**\*\*Please email letters to** **victor.francovich@asm.ca.gov****;** **mona.wood@asm.ca.gov****; melanie.morelos@sen.ca.gov;** **samantha.seng@nextgenclimate.org****;** **tracey@cfpa.net** **\*\***

<INSERT LETTERHEAD>

May \_\_ , 2017

The Honorable Anna Caballero, Chair

Assembly Committee on Agriculture

1020 N Street, Room 362
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 782 (Skinner) - SUPPORT**

Dear Chairperson Caballero,

<Organization Name> is pleased to support Senate Bill 782, The California Grown Fresh School Meals Grant Program act. This bill establishes the California Grown Fresh School Meals Grant Program, which is designed to improve the quality of school meals by increasing the number of school meals that are freshly prepared and made from Californian-grown agricultural products.

School meals reach more than 3 million California school children on an average school day. For the millions of low-income California families who qualify for free or reduced-price school meals, the food their children receive in school may be their only chance at a healthy meal on any given day. Multiple studies have shown that healthy school meals improve the academic achievement of students, reduce the risks for childhood obesity and diabetes, increase attendance rates, and have positive behavioral impacts that result in better classroom environments.

Despite efforts to provide nutritious school meals through federal, state and locally implemented farm-to-school programs, more needs to be done to enable school districts to procure and serve fresh and healthy food. Due to limited facilities and fiscal constraints, it is difficult for districts to provide school meals that are freshly prepared or made from ingredients grown in the state.

<Insert short paragraph of organization’s work related with this bill.>

While California leads the nation in agricultural production, we also have the nation’s highest rate of child poverty, with close to 1 in 4 children not knowing where their next meal will come from. Increasing the quality of school meals with freshly prepared, California-grown ingredients would provide health and academic benefits to students AND economic benefits to the state. According to a California State University, Fresno, Center for Agricultural Business study, every one dollar spent in the agriculture sector adds two dollars and fifty-six cents ($2.56) to the state economy. A recent UC Davis study found that every $1 of produce that local school districts purchased directly from Yolo County growers generates $1.82 of economic activity in the Sacramento Region.

SB 782 is an investment in our students and our agriculture industry, by incentivizing school districts to buy fresh, California-grown ingredients and to provide meals that are freshly prepared. For all these reasons, we respectfully urge your support of SB 782.

Sincerely,

<Signature>

<Name>

<Title>

cc: Senator Nancy Skinner