

**Please send a support letter – On your letter head**  
**Sample Support Letter – AB 2326 (Rubio)**  
**Send Email To:** [Irene.Frausto@asm.ca.gov](mailto:Irene.Frausto@asm.ca.gov) or **By Fax To:** (916) 319-2189  
**Send Copy To:** [denise.barajas@asm.ca.gov](mailto:denise.barajas@asm.ca.gov); [kevin.aslanian@ccwro.org](mailto:kevin.aslanian@ccwro.org)

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Please Submit by**

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

**RE: SUPPORT AB 2326 (Rubio) – CalWORKs Parents with Newborn Option to Participate in CalWORKs Work Program**

Dear Chairperson Rubio:

**[Name of Your Organization]** supports AB 2326 that would automatically exempt a parent with a child under 24 months of age from being required to participate CalWORKs employment program and be given the option to volunteer to participate in the CalWORKs employment program until the child reaches the age of two years.

In order to be exempt with a child under 2 years of age, a CalWORKs parent has to contact their county worker. Currently, in most large counties, CalWORKs beneficiaries no longer can contact their worker. They have to go through a call center that often takes hours to get through. Thus, often CalWORKs beneficiaries are not able to rely their request for an exemption. Notwithstanding the several billions spent on automation, CalWORKs beneficiaries are not able to request the exemption on-line in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

CalWORKs families in California are living on an average fixed income of 34% of the federal poverty level. California's children endure the highest supplemental poverty level in the nation. Medical science highly recommends that babies be breastfed for 12-24 months and at least 10-12 times a day.

*This is especially vital for California's CalWORKs babies who endure the highest poverty rate in the nation.* While other children can thrive without being breast fed because they live in families that are not living in poverty, CalWORKs babies need to be breastfed to make up for the negative lifelong impact of deep poverty.

Numerous studies from around the world have shown that stomach viruses, lower respiratory illnesses, ear infections, and meningitis occur less often in breastfed babies and are less severe when they do happen. Exclusive breastfeeding (meaning no solid food, formula, or water) for at least six months seems to offer the most protection. One large study by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences showed that children who are breastfed have a 20 percent lower risk of dying between the ages of 28 days and 1 year than children who weren't breastfed, with longer breastfeeding associated with lower risk.

AB 2326 provides that a CalWORKs parent shall be exempt for participation in a WtW activity with a child under the age of 24-months. The individual exempted from the WtW program shall be issued a notice of action (NOA) informing them that they are exempt from participation in the WtW program, but they are entitled to volunteer to participate in any WtW activity of his or her choice. The NOA shall include a WtW plan that the parent can complete and instruction how to submit the plan to the county for voluntary participation in the WtW program. The county shall act on the WtW plan within 30 days otherwise the plan shall be deemed to be acceptable to the county.

Thus, **[Name of Your Organization]** supports this bill and respectfully requests your "Aye" vote.

Sincerely,

**Your Name and Title**

CC: Assembly Human Services Committee Members

Office of Honorable Blanca Rubio, California State Assembly (Author)  
Denise Barajas, Office of Assembly Member Rubio  
Kevin Aslanian, Coalition of California Welfare Rights Organizations (Sponsor)