Please send a support letter – On your letter head
Sample Support Letter – Assembly Bill 2151 (Chu)

Submit: By email to daphne.hunt@asm.ca.gov or by fax to 916.319.2189
Send by email to: Adriana Diaz adiazbhc@gmail.com

Date – Please consider sending by March 15th

The Honorable Kansen Chu
Chair, Assembly Human Services Committee
1020 N Street, Room 124
Sacramento, California 95814
916.319.2189 fax

Re: Assembly Bill 2151 (Chu) - Support

Dear Chairman Chu:

[Name of Your Organization] supports Assembly Bill 2151 (Chu), which would reduce hunger and increase access to healthy foods for many low-income Californians with special dietary needs by requiring the California Work Opportunities and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) program to increase their special foods allowance from $10 to $20 per month and ensure verification would be accepted by health professionals other than a physician.

Going hungry is a major contributor to ill health, especially among individuals with special food needs resulting from chronic illness like diabetes. Individuals who do not have access to the special foods they require for healthy sustainability have long-lasting consequences when they go without their proper nourishment. According to the British Medical Journal, common chronic conditions that require a special diet are: diabetes, kidney disease, gout, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol. Some of these chronic conditions, including diabetes, are more prevalent in low-income households. These households often face added challenges to managing their care such as inconsistent access to health care, lack of access to affordable healthful foods in their neighborhoods, limited transportation, and limited safe housing options. These additional barriers often lead to difficult patient tradeoffs when costly nutritional needs come into conflict with other priorities, indicating the need for additional support to help manage special dietary health needs. In California, the percentage of adults with diabetes is almost two times higher in families with incomes below 200% of the federal poverty level than in families with incomes at or above 300% of the federal poverty level. Children are especially vulnerable, since one in five children in California lives in poverty, and four in five Californians who receive CalWORKs cash assistance are children.

Over four million Californians have enrolled in Medi-cal since 2012, largely due to Medi-cal expansion. However, many Medi-cal beneficiaries still struggle to gain access to their primary physicians due to

shortage of physicians and lack of transportation. It is important that all health professionals who know patient history and their special dietary needs be allowed to verify these special needs. For example, CalWORKs recipients who have been referred to a nutritionist for help in modifying their diet following a diagnosis of a food allergy or diet-related disease should be able to have that same nutritionist verify their eligibility. AB 2151 will allow CalWORKs non-physician health professionals to validate the patient’s need for a special diet.

Optional: Include 2 sentences about why your organization cares.

With child and adult hunger at record levels, it is essential that we do everything we can to combat it. AB 2151 gives us one more tool to address child hunger and [Name of Your Organization] requests your ‘Aye’ vote.

Sincerely,

Your Name and Title

cc: Adriana Diaz, Women’s Foundation of California, Women’s Policy Institute (co-sponsor)