

# **AB 826 (Santiago)**

## **Emergency Food Assistance for Undocumented Immigrants**

### **Bill Summary**

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

### **Existing Law**

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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**

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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**

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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**

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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**

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None on file.

## **For More Information**

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