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March 8, 2024

Assemblymember Steve Bennett, Chair
Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 4 Climate Crisis, Resources, Energy
and Transportation
1021 O St, Room 8230
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Preservation of CNIP Funding in the 2024-2025 State Budget

Dear Chair Bennett,

I respectfully request the preservation of a critical safety net program that has been proposed to be cut in the Administration's budget: the \$35 million allocated in the 2024 budget to ensure continued support of the ongoing [California Nutrition Incentive Program \(CNIP\)](#) in California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Office of Farm to Fork.

This safety net funding will maintain programs like the statewide [Market Match](#) nutrition incentive program that provides millions of fresh fruit and vegetables to low-income Californians. Market Match is a 15-year-old program that matches CalFresh spend dollar-for-dollar for fresh food at the local level, drives health equity, and economic development in rural areas. CNIP funds are matched by federal grant dollars. Since 2017, CNIP funding has brought more than \$30 million in federal match funds into California from the USDA Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP).

The Market Match Program is currently the single largest CNIP program, matching federal nutrition assistance benefits like CalFresh and WIC, at farmers markets and other California farm-direct sites. Market Match is available at 293 sites, spanning 52 counties, 37 Senate districts, 66 Assembly districts. These 293 active Market Match sites are run by 57 community-based organizations and farmers' market operators.

CNIP is expected to draw approximately \$13 million in matching federal dollars to California through GusNIP, to support Market Match and other nutrition incentive programs for a 2-year period that ends in 2025. The program is a win-win-win: increasing the spending power of low-income

Californians, enhancing access to fresh, healthy produce and food, and reinvesting state and federal dollars into California's small and mid-sized farms and rural communities.

Without the committed state funds in the next fiscal year, Market Match will not be able to continue past 2024 since GusNIP's federal grant requires a committed, 100% match of state funding. We need to protect the investment of \$35 million to continue providing millions of low-income Californians with fresh fruits and vegetables.

If you have any questions, please contact my Chief of Staff, Tania Dikho, at 916-319-2019 or Tania.Dikho@asm.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



PHILIP Y. TING
Assemblymember, 19th District



PILAR SCHIAVO
Assemblymember, 40th District



MIGUEL SANTIAGO
Assemblymember, 54th District



LORI D. WILSON
Assemblymember, 11th District



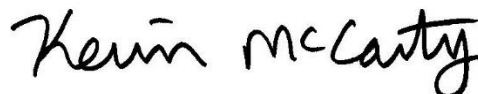
ALEX LEE
Assemblymember, 24th District



MATT HANEY
Assemblymember, 17th District



CECILIA AGUIAR-CURRY
Assemblymember, 4th District



KEVIN MCCARTY
Assemblymember, 6th District

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke.

BLANCA PACHECO
Assemblymember, 64th District