



June 4, 2018

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

RE: SB 1446 (Glazer) – SUPPORT

Dear Chairperson Rubio:

California Food Policy Advocates (CFPA) supports SB 1446 which would prohibit County Welfare Agencies from sanctioning CalWORKs recipients who meet federal work participation rates.

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. We support improving access to the CalWORKs program, which provides much needed resources for low-income families to meet their basic needs, including healthy food. CalWORKs also helps more low-income households in California participate in CalFresh, the state's largest and most effective food assistance program.

CalWORKs recipients are required to sign a welfare-to-work plan and provide proof of progress in accomplishing the goals set forth in that plan. However, if a CalWORKs recipient finds employment or is engaged in another federally defined work activity before their plan permits, their benefits are reduced through a sanction.

County welfare agencies do allow sanctioned CalWORKs recipients to demonstrate that they had good cause in failing to comply with their intended plan, but this places an unfair burden on these recipients. Recipients are usually starting new jobs that prevent them from meeting with county welfare agencies during business hours. It is also difficult to ask for time off from an employer if the employee is new to the job.

The sanctioning process for CalWORKs recipients is counterproductive to helping people get back on their feet. It punishes people for working and discourages CalWORKs recipients from finding employment sooner than what their plan permits. A statewide response to this problem is necessary to address the overall problem of sanctioning people meeting federal work participation rates.

In order to reduce costs and the amount of time associated with complying with this provision, the bill allows DSS to implement this act through an all-county letter from the departments director.

For these reasons, CFPA strongly supports SB 1446 and thanks you for your leadership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jared Call".

Jared Call, Managing Nutrition Policy Advocate
California Food Policy Advocates

cc: Assembly Human Services Committee Members and Consultants
Kevin Aslanian, Coalition of California Welfare Rights Organizations (Sponsor)