



*Contra Costa's Family Economic Security Partnership (FESP)*

c/o 1485 Civic Court • Concord, CA 94520 • (925) 771 7331

May 4, 2017

Honorable Assembly Member Autumn Burke  
Member of the Assembly  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1520 (Burke, Co-authors Baker, Gloria, Limón, Thurmond). Lifting Children and Families Out of Poverty Act of 2017 - **SUPPORT**

Dear Assembly Member Burke:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Family Economic Security Partnership (FESP), a public, private and nonprofit collaboration of over 40 organizations dedicated to increasing the income and building the assets of low-income families and individuals living in Contra Costa County. Our goal is to create a countywide vision and strategies to better leverage community resources and enhance community collaboration in order to increase the economic security of low-income families and individuals.

As Chair of FESP, I am writing to express FESP's **support for Assembly Bill 1520** which would state the intent of the Legislature to move toward reducing child poverty in California by 50% over a 20 year period by funding programs that have been proven to reduce child poverty – child care, EITC, CaWORKs, job training, home visiting, etc.

For the past ten years, FESP has actively supported numerous programs to help lift families out of poverty, including the Earned Income Tax Credit, CalFresh, financial education programs, early childhood education, job training, and family support. We know what works – we just need to fully fund and support those programs that have demonstrated effectiveness. While direct services are important, directing resources to prevent poverty and lift families and children out of poverty is much more effective, providing economic gains, saving taxpayer costs, improving school readiness and improving overall health and welfare.

Poverty is entirely preventable with adequate and appropriate commitment and investment. We applaud your efforts to make it so.

Sincerely,

Sean Casey,  
Chair, Family Economic Security Partnership

cc: Assembly Members Baker, Gloria, Limón, Thurmond



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May 19, 2017

Governor Jerry Brown  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Strengthening, Expanding, and Promoting the CalEITC - SUPPORT**

Dear Governor Brown:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Family Economic Security Partnership (FESP), a public, private and nonprofit collaboration of over 40 organizations dedicated to increasing the income and building the assets of low-income families and individuals living in Contra Costa County. Our goal is to create a countywide vision and strategies to better leverage community resources and enhance community collaboration in order to increase the economic security of low-income families and individuals.

As Chair of FESP, I am writing to express FESP's **support for the California EITC**, one of the most effective anti-poverty strategies to help low income families gain financial stability. In the first year of its existence, 815,000 low-income Californians benefited from this important state tax credit.

There is evidence to suggest that the CalEITC was underutilized in its first year in part because many families are not required to file state income taxes due to their very low incomes. However, these are exactly the families that could benefit the most! Your proposed 2017-18 budget does not include any funding to maintain or expand outreach efforts to reach non-filers. Only one-quarter of tax filers who claimed the CalEITC in tax year 2016 had also claimed it in tax year 2015, indicating that there is significant "churn" in the population that is eligible for the credit. This makes a strong case for California to maintain, and ideally expand, efforts to promote the credit in order to reach newly eligible workers each year.

We are writing to encourage you to: a) expand the CalEITC to include all households currently eligible for the federal EITC by increasing the income eligibility threshold and include earnings from self-employment; b) include funds in the budget to continue and expand outreach; and c) expand the credit itself so that it truly can benefit those most in need.

Sincerely,

Sean Casey, Chair, Family Economic Security Partnership

cc: Assembly Members Phil Ting and Holly Mitchell