

1 [Supporting California State Assembly Bill No. 1975 (Bonta) - Medi-Cal: Medically Supportive
2 Food and Nutrition Interventions]

3 **Resolution supporting California State Assembly Bill No. 1975, introduced by**
4 **Assembly Member Mia Bonta (D-66), co-authored by Assembly Members Joaquin**
5 **Arambula, Isaac Bryan, Mike Gipson, Chris Holden, Corey Jackson, Reggie Jones-**
6 **Sawyer, Kevin McCarty, Tina McKinnor, Akilah Weber, and Lori Wilson to make**
7 **medically supportive food and nutrition interventions a covered benefit under the Medi-**
8 **Cal program.**

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10 WHEREAS, Many Californians, including San Franciscans, live with chronic health
11 conditions that are proven to be manageable and even preventable if given access to specific
12 and medically prescribed nutritional interventions; and

13 WHEREAS, These chronic illnesses disproportionately impact communities of color
14 and low-income residents facing food insecurity, food deserts, and a fundamental lack of
15 access to fresh foods; and

16 WHEREAS, Access to healthy foods, nutrition, and nutrition education are proven and
17 essential public health interventions that can be taken by healthcare providers to help prevent
18 and treat a long list of chronic health conditions; evidence has shown that where medically
19 supportive food has been prescribed and monitored by a physician, there have been
20 significant improvements in a person’s medical outcomes and overall quality of life; and

21 WHEREAS, Providing patients with proper food and nutrition to individuals with chronic
22 health conditions has also resulted in significantly reducing healthcare costs; and

23 WHEREAS, The State of California has already officially endorsed the concept of
24 nutrition as an important factor in measuring health outcomes and health equity, incorporating
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1 medically supportive food and nutrition interventions in the California Advancing and
2 Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM) initiative; and

3 WHEREAS, Despite the inclusion of these measures in State programs, they remain
4 optional, allowing individual managed health care plans to voluntarily opt in to the provision of
5 such services, resulting in many Medi-Cal beneficiaries who will not be eligible because their
6 plans may not include medically supportive food and nutritional interventions as a covered
7 benefit; and

8 WHEREAS, The Food is Medicine Initiative, led by Assembly Member Mia Bonta,
9 would provide medically supportive food and nutritional interventions as a permanent, covered
10 benefit under the Medi-Cal program, subject to federal approval and the issuance of final
11 guidance by the State Department of Health Care Services, and would require those
12 interventions to be offered to patients if determined to be medically necessary by a healthcare
13 provider or healthcare plan; and

14 WHEREAS, The inclusion of medically supportive food and nutritional services as a
15 required covered benefit of Medi-Cal would be a groundbreaking and strategic step toward
16 addressing the root causes of health disparities and chronic illness in California, and a model
17 for such health interventions to the rest of the nation; and

18 WHEREAS, This bill would “require the Department to define the qualifying medical
19 conditions for purposes of the covered interventions, and a health care provider, to the extent
20 possible, to match the acuity of a patient’s condition to the intensity and duration of the
21 covered intervention and to include culturally appropriate foods;” now, therefore, be it

22 RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors supports Assembly Bill No.
23 1975 (AB 1975) and urges the California State Assembly to pass this legislation; and, be it

24 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors of the City and
25 County of San Francisco will transmit a copy of this Resolution to San Francisco's State five

1 Legislative Delegation, City and County of San Francisco State Lobbyist, California Governor
2 Gavin Newsom and the bill's primary sponsors, Assembly Members Bonta, Arambula, Bryan,
3 Gipson, Holden, Jackson, Jones-Sawyer, McCarty, McKinnor, Weber, and Wilson.

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