

# AB 214 (Weber)

## College Student Hunger Relief Act of 2017

*Coauthor: Senator Skinner*

### **Summary:**

AB 214 would build upon previous legislation to address the growing crisis of hunger on California's college campuses.

### **Background:**

According to California State University (CSU), 24% of CSU students experience hunger and 12% experience homelessness. In a survey recently conducted by the UC Regents, it was found that nearly one in five University of California students do not have access to adequate food or nutrition. Furthermore, the Wisconsin HOPE Lab, a research organization aimed at improving equity in higher education, reported that half of all community college students are struggling with housing and/or food insecurity.

Assembly Bill 1747, authored by Assemblymember Shirley Weber and signed by Governor Jerry Brown last year, addressed growing hunger among low-income college students in California. The bill provided the state with several new tools to draw down federal resources and aims to improve coordination between anti-hunger efforts on college campuses and anti-hunger efforts in the surrounding communities.

CalFresh is California's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and provides federally funded food benefits for low-income Californians. CalFresh has sometimes proven difficult to access for students. The California Department of Social Services has recently concluded a workgroup established by AB 1930 (Skinner, 2014) which will reduce barriers to students applying for CalFresh. The workgroup sought to ensure that students who actively participate in their education plans and meet all other eligibility requirements for CalFresh

are adequately screened for exemptions from federal work requirements for students applying for or receiving SNAP benefits.

### **Purpose:**

AB 214 will further improve access to federal anti-hunger benefits for California's low-income college students by:

- Clarifying education policies and definitions to simplify the administration of CalFresh for college students.
- Codifying the policies identified in the AB 1930 workgroup.
- Requiring the California Student Aid Commission to inform students of information that could help them verify their eligibility for CalFresh.
- Clarify definitions of on-campus food retailers required to participate in the CalFresh Restaurant Meals Program.

### **Support:**

#### *Sponsors*

Coalition of CA Welfare Rights Organizations  
Student Senate for California Community Colleges  
Western Center on Law and Poverty  
Young Invincibles

### **Opposition:**

None on file.

### **For More Information Contact:**

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