

May 18, 2018

The Honorable Lorena Gonzalez-Fletcher
Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 2114
Sacramento, CA 95814



Re: AB 2066 (Stone/Reyes) Expanding CalEITC to all income-eligible Californians – SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Gonzalez-Fletcher:

California Food Policy Advocates supports AB 2066 (Stone/Reyes), which extends eligibility for the California Earned Income Tax Credit (CalEITC) to low-income working Californians who file taxes yet are currently excluded from the federal and state EITCs.

CFPA is a statewide policy and advocacy organization dedicated to improving the health and well-being of low-income Californians by increasing their access to nutritious, affordable food. AB 2066 would put more money in the pockets of low-income Californians, and thus helps them to put adequate food on their tables. When all Californians, regardless of immigration status, are given the support they need to lead lives out of poverty, we take one step closer towards building a stronger, healthier and more productive California for all.

The CalEITC tackles California's poverty crisis and provides much-needed assistance to working families and individuals who are struggling to make ends meet. Unfortunately, since the CalEITC is available only to those who are already eligible for the federal EITC, it fails to reach all of California's poorest workers and their families.

In order to improve the effectiveness of the CalEITC and help all California working families in poverty, AB 2066 extends eligibility to three categories of workers who file taxes:

- **Low-income working young adults ages 18-24:** Young adults experience poverty at higher rates than any other adult age group. AB 2066 would help low-wage young adults at the beginning of their careers, working students struggling to get by, and former foster youth.
- **Low-income working seniors over 65:** Maximum Social Security benefits do not start till age 70, and many low-income workers do not receive Social Security that is sufficient to keep them out of poverty. AB 2066 would provide support to older workers who are among those most at risk of financial insecurity in retirement.
- **Low-income working immigrant families with federally assigned Individual Taxpayer Identification Numbers (ITINs) and Social Security Numbers (SSN):** Many immigrant working families who pay and file their taxes are excluded from CalEITC because they lack a SSN assigned by the federal government for employment purposes. By removing barriers for working immigrant tax filers, AB 2066 would provide greater financial security to low-income immigrant families and individuals for a more inclusive and equitable CalEITC.

California needs to take bold steps to reduce the poverty rate of all working families and individuals and to build a stronger and more equitable economy. Extending the CalEITC to include young adults, seniors and immigrant families will help achieve those goals. For these reasons, we support AB 2066 and respectfully request your “AYE” vote.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Lee', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kevin Lee
Policy Advocate
California Food Policy Advocates

CC: Assemblymember Mark Stone (Author)
Assemblymember Eloise Gómez Reyes (Joint Author)
Judy Darnell, United Ways of California (Sponsor)
Michele Stillwell Parvensky, Children’s Defense Fund – California (Sponsor)
Gina de Silva, California Immigrant Policy Center (Sponsor)
Josh Fryday, Golden State Opportunity (Sponsor)