Please use your organization’s letterhead and fax a copy to 916 319-2184 (Victor Francovich) and email a final copy to justin@rootsofchange.org.

[Date]

The Honorable Henry Perea

Chair, Assembly Agriculture Committee

State Capitol

Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 1321 (Ting) – Support**

Dear Assemblymember Perea:

[Name of your organization] supports AB 1321, which would establish the Nutrition Incentive Matching (NIM) Grant Program to maximize California’s share of federal matching funds, improve the health of low-income Californians, and support California’s farming communities and small business owners.

The NIM Grant Program is built on the evidence-based success from California Market Match, a successful pilot that increases the purchasing power of nutrition assistance benefits (e.g. CalFresh) when clients purchase fruits, nuts and vegetables at more than 100 farmers’ markets. A 2013 evaluation of Market Match reported an average six-fold return, and serves a local economic development strategy for farming communities up and down the state. Participating growers have cited additional income from incentives as the reason for adding staff or acreage.

Under the new Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) program in the 2014 Farm Bill, the U.S. Department of Agriculture shall award matching grants over the next four years to support nutrition incentive programs like the NIM Grant Program. Only $65 million of $100 million in FINI funding remains and California should maximize its share considering the state’s unparalleled agricultural bounty, vast network of farmers’ markets and entrenched poverty. While California is now the world’s 7th largest economy, we still have the highest poverty rate nationally. Limited resources for purchasing food has a dramatic impact on health and increases the risk of developing preventable chronic diseases, like diabetes, with disproportionate impacts on communities of color in California.

Optional: Include a couple of sentences about why your organization supports and/or cares about AB 1321. For these reasons, [Name of your organization] strongly supports AB 1321 and respectfully asks for your Aye vote on this bill.

Sincerely,

[Your name and title]

cc: Assemblymember Ting (Lead author)

 The Honorable Members of the Assembly Agriculture Committee