



May 17, 2017

The Honorable Lorena Gonzalez Fletcher  
Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee  
State Capitol, Room 2114  
Sacramento, CA 95814



Re: AB 626 (E. Garcia): California Retail Food Code:  
microenterprise home kitchen operations  
As Amended May 2, 2017 – OPPOSE  
Set for Hearing on May 24, 2017 – Assembly Appropriations  
Committee

Dear Assembly Member Gonzalez Fletcher:



The California State Association of Counties (CSAC), Urban Counties of California (UCC), Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), County Health Executives Association of California (CHEAC), and Health Officers Association of California (HOAC) regrettably must OPPOSE AB 626 by Assembly Member Eduardo Garcia, which would allow for the sale of food directly to consumers from private homes.



Local public health and environmental health departments work diligently to prevent and reduce community exposure to costly foodborne illnesses. We have tremendous concerns about the preparation of potentially hazardous foods in home kitchens. Home kitchens are not built to the same code as commercial kitchens and cannot be inspected as thoroughly. Therefore, meals sold out of home kitchens have an increased risk of causing outbreaks of foodborne illness.



Foodborne illnesses from potentially hazardous foods can often result in missed work, extensive treatment, hospitalization, and even death. According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), six common foodborne illnesses in California resulted in over \$50 million in medical costs alone in 2015. Expanding restaurant operations to home kitchens only stands to increase the frequency of foodborne illness, resulting in higher medical and lost productivity costs to California.

Furthermore, AB 626 poses significant costs to both the state and local governments. This measure threatens to exponentially increase California Department of Public Health (CDPH) costs associated with foodborne illness outbreak response, investigation, and laboratory resources. At the county level, local health departments are expected to incur increased costs of permitting microenterprise kitchens and investigating and responding to foodborne illness outbreaks. Under the current Cottage Food Program, health departments have consistently determined the cost associated with registration, permitting, accounting, and enforcement far exceeds the permitting fees collected and must rely on resources in already-strained health department budgets. When outbreaks do occur, epidemiologists must conduct thorough investigations that can take local health departments weeks, months, or even years to complete, thus further impacting local resources.

It is for these reasons that we must oppose AB 626 (E. Garcia). For more information, please reference our attached AB 626 Financial Fact Sheet.

Sincerely,

*As signed by*

Cara Martinson  
Legislative Representative  
California State Association of  
Counties (CSAC)

*As signed by*

Jolena Voorhis  
Executive Director  
Urban Counties of California (UCC)

*As signed by*

Tracy Rhine  
Legislative Advocate  
Rural County Representatives of  
California (RCRC)

*As signed by*

Michelle Gibbons  
Executive Director  
County Health Executives  
Association of California (CHEAC)

*As signed by*

Kat DeBurgh  
Executive Director  
Health Officers Association of California (HOAC)

cc: The Honorable Eduardo Garcia, Member, California State Assembly  
Honorable Members, Assembly Appropriations Committee  
Lisa Murawski, Consultant, Assembly Appropriations Committee  
Peter Anderson, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus