



MAYOR REX RICHARDSON

March 7, 2024

The Honorable Mia Bonta
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 5620
Sacramento, CA 94249

RE: Support for AB 1975 (Bonta) - Medi-Cal: medically supportive food and nutrition interventions

Dear Assemblymember Bonta,

On behalf of the City of Long Beach (City), I write to express support for AB 1975, which aims to increase access to medically supportive food and nutrition interventions for Medi-Cal recipients.

AB 1975 will transition medically supportive food and nutrition interventions from optional services in CalAIM to permanent Medi-Cal benefits. A significant number of Californians, especially individuals of color, are grappling with preventable chronic conditions that can be treated with food-based interventions. Among people with Medi-Cal, 15 percent of individuals are living with diabetes and 31 percent suffer from high blood pressure. Black Californians are nearly twice as likely to be diagnosed with diabetes than white Californians and over 10 percent more likely to be diagnosed with high blood pressure. The City supports policies and legislation that reduce barriers to accessing basic needs, including but not limited to, housing, food and healthcare.

According to the City's [2019 Community Health Assessment](#), the rate of hospitalizations per 10,000 Black adults was 11.9 in 2013-2015, significantly higher than the overall city value of 5.8 and nearly double the rate of any other race/ethnicity subgroup. Furthermore, according to the assessment, diabetes was the sixth leading cause of death in the city, with 9.7 percent of adults in Long Beach reporting having been diagnosed with diabetes. AB 1975 will contribute to improving health outcomes and advancing health equity across the city. Additionally, the legislation will help ensure access to essential nutritional support to prevent and treat medical conditions.

For these reasons, the City supports AB 1975.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rex Richardson", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Mayor Rex Richardson
City of Long Beach

cc: The Honorable Lena Gonzalez, State Senate, 33rd District
The Honorable Mike Gipson, State Assembly, 65th District
The Honorable Josh Lowenthal, State Assembly, 69th District