

June 12, 2019

Senator Scott Wiener
State Capitol, Room 5100
Sacramento, CA 95814-4900

RE: SB 285 (Weiner): Public social services as amended on May 17, 2019
AAP-CA Position: Support

Dear Senator Wiener,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California, representing over 5,000 board-certified pediatrician members of California AAP Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4, strongly supports your proposed legislation SB 285 as amended on May 17, 2019 to improve CalFresh program quality, coordination, and participation rates.

Studies show that food insecurity is associated with increased risks of some birth defects, anemia, cognitive problems, anxiety, depression and suicide. Food insecurity is generally associated with higher risks of being hospitalized and poorer overall health and oral health.

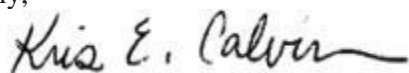
Helping children and their families get proper nutrition becomes a challenge when there are food deserts that affect many of them. CalFresh is an important resource for underserved communities, addressing ongoing food insecurity. Despite being the largest food-assistance program in the state, the CalFresh program lags behind most other states in connecting eligible, low-income households with federally funded food assistance.

SB 285 introduces a number of measures geared towards improving the CalFresh program. These measures include introducing an option to complete the entire application process for CalFresh enrollment or recertification by telephone, regardless of address or lack of a permanent address, among other simplifying improvements to the application process.

SB 285 would help to bridge the CalFresh participation gap in California by setting goals for the program participation rates, incentivizing the creation of a streamlined application, and facilitating coordination with other services.

Pediatricians across the state strongly support SB 285. Thank you for your public service and leadership on behalf of the health and wellbeing of the children, youth, and families of California.

Sincerely,



Kris Calvin, Chief Executive Officer
American Academy of Pediatrics, California

cc: AAP-CA Leadership