

Please send a support letter – On your letter head

Sample Support Letter – Senate Bill 283

Send by Fax to: (916) 327-1997

Please send email copy to jbartholow@wclp.org, glennbackes@mac.com and marla.cowan@sen.ca.gov

Date _____

Honorable Loni Hancock (D-09)
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 2082
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Senate Bill 283 (Hancock) -SUPPORT

Dear Senator Hancock,

[Name of Your Organization] is writing in support of Senate Bill 283 (Hancock) which will allow individuals, previously convicted of a drug felony, who meet all other eligibility rules to receive basic needs services, employment training and work supports through the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) and CalFresh programs, provided that they are complying with the conditions of probation or parole, or have successfully completed their probation or parole. SB 283 provides additional tools to local probation departments, while helping County Human Services Agencies improve outcomes for job placement and child wellbeing for the low-income families that they serve.

California's optional lifetime ban on receiving CalWORKs or CalFresh for people with former drug-related felony offenses, denies these benefits to individuals who have already paid their debt to society, rendering them unable to secure nutritious food for themselves or their families. With more families receiving federal food assistance, eliminating this ban both increases CalFresh efficiency and simultaneously reduces hunger. Additionally, increasing the number of people in CalFresh would bring more federal money into our state, boosting consumer spending, stimulating local businesses, and promoting job growth. SB 283 would only restore eligibility for assistance to adults meeting the requirements for program participation and successfully complying with probation or parole supervision.

Thousands of Californians are released from prison or jail every year on parole or probation. Unfortunately, with few or no job prospects, approximately two-thirds of those released from prison will be rearrested – and almost one-half will be re-incarcerated—within three years of their release. According to a 2011 report by Pew Center on the States, California ranks second-worst in the nation in recidivism rates, nearly 15 percentage points higher than the national average. If we want to reduce recidivism and expect people in recovery from drug addiction to become productive citizens and to reintegrate into society, we must ensure they have the same access to public support as other needy members of the community.

Include 2 sentences about why your organization cares.

[Name of Your Organization] supports SB 283 and thanks you for introducing this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Your Name and Title

cc: Glenn Backes, Drug Policy Alliance (Co-Sponsor)
Jessica Bartholow, Western Center on Law and Poverty (Co-Sponsor)
Cathy Senderling, County Welfare Directors Association (Co-Sponsor)