista Community Clinic
Western Center on Law & Poverty
YMCA of Metropolitan Los Angeles

Opposition
None on file.

For More Information
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