



LOS ANGELES COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
SACRAMENTO LEGISLATIVE OFFICE

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June 24, 2024
Senator Josh Becker
1021 O Street, Suite 7250
Sacramento, CA 95814

Senate Bill 1254
SUPPORT

Dear Senator Becker:

The Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office is pleased to support Senate Bill 1254 (Becker).

SB 1254 would require the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to partner with the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) and county jails to enroll, prior to their release, otherwise eligible applicants who are ineligible because of their incarceration status for the CalFresh program. This would ensure that an applicant's benefits begin as soon as possible upon reentry of the applicant into the community from state prison or county jail.

An estimated 400,000 individuals are released from correctional facilities in CA each year. A study conducted in the state of Washington revealed that mortality rates among former prisoners spike during the initial two weeks after release, and many struggle to reintegrate, as the risk of recidivism is highest soon after release. Research indicates that accessing federal food benefits correlates with a reduced likelihood of returning to prison within the first year of release, a critical period when individuals are most vulnerable to re-incarceration. According to a 2018 report by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, prompt access to basic needs like adequate nutrition, alongside social services, is crucial.

To the extent that programs like CalFresh can help support formerly incarcerated individuals by providing food assistance and supplementing their income, SB 1254 may have a positive impact on reducing recidivism among this population, thereby increasing safety within our communities.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Tamar Tokat in our Legislative Office at 916-442-0668.

Very Truly Yours,

GEORGE GASCÓN
District Attorney