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March 17, 2015

The Honorable Rob Bonta, Chair  
Assembly Health Committee  
100 Capitol Mall, State Capitol Building, Room 6005  
Sacramento, CA 95814

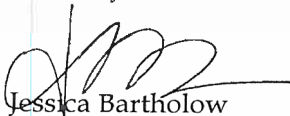
Dear Chairman Bonta:

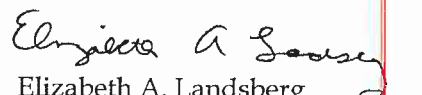
The Western Center on Law and Poverty represents California's poorest residents in policy and budget discussions affecting housing, health and public benefits. We are writing in support of AB 294, authored by Assembly Member Lackey, which would require health and human services state plans and waivers submitted to the federal government be posted on the front page of the applicable department's website.

The State of California operates numerous health and human services programs that require the state to submit a "State Plan" to operate these programs. The state also receives numerous waivers from the federal government. These plans and waivers are available via Public Records Request Act, but not readily accessible to the public in that not all departments post approved state plans and waivers on their website. DHCS is mandated by California statute to post all State Plan Amendments (SPA) within 10 business days from the date the SPA was submitted to and approved or denied by the federal government. Similarly, other departments should follow suit. These state plans include, but are not limited to, plans for Medi-Cal, SNAP (also known as Food Stamps or CalFresh), TANF also known as CalWORKs, Child Care, and the Dept. of Rehabilitation.

By making California's state plans and waivers readily accessible to the public, AB 294 would make these government programs more transparent and, as a result, would make the programs work better for the people they serve and accountable to achieve their intended goal. For these reasons, Western Center supports AB 294 and asks for your "aye" vote.

Sincerely,

  
Jessica Bartholow  
Legislative Advocate

  
Elizabeth A. Landsberg  
Director of Legislative Advocacy

cc: Members of the Assembly Health Committee  
Members of the Assembly Human Services Committee  
Honorable Tom Lackey (Author)  
Kevin Aslanian, Coalition of California Welfare Rights Organizations (Sponsor)