June 24, 2013

The Honorable Luis A. Alejo
Assemblymember
State Capitol
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0030

RE: AB 290 (Alejo) Childhood Nutrition Training- SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Alejo:

On behalf of First 5 LA, I am writing to express our support for AB 290, which requires that a newly licensed teacher or director of a day care center or family day care home who receives health and safety training shall also have at least one hour of childhood nutrition training, including information about age-appropriate meal patterns, and information about reimbursement rates for the federal Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

First 5 LA is a child advocacy and grantmaking organization created by California voters to invest Proposition 10 tobacco tax revenues in health care, early education and child development programs for L.A. County children from the prenatal stage to age 5 and their families. In order to achieve our mission, one of our policy goals is to help increase access to healthy food options and physical activity for young children. In 2012 First 5 LA launched its "Eat Healthy, Grow Strong" campaign to engage and equip communities with a variety of educational tools and activities to help reverse this dangerous trend of childhood obesity.

While child care provider training has a great impact on the quality of child care programs, California’s licensing laws still do not require providers to undergo any nutrition training. According to the Centers for Disease Control, while the prevalence of obesity among all U.S. children aged 2-4 years is 14.4 percent, for California the prevalence is over 17 percent. By requiring providers to take one hour of nutrition classes as a part of the licensing process, licensed child care providers will learn about the importance of healthy meals and snacks, cost-effective strategies, age-appropriate meal patterns and serving sizes.

First 5 LA recognizes the importance of proper nutrition for children both to ensure they don’t go hungry and to combat obesity by serving children food that is age-appropriate and nutritious. We are grateful for your leadership on
this issue and hope you will consider First 5 LA a resource in your efforts to improve children’s nutrition.

If we can be of further assistance, please contact Tessa Charnofsky, Government Affairs Manager, at TCharnofsky@First5LA.org.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Kim Belshé
Executive Director

KB: rv

cc: Senate Committee on Appropriations