



March 21, 2023

Assembly Member Corey Jackson, Chair
Assembly Human Services Committee
California State Assembly
1020 N Street, Room 584
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 435 (Cervantes) - Expanding BenefitsCal Automated Application Process Eligibility
- SUPPORT**

Dear Chair Jackson,

On behalf of All Home, I am writing in support of AB 435 (Cervantes), which would allow individuals who are eligible for the Cash Assistance Program for Aged, Blind, and Disabled Legal Immigrants (CAPI), the Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA), and the Trafficking and Crime Victim Assistance Program (TCVAP) programs to apply online using BenefitsCal in lieu of doing so in-person. All Home advances regional solutions to disrupt the cycles of poverty and homelessness, and create more economic mobility for people with extremely low incomes in the Bay Area and across the state. .

Public benefits programs provide essential support to people with extremely low incomes who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness, but they are too often difficult to access. Currently, immigrants who are eligible for the CAPI, TCVAP, and RCA programs must complete their application in-person during the hours of 8 A.M. to 5 P.M. Due to language barrier issues, many CAPI, TCVAP, and RCA applicants need family members to help them navigate the application process. These family members often have to take time off from work to assist with program applications in-person at a social service department, which many people lack the flexibility and financial stability to do.

Thankfully, California Statewide Automated Welfare System (CalSAWS) is a decades-in-the-making effort to develop a single case management system for county eligibility staff and BenefitsCal, a public-facing online benefits portal created by CalSAWS, allows applicants to apply for and manage their CalWORKS, CalFresh, Refugee Assistance, Medi-Cal, and General Assistance and Relief benefits all in one place. CalSAWS and

BenefitsCal can transform access to public assistance in California, and to deliver on its potential it should include as many programs as possible.

AB 435 would offer CAPI, TCVAP, and RCA recipients an equitable experience in applying for benefits online by expanding CalSAWS responsibilities to accept and process CAPI, TCVAP, and RCA applications through the BenefitsCal online portal. Further, this bill would require the Department of Social Services to report to the budget committees and relevant policy committees in both houses regarding the Department's plan to ensure that potential beneficiaries are able to apply online for these programs by December 1, 2024. AB 435 would also increase accessibility by requiring county social services departments to provide information identifying available immigrant benefit services, including CAPI, RCA and TCVAP, on their websites.

CalSAWS is an important and long overdue opportunity to increase access to public benefits, lower barriers and streamline administration, and should include CAPI, TCVAP, and RCA. For these reasons, All Home is proud to support AB 435.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tomiquia Moss". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tomiquia Moss
Founder and CEO
All Home