

May 21, 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,

The City of Eureka supports the preservation of a critical safety net program that has been proposed to be cut in the Administration's budget: the \$35 million allocation in the 2024 budget to ensure the continued support of the California Nutrition Incentive Program (CNIP) within the California Department of Food and Agriculture's Office of Farm to Fork.

The CNIP, particularly through programs like the Market Match nutrition incentive program, plays a crucial role in our community. Market Match has been instrumental in providing fresh fruits and vegetables to low-income community members, promoting health equity and supporting economic development in our region. With a 15-year history, Market Match matches CalFresh spending dollar-for-dollar for fresh food at local markets, benefiting families and individuals across our city.

CNIP funds are matched by federal grant dollars, and since 2017, they have brought in over \$30 million in federal match funds 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..

CNIP is projected to draw approximately \$13 million in matching federal dollars to California through GusNIP, supporting Market Match and other vital nutrition incentive programs until 2025. However, without the committed state funds in the next fiscal year, Market Match faces the risk of discontinuation, as GusNIP's federal grant requires a committed, 100% match of state funding.

The benefits of the CNIP are undeniable: it increases the spending power of low-income residents, improves access to fresh, healthy produce, and reinvests state and federal dollars into our local farms and rural communities. We urge you to consider the significant impact that the CNIP has on the health and well-being of our community and to prioritize its funding in the upcoming budget deliberations.

Sincerely,

Kim Bergel
Mayor

