The 2019-20 Budget Must End Poverty for 1.3 Million Living on SSI/SSP

Since 2009, state budget cuts have forced poverty & hardships on to the 1.3 million Californians who rely on Supplemental Security Income/State Supplemental Payment (SSI/SSP) for basic needs. The 2018-19 budget promises significant improvements to SSI/SSP recipients, but the work is far from done.

Ending poverty in SSI/SSP will prevent homelessness & hunger

We ask the Legislature to prioritize these 3 policies in the 2019-20 budget:

I. Raise SSP grants to 100% of the Federal Poverty Level

The maximum grant as of January 1st 2019 is $931.76 per month, worth 92 percent of the FPL, now at $1,011.67. The January 2009 SSI/SSP grant of $907 per month for individuals was worth 100.5 percent of the FPL.

Grant cuts have pushed recipients into homelessness, and are a significant reason why we have the highest Supplemental Poverty Measure of any state. Women, disproportionately women of color, are the majority of SSI recipients.

II. Immediately Restore the Cost Of Living Adjustment

For decades California periodically provided an SSI/SSP COLA until it was repealed in 2009. The 2018-19 budget restores the state COLA as of 2022.

Seniors and people with disabilities cannot wait and watch their benefits erased by the extraordinary cost of living in California – we must restore the COLA now.

III. Permanently Protect Households Harmed by Ending SSI Cash-Out

The 2018-19 budget ended the 45-year exclusion from CalFresh for SSI/SSP recipients, an historic achievement. It also funded the Supplemental & Transitional Nutrition Benefits to mitigate harm for households who will lose some or all CalFresh from this change. But this work is incomplete, and we call on the state to:

- Support the Governor’s proposal to permanently fund the hold harmless benefits. Establish the benefits as state entitlements. For equity, provide prospective eligibility and make the parity with CAPI permanent.
- Maximize CalFresh customer experience opportunities to meet the 75% enrollment target set by CDSS.

Californians for SSI (CA4SSI) is a statewide coalition of over 200 organizations across the aging, disability rights, housing and homeless, anti-hunger and anti-poverty sectors. CA4SSI seeks to ensure that blind, aged and people living with disabilities living on SSI/SSP obtain adequate support to lead their lives with dignity.

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CAASSI Statewide Organizational Endorsers

AARP, ACLU California, AllCare Alliance, The ARC CA, California Association of Food Banks, California Alliance for Retired Americans, California Association of Public Authorities for IHSS, California Church IMPACT, California Council of the Blind, California Emergency Foodlink, California Food Policy Advocates, California Foundation for Independent Living Centers, California IHSS Consumer Alliance, California Partnership, California Senior Legislature, Californians for Disability Rights, CLUE: Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice, Community Services Unlimited Inc., County Welfare Directors Association of CA, Courage Campaign, Disability Rights California, Educate Advocate, Food Chain Workers Alliance, Housing California, IHSS Consumers Union, Insight Center, Jewish Public Affairs Committee of California, Justice in Aging, Lutheran Office of Public Policy – California, Magnolia Women’s Recovery Center, Meals on Wheels California, National Association of Social Workers/CA Chapter, National Center for Lesbian Rights, Produce Good, Resources for Independent Living, SEIU, Service Center for Independent Life, UDWF/AFSCME Local 3930, Western Center on Law and Poverty

Bay Area


Central Valley

Central California Food Bank, Community Action Partnership of Kern County, Disability Resource Agency for Independent Living, FoodLink for Tulare County, Kern County Independent Living Center, Second Harvest Food Bank of San Joaquin & Stanislaus Counties

Los Angeles / Southern California

ACLU of Southern California, Adams Vermont/Gardena CFMS, Center for Health Care Rights, Clergy Caucus of Inland Congregations United for Change, CLUE-LA, Communities Actively Living Independent & Free, Community Action Agency, Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino, Dayle McIntosh Center, Educate. Advocate., Disabled Resources Center, Inc., Downtown Women’s Center, Fair Trade LA, Feeding America Riverside-San Bernardino Counties, FIND Food Bank, Food Bank Coalition of San Luis Obispo County, Foodbank of Santa Barbara County, Food & Water Watch, Friends Across The Line, Friends In Deed, Guerrilla Food Not Bombs, Homeless Action Center, Homeless Health Care Los Angeles, Hunger Action LA, Huntington Hospital Senior Care Network, Jewish Family Service of Los Angeles, Jewish Labor Committee Western Region, John Tennant Memorial-Episcopal Senior Communities, Latino Diabetes Association, Latino and Latina Roundtable of the San Gabriel and Pomona Valley, Legal Aid of San Mateo County, Los Angeles Aging Advocacy Coalition, Los Angeles Community Action Network, Los Angeles for a New Economy, Los Angeles Regional Food Bank, Orange County Food Access Coalition, MLK Coalition of Greater Los Angeles, Orange County Food Bank, Orange County Hunger Coalition, Personal Assistance Services Council of LA County, Project Angel Food, Prototypes, Retirement Housing Foundation, Santa Barbara Food Alliance, Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County, SEIU Local 721, Social Justice Learning Institute, Southern CA Resource Services for Independent Living, Starting Over, Inc., St. Barnabas Senior Services, Thai Community Development Center, The East Los Angeles Community Union, Time for Change Foundation, Urban & Environmental Policy Institute at Occidental College, VELA, Veterans For Peace Los Angeles, Westside Center for Independent Living, Women Organizing Resources, Knowledge & Services, Youth Justice Coalition

Sacramento/Northern California

2-1-1 Humboldt, Area 1 Agency on Aging, California Emergency Foodlink, Capitol People First, Cottage Housing Inc., DOGFITE (Disability Organizing Group for Initiating Total Equality, Food for People, Inc., Ford Street Project, Life Support Alliance, Humboldt Area Center for Harm Reduction, Mary Immaculate Residential Facility, Mendocino Food & Nutrition Program, Placer Food Bank, Placer Independent Resource Services, River City Food Bank, Sacramento Housing Alliance, Resources for Independent Living-Sacramento, Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services, Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee, Sacramento Loaves & Fishes, Sacramento Regional Coalition to End Homelessness, The Resource Connection Food Bank, Yolo County Commission on Aging and Adult Services, Yolo Food Bank, Yolo Healthy Aging Alliance, Yuba-Sutter Gleaners Food Bank, Inc.

San Diego