



April 16, 2018

Honorable Blanca Rubio
Chair, Assembly Human Services Committee
State Capitol, Room 5175
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 3033 (Maienschein) CalHEERS: application for CalFresh
AAP-CA Position: Support

Dear Chairperson Rubio:

I am writing on behalf of the American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA) representing over 5,000 California pediatricians to let you know we are in strong support of AB 3033, CalHEERS: application for CalFresh. This bill would make it easier for individuals applying for Medi-Cal through Covered California to also apply for CalFresh benefits at the same time.

While California has improved CalFresh participation, there are still nearly 30 percent of those eligible who have not enrolled. AB 3033 would save low-income Californians time and energy since they would no longer have to complete nearly identical on-line applications for Medi-Cal and CalFresh. By checking a box on their application, applicants for Covered California would be able to have information shared with County Health and Human Services Agencies who could begin the process for determining eligibility for CalFresh.

As a pediatrician, I know that hunger is problem for many of my patients. Nearly half of the nation's fruits and vegetables are produced in California, yet more than twenty percent of children in California live in a food insecure household. I see first-hand the effects that food insecurity has on children. Because cheap food is not necessarily healthy food, food insecure children are more likely to be obese and as teens or adults more likely to develop Type 2 Diabetes. Hunger also leads to anxiety and depression in children, and impairs children's ability to learn and do well in school. I know of schools that schedule standardized testing at the beginning of the month since they know many of their children will be better fed. A hungry child simply can't pay attention well when they don't know where their next meal is coming from.

AB 3033 would simplify the CalFresh application for many people and help countless California children and their families put food on the table and reduce food insecurity. California Pediatricians strongly support AB 3033.

Thank you for your public service and leadership on behalf of the health and well-being of children, youth and families in California.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nancy Graff". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, stylized initial "N" and "G".

Nancy Graff, MD
Fellow, American Academy of Pediatrics
AAP-CA, State Government Affairs Committee