

Please send a support letter – On your letter head

Sample Support Letter – AB 1992(Chu)

Send Email To: Irene.Frausto@asm.ca.gov or By Fax To: (916) 319-2189

Send Copy To: Kevin.Aslanian@ccwro, jconnallon@childrensdefense.org & jbartholow@wclp.org

Date

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

RE: SUPPORT AB 1992 (Chu) – Immunization Sanctions in CalWORKs

Dear Chair Rubio:

[Name of Your Organization] supports AB 1992 (Chu), which will improve health outcomes for low-income children. Specifically, this bill will postpone financial penalties for families in the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) program who have not verified that their young children are vaccinated. In addition, it will provide crucial support these families need to secure immunizations.

Current California law requires families receiving CalWORKs benefits to provide documentation that under-school-age children have the required immunizations. Families may could opt out of immunizing their child if it has been medically determined that the child cannot be immunized or if the family files an affidavit claiming that their beliefs do not permit them to immunize their child. If they do not provide verification within 45 days, the family's grant is reduced by approximately \$130 per month until verification is submitted to the county.

According to the Urban Institute, twenty-one states join California in penalizing families who receive welfare if their non-school-age child has not been immunized according to set standards. While the rationale for such policies has been that they will improve the health of a child, the research has proven that the penalties do not help families secure recommended immunization for their young children. Immunization penalties for families punish families lacking access to health care services and do not improve immunization rates.

Contrary to the stereotype that children go unimmunized because their parents have made a conscious decision not to immunize, research shows that children living in deep poverty are more likely to go unimmunized than other children solely because their families are so desperately impoverished that they are disconnected from health services. Due to the serious health and public health implications of children not being immunized, the state should impose policies to help family access necessary immunization. AB 1992 supports children and families in deep poverty by extending the time a family has to comply with the CalWORK immunization verification requirement to 6-months and help a low-income family secure immunization for their child. For these reasons, **[Name of Your Organization]** supports AB 1992 and respectfully requests your "Aye" vote.

Sincerely,

Your Name and Title

CC: Assembly Human Services Committee Members
Office of Honorable Kansen Chu, California State Assembly (Author)
Kevin Aslanian, Coalition of California Welfare Rights Advocates (Co-Sponsor)
Jessica Bartholow, Western Center on Law and Poverty (Co-Sponsor)
Janis Lambert Connallon, Children's Defense Fund – California (Co-Sponsor)