

April 1, 2015

Assembly Member Henry Perea  
Chair, Assembly Agriculture Committee  
1020 N Street, Room 362  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Via Fax: 916-319-2184

Dear Assembly Member Perea:

**Re: Support for AB 1321, California Nutrition Incentives Act**

On behalf of SPUR, I am writing in support of the California Nutrition Incentives Act (AB 1321) introduced by Assembly Member Phil Ting.

In our recently published report, *Healthy Food Within Reach*, we highlight the importance of reducing the barriers that Bay Area residents face in accessing healthy food. One of the primary barriers is the affordability of healthy food and one of our top recommendations to help Californians overcome this barrier was promoting healthy food incentive programs like those outlined in this legislation. Known by a variety of names across the country – and as Market Match in California – these programs increase the purchasing power of low-income customers by providing them with matching dollars for produce purchases.

Evaluations from across the country have shown healthy food incentive programs to be effective in increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables, which helps reduce food insecurity and has a positive impact on public health. And, when the program is available at farmers' markets, it not only improves the affordability of produce for low-income customers but also increases local farmers' revenue and the economic viability of the regional food system.

Given these benefits, we strongly support efforts to secure long-term, steady funding for expansion of healthy food incentives at farmers' markets statewide. We also support the legislation's inclusion of a grocery store pilot. The vast majority of food assistance dollars are spent at grocery stores and for programs like this to have a wider impact, we believe California needs to explore expanding them beyond farmers' markets, as envisioned with this pilot. The legislation currently limits the grocery pilot project to small retailers with annual sales less than \$10 million. SPUR believes that however the pilot is structured, a long-term vision of a healthy food incentive program should include expansion to grocery stores and any produce retailer that accepts food assistance benefits.

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SPUR respectfully requests your AYE vote for Assembly Bill 1321.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Zigas', is positioned above the printed name.

Eli Zigas  
Food and Agriculture Policy Director

CC: Assembly Members Philip Ting, David Chiu, Rob Bonta, Nora Campos and Kansen Chu