

Sample Letter of Support
AB 581 (Pérez) – California Healthy Food Financing Initiative

[DATE]

The Honorable John Perez
State Capitol Building, Room 219
Sacramento, CA 95814
Fax: (916) 319-2146

RE: AB 581 (Pérez) – Support

Dear Speaker Perez:

[Organization name] writes in support of AB 581 (Perez), which would establish a California Healthy Food Financing Initiative (CHFFI) in the State Treasury. The bill will set up a system that could help existing corner stores expand to stock more fresh food. Creating this initiative is a smart way to expand access to healthy food in underserved communities by leveraging funding from federal and foundation programs, incentives available to enterprise zones, and funding from private sector financial institutions. Addressing the obesity and diabetes epidemics in communities of color will take state leadership through programs such as a state CHFFI.

For decades, low-income communities and communities of color have suffered from lack of access to healthy, fresh food. The United States Department of Agriculture estimates that around 1.7 million California residents live in low-income communities and do not have access to a large grocery store within one mile of their home. This lack of access has health implications. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 20 percent of California adults are obese. Improving access to healthy food helps address this crisis—studies show that better access to healthy food corresponds with healthier eating and lower rates of obesity and diabetes.

A state CHFFI could collaborate with other public, private, and philanthropic entities to provide critical one-time loans and grant financing to attract grocery stores and other fresh food retail to underserved urban and rural areas. It could also renovate and expand existing outlets so they can provide the healthy foods that communities need.

The **[organization name]** thanks you for authoring this important bill and supports its passage in the California State Legislature. Thank you for your leadership on AB 581.

Sincerely,

Name
Title