[Place on Organizational Letterhead]

Please email to: mark.teemer@sen.ca.gov

Please send email copy to: luis.quinonez@asm.ca.gov and csend@cwda.org

[DATE] <= Please consider sending by Tuesday, June 6

The Honorable Scott Wiener, Chair

Human Services Committee, California State Senate

State Capitol, Room 4066

Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator Wiener:

**Re: AB 818 (burke) As Introduced February 15, 2017 - SUPPORT**

[Insert name of organization] is pleased to support AB 818 by Assembly Member Burke, which would eliminate barriers to high school graduation by parents participating in welfare-to-work activities through the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) program.

CalWORKs provides basic cash assistance and welfare-to-work services to low-income families. Adult recipients are limited to 24 months of benefits, unless they are meeting federal work participation requirements or other statutory time clock extenders. Unfortunately, it can be difficult for parents to achieve their high school education and subsequently participate in additional education or training to further their employment goals within this 24-month time frame.

Adults without a high school diploma generally earn significantly less than those who have finished high school. In 2009, the average annual income for a high school dropout was $19,540, compared to $27,380 for a high school graduate. Further, while the national unemployment rate in 2012 was 8.3 percent, it was 13.1 percent for those without a high school diploma.

AB 818 would address this by ensuring the 24-month extension criteria in state law expressly include the active pursuit of a high school education as well as the next activity after achieving a high school diploma or equivalent. The latter is intended to ensure that recipients do not use up so much of their time clocks achieving a high school education that they are left with insufficient time to move toward a better-paying job, for example, by enrolling into a subsequent education or training program.

[Include information about the work your organization does and why the bill would help you and/or the clients you serve.] For all of these reasons, we are pleased to support AB 818.

Sincerely,

[Name] [Title]

[Organization]

cc: The Honorable Autumn Burke

Cathy Senderling-McDonald, CWDA

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| County Welfare Directors Association of California |