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The Honorable Holly J. Mitchell
Chair, Budget and Fiscal Review
Committee
California State Senate
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Phil Ting
Chair, Budget Committee
California State Assembly
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Richard Pan
Chair, Budget Subcommittee on Health &
Human Services
California State Senate
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Joaquin Arambula
Chair, Budget Subcommittee on Health &
Human Services
California State Assembly
Sacramento, CA 95814

May 12, 2017

Re: Ongoing \$17.5 Million Support for CalFood in the 2017-18 Budget

Dear Senator Mitchell, Assemblymember Ting, Senator Pan and Assemblymember Arambula,

California Association of Food Banks represents 41 food banks who partner with more than 6,000 local agencies statewide with a mission to end hunger in California. On behalf of a broad coalition of anti-hunger and agricultural stakeholders, we write to you regarding the Governor's May Revise budget and the CalFood proposal under consideration by the budget committees.

CalFood Proposal for Consideration by the Health & Human Services Budget Subcommittees

CAFB's priority is for the Legislature & Administration to include ongoing support of \$17.5 million for CalFood in the 2017-18 Budget Act. This proposal has been provided in writing and presented in each subcommittee hearing earlier this year, and presented to the Governor's office & Department of Finance.

California continues to suffer from a hunger crisis facing 1 in 8 residents, including 1 in 4 children, made worse by the climate of fear limiting the reach of CalFresh. The 2016-17 budget responded to California's [hunger](#) crisis in two forms - [\\$2M for CalFood](#) (formerly SEFAP) & [\\$18.6M for the Drought Food Assistance Program](#) (DFAP). Since implementation:

- CalFood funds became available [August 17, 2016](#). More than 90% is spent and food banks are on pace to spend all funds in the budget year. We request any unspent funds be re-allocated to 2017-18.
- CDSS projects that remaining DFAP funds will support the deliver emergency of food resources through August 2017, covering approximately two months of the 2017-18 budget year.

We gratefully recognize that the May Revision proposes \$2M in one-time funding for CalFood. Our hunger crisis requires a robust, ongoing response by the State, however, so the Revise leaves a prorated gap of \$15.5M over 10 months in DFAP.

Therefore we request \$17.5 million in ongoing General Fund support for CalFood in the 2017-18 Budget to simply maintain the current level of support for emergency food. Funding CalFood at \$17.5 million would deliver some 87.5 million meals while supporting California farmers.

This is a proven, absorbable funding level, and anything less represents a cut at a time when the need is rising. The rains may have returned, but employment lags a year or more as farmers plan in advance of the

weather, and agricultural communities have extraordinary unemployment even in good economic times. Moreover, access to emergency food from trusted partners such as food banks is urgent given the climate of fear affecting CalFresh as families are afraid to enroll in or are leaving CalFresh. **Food banks are the only place where our neighbors in need can access food with no questions asked.**

CalFood is a prudent and far-reaching use of state funds, including:

- Leveraging incredible economies of scale –each \$1 appropriated enables California food banks to provide roughly 5 meals.
- Reaching all 58 counties & enabling each county to purchase foods according to their needs.
- Supporting our agricultural communities as funds must be used on California grown foods.

Finally, funding CalFood at \$17.5 million request would still only provide approximately \$3.25 per food insecure Californian – far less than several of our peer states who have much higher SNAP participation.

Peer State Investments in Emergency Food Assistance				
State	Annual State Emergency Food Funding ¹	Food Insecure Persons ²	Annual GF \$ Per Person	SNAP Participation ³
Massachusetts	\$14.7 million	767,550	\$19.15	84%
New York	\$34.5 million	2,739,920	\$12.59	86%
Ohio	\$19.2 million	1,951,880	\$9.84	87%
Pennsylvania	\$17.8 million	1,808,660	\$9.84	88%
Washington	\$6.3 million	1,017,900	\$6.19	100%
New Jersey	\$6.8 million	1,101,750	\$6.17	75%
Texas	\$2.9 million	4,653,290	\$0.62	73%
California	\$2 million	5,401,770	\$0.37	66%

CAFB and our coalition look forward to working with the Budget Committees and Administration so that more families have the food they need to move out of poverty and live their lives in dignity.

Sincerely,



Andrew Cheyne
Director of Government Affairs

CC: Speaker of the Assembly Anthony Rendon
Department of Finance
Office of Governor Edmund Brown Jr.

Senate President Kevin de León
Department of Social Services

¹ Compiled from each state's EFAP funding data.

² Feeding America, Map the Meal Gap. <http://feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/hunger-studies/map-the-meal-gap.aspx>

³ USDA, Reaching Those in Need. <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/ops/Reaching2014.pdf>



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