May 21, 2019

The Honorable Eduardo Garcia

State Capitol

Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: PLEASE SUPPORT AB 377, amending the Homemade Food Operations Act**

Dear Assemblymember Garcia,

On behalf of the California Association of Micro Enterprise Opportunity (CAMEO), I write in support of AB 377 (Garcia). The bill will amend the Retail Food Code to refine the Homemade Food Operations Act (AB 626 – 2018 Garcia).

CAMEO is California’s statewide network made up of over 230 organizations, agencies, and individuals dedicated to furthering microbusiness development in the state. Annually, CAMEO members serve about 34,000 very small businesses with training, business and credit assistance and loans. These firms – largely start-ups with less than five employees – support or create 51,000 new jobs in California and generate a total of $2.5 billion in economic activity.

Legalizing home cooking has wide support across California. Last year, over 60,000 people signed a petition, thousands of people called or wrote their elected officials, and nearly 100 organizations signed on in support of AB 626. These supporters continue to be excited to embrace this opportunity - as cooks, eaters, and local food advocates. Many are frustrated that issues of jurisdiction and public health requirements have significantly slowed implementation in many Counties, even though the legislature passed AB 626 unanimously last year.

We sincerely hope AB 377 will move through the legislature with urgency to unblock implementation of AB 626. AB 377 creates more clarity around public health requirements and how counties (and 4 cities) can opt-into this opportunity, thanks to tireless ongoing collaboration between public health officials and home cooking advocates. Ultimately, AB 377 will allow for easier, safer adoption of AB 626 – allowing home cooks, mostly women, immigrants, and people of color, to use their skills to generate income.

For these reasons, we are proud to support AB 377 and thank you for your leadership in bringing this bill to the California legislature. If you have any questions regarding this request, please feel free to contact Heidi Pickman, 415.992.4480 or at hpickman@microbiz.org.

Sincerely,

 Carolina Martinez, CEO