

Dr. LaShae Sharp- Collins

79th Assembly District



AB 1324: CalWORKs Eligibility

SUMMARY

AB 1324 will increase the eligibility for CalWORKs benefits by extending them to eligible self-employed workers, providing benefits for workers that work over 100 hours in month, and allowing benefits for striking workers. It also ensures that the jobs provided by the program are those that lift families out of poverty and build careers.

BACKGROUND

CalWORKs is California's bedrock anti-poverty safety net providing life-saving cash aid and supportive services to 659,000 children. The families are overwhelmingly led by Latina (60%) and Black (17%) mothers who already face severe discrimination and disenfranchisement from economic prosperity.

This program focuses on quickly pushing parents into paid employment without addressing longer-term barriers to work and resources needed to lead thriving lives. Creating clearer definitions for approved job programs will increase economic independence and allowing self-employment provides greater flexibility in the job search.

Removing the 100-hour rule reflects the reality of the working-class family. Additionally, removing the ban on striking workers allows for individuals receiving CalWORKs to be active participants in improving working conditions without retaliation.

AB 1324 allows for more individuals to receive the critical support they need to work and provide for their families.

THIS BILL

AB 1324 access to CalWORKs benefits for self-employed workers, workers who work more than 100 hours and workers fighting for improved labor conditions while also ensuring CalWORKs benefits are focused on jobs that will elevate families out of poverty.

The bill also mandates a feasibility study to explore pathways for expanding eligibility and benefits, with a particular focus on addressing disparities in access. Expansion of this program benefits all Californians in the long-term.

SUPPORT

SEIU (Co-sponsor)
End Poverty in CA (EPIC) (Co-sponsor)
End Child Poverty CA (Co-sponsor)
Western Center on Law & Poverty (Co-sponsor)

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