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March 15, 2017

The Honorable Blanca Rubio
Chair, Assembly Human Services Committee
1020 N. Street, Room 124
Sacramento, California 95814

Re: Support AB 625 (Quirk-Silva) – CalFresh for Foster Youth

Dear Assemblymember Rubio,

On behalf of the California Women's Law Center (CWLC), we are writing in support of AB 625 which would enable youth in foster care to access resources to ensure they have food security.

Many foster youth continue to struggle to meet their basic needs. Over 25% of youth still in foster care are classified as "food insecure." A contributing factor to food insecurity is the way in which Supervised Independent Living Placement ("SILP") payments are classified for purposes of CalFresh. Currently, SILP payments made directly to non-minors in foster care are considered unearned income for eligibility determinations and payment amount. As a result, many youth are deemed ineligible for CalFresh or are receiving grossly inadequate monthly benefits.

CWLC's mission is to advance the potential of women and girls through transformative litigation, policy advocacy, and education. CWLC recognizes the importance of food security as a basic need for youth in foster care. While transitioning into independence and learning to take on more responsibility, foster youth should not have to worry about where their next meal is coming from. AB 625 would address this issue by requiring the state to seek a federal waiver to allow a non-minor dependent residing in a SILP to be eligible for CalFresh without regard to income or resources. Upon approval of the waiver, the non-minor would receive the maximum benefit amount allotted.

For these reasons, the California Women's Law Center supports AB 625.

Sincerely,

Betsy Butler
Executive Director