SAMPLE SUPPORT LETTER FOR AB 1161 (HARABEDIAN)

PLACE ON YOUR LETTERHEAD, REPLACE YELLOW HIGHLIGHTED TEXT,

AND SUBMIT TO [LEGISLATIVE PORTAL](https://calegislation.lc.ca.gov/Advocates/)

April XX, 2025

Assemblymember Mia Bonta

Chair, Assembly Committee on Health

1020 N Street, Room 390

Sacramento, CA 95814

 Re: Support for AB 1161 (Harabedian)

Dear Chair Bonta:

On behalf of [NAME OF ORGANIZATION], I am writing to support AB 1161 (Harabedian), which would ensure low-income Californians impacted by disasters remain eligible for public benefit programs for at least 90 days. [ONE TO TWO SENTENCES ABOUT ORGANIZATION].

Public benefits programs provide life-saving health care, supportive services that keep older adults and persons with disabilities in the community, ensure families have a way to meet basic needs, and provide food benefits to prevent hunger. After disasters, Californians need these benefits more than ever before. But these programs are set up to automatically terminate eligibility if people do not submit required documentation within certain timeframes, typically 30 days.

During the recent fires in Los Angeles County, thousands of homes were destroyed and the LA County Department of Public Social Services office in Pasadena closed. With mailboxes incinerated or inaccessible due to restricted evacuation zones, mail service stopped. Immediately after a disaster, survivors focus on life and safety needs, like medical care, food, water, and shelter so may not be able to submit documentation timely resulting in public benefits termination.

Unfortunately, this will not be California’s last disaster so we must ensure we have processes and systems in place to protect our most vulnerable Californians in their time of need. This bill would proactively protect low-income California’s by extending public benefits eligibility for a minimum or 90 days or longer depending on the duration of the disaster declaration or public health emergency, and automate these protections in public benefit IT systems so that counties are ready to protect eligibility whenever a disaster strikes.

For these reasons, we urge your support for AB 1161.

Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME]

[YOUR ORGANIZATION]