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Title: Report regarding approval of a resolution authorizing the Mayor to sign a letter of support for Assembly Bill 311 (Santiago) "Food for All" to expand access to the California Food Assistance Program (CFAP). (Tamiko Huey, Management Analyst II)

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Report regarding approval of a resolution authorizing the Mayor to sign a letter of support for Assembly Bill 311 (Santiago) "Food for All" to expand access to the California Food Assistance Program (CFAP). (Tamiko Huey, Management Analyst II)

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council approve a resolution authorizing the Mayor to sign a letter of support for Assembly Bill 311 (Santiago) "Food for All" to expand access to the California Food Assistance Program (CFAP)

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

CalFresh also commonly referred to as SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) or Food Stamps was established by the Food Stamp Reform Act of 1977. This program issues monthly electronic benefits via debit cards to low-income individuals that can be used to buy most foods at participating markets and grocery stores. (Welfare & Institutions Code Section 18900.2)

CalFresh applicants must be U.S. citizens or lawfully present immigrants who have either lived in the country (in a qualified status) for five years, receive disability related assistance or benefits, regardless of entry date, or are children who are qualified and lawfully admitted for permanent residence under the Immigration and Nationality Act. Undocumented Californians are unjustly excluded from CalFresh (SNAP), the California Food Assistance Program CFAP), and other crucial benefit programs.

Currently, 45% of undocumented adults and 64% of undocumented children in California are affected by food insecurity. While CalFresh and CFAP is a vital food resource for low-income Californians, these programs unjustly exclude between 690,000 to 840,000 residents on the basis of their immigration status. Specifically, CFAP excludes undocumented immigrants, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals recipients, Temporary Protected Status holders, and certain visa holders. Although the 2022-23 State Budget expanded access to CFAP for California immigrants ages 55 and older, it excluded California immigrants ages 54 and younger.

These exclusions contribute to the nation's high rate of hunger, which can have serious consequences for

health, financial security, and children’s long-term success. Research shows that access to food assistance like CalFresh improves overall health outcomes for low-income individuals and lowers health care costs over the long term. Unfortunately, California immigrants experience high levels of food insecurity as a result of racial and economic disparities and xenophobic exclusions within our State’s safety net programs.

AB 311 will provide an avenue to truly establish food for all by removing the age limitation and ensure that no Californian goes hungry.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact to the City.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Support of Assembly Bill 311 (Santiago) “Food for All” contributes to the City’s Strategic Plan under Priority #2: Quality of Life.

CONCLUSION

It is recommended that the City Council approve a resolution authorizing the Mayor to sign a letter of support for Assembly Bill 311 (Santiago) “Food for All” to expand access to the California Food Assistance Program (CFAP).