



March 26, 2020

VIA Online Portal to the Author and Senate Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Adrin Nazarian
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 479 (Nazarian) – School meals: plant-based food and milk options: California School Plant-Based Food and Beverage Program – SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Nazarian,

The League of Women Voters of California writes in strong support of AB 479, your legislation to make plant-based food and beverages more available to students.

We understand that Governor Newsom is supporting what may be an even broader approach as described in the Education Budget Trailer Bill. We plan to reach out to the Department of Finance, as well as the Assembly and Budget Committees to explore those plans.

The League has a long history of supporting policies and programs that enable families to meet basic human needs, including access to healthy foods and children's equitable access to school-provided opportunities. The League also recognizes that climate change is the greatest global challenge to the balance of our ecosystem, and we support state actions to mitigate and adapt to climate change. AB 479 helps to accomplish all these goals.

AB 479 increases funding for schools to provide more plant-based food and beverages, adds a small amount for consultants on implementation, and requires collection of baseline data,

In addition to the health benefits of more plant-based foods, reducing the amount of meat (particularly ruminants like beef, lamb, and goat) lowers the amount of carbon emissions produced. By bridging the gap between the cost of a plant-based meal and a meat-based one, AB 479 empowers students of all economic levels to choose a healthy, nutritious plant-based meal that will also help California move closer to its goal to reach carbon neutrality.

The League of Women Voters of California strongly supports AB 479 to provide state funding to make plant-based meals and beverages more available to California's school children. Thank you for your leadership in authoring this important bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carol Moon Goldberg".

Carol Moon Goldberg
President