



September 23, 2019

Supervisor Candace Andersen  
309 Diablo Road  
Danville, CA 94526

Supervisor John Gioia  
11780 San Pablo Avenue, Suite D  
El Cerrito, CA 94530

Dear Supervisors Andersen and Gioia:

I apologize that a representative from the Multi-faith ACTION Coalition will not be at today's committee meeting. This does not signal any change in our commitment to speaking out for residents who depend on Cal Fresh to improve their ability to feed themselves and their families.

The Multi-faith ACTION Coalition joined the CalFresh Partnership several years ago to try and increase the number of people receiving benefits in our County. The people we seek to help qualify according to county and state statistics but don't receive this needed assistance. These are dollars left on the table and it hurts families with food insecurity. The residents receiving SSI/SSD finally are eligible but yet the numbers in today's report show that only a fraction of those eligible have been enrolled. We urge you to seek assurances that outreach is happening in these communities. Contra Costa County must do everything possible to bring these benefits to its residents.

According to the author of SB 285, California lags behind most other states in connecting eligible, low-income households with federally funded food assistance—our CalFresh program. California ranks third to last in connecting working poor households and last in connecting seniors to CalFresh. Despite recent changes to the enrollment process, California still fails to reach four in five eligible seniors. This is a situation we must address and improve. Shouldn't Contra Costa lead the way?

The Multi-faith ACTION Coalition joins with our partners calling on you to make sure everyone who is eligible for Cal-Fresh receives it and has their applications processed quickly and with all the information included to ensure they receive the maximum benefit that they are entitled to receive. It is our moral obligations to work to help hungry people, so please act to address these concerns.

Sincerely,

Melody Howe Weintraub  
Chair, Steering Committee

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