



# 2019 LEGISLATIVE VICTORIES FOR FINANCIAL & FOOD SECURITY

## PART 1

### **AB 494 (BERMAN) CALFRESH: ELIGIBILITY: SHELTER EXPENSE DEDUCTIONS**

**PROBLEM: Unnecessary and unreasonable bureaucracy prevents families from getting food assistance.**

In California, less than three quarters of eligible people participate in the CalFresh food stamp program, which is available for people with incomes under 130% of the poverty line (under 160% if aged or disabled). This is partly due to unnecessarily complex application procedures, unevenly applied by counties. For example, some counties require rent receipts to verify household expenses, which may not exist for people subletting a room.

**SOLUTION: AB 494**

Establishes that the housing costs reported by a CalFresh applicant or recipient are sufficient for determining this cost, unless the welfare office believes the reported costs are questionable.

### **AB 807 (BAUER-KAHAN) CALWORKS ELIGIBILITY: INCOME EXEMPTIONS**

**PROBLEM: Families on CalWORKs assistance get penalized for scholarships, rent assistance, and temporary income.**

For example, when kids in low-income households get scholarships to attend school, it's counted as income for determining a family's CalWORKs eligibility, making many households ineligible.

**SOLUTION: AB 807**

Adds certain scholarships, rent payments received by government entities, and income related to the Census to the list of CalWORKs-exempt income.

### **SB 265 (HERTZBERG) PUPIL MEALS: CHILD HUNGER PREVENTION AND FAIR TREATMENT ACT**

**PROBLEM: Schools shame students when they don't have lunch money.**

Schools often give students "shame sandwiches" (usually cheese and bread) when they don't have money for school meals.

**SOLUTION: SB 265**

Requires schools to ensure that students whose parent or guardian have unpaid school meal fees are not denied a meal of the pupil's choice, and ensures they are not shamed or treated differently than other students.

### **SB 616 (WIECKOWSKI, HERTZBERG, L. RIVAS) ENFORCEMENT OF MONEY JUDGMENTS: EXEMPTIONS**

**PROBLEM: Debt collectors drain bank accounts, then consumers can't pay for basic needs,**

Debt collectors were completely draining bank accounts of low-income consumers when collecting debt.

**SOLUTION: SB 616**

Caps how much can be levied from a bank account at one time to ensure basic needs of the consumer can be met. Does not relieve debt.