



For Immediate Release  
August 31, 2016

**Contact:**

Betsy Butler, California Women's Law Center – [betsy.butler@cwlc.org](mailto:betsy.butler@cwlc.org) (323) 951-1041

**California Legislature Sends '*Justice for Victims Act*' To Governor**

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA - California lawmakers in the Assembly and the Senate passed SB 813, the '*Justice for Victims Act*,' which would eliminate the statute of limitations for rape and related felony sex crimes in the state. This landmark bipartisan measure, introduced by Senator Connie M. Leyva (D-Chino) and co-sponsored by the California Women's Law Center (CWLC) and San Bernardino County District Attorney Michael A. Ramos, removes the arbitrary time limit for victims of rape and sexual assault, ultimately holding predators accountable for their actions.

The measure has been sent to Governor Jerry Brown for his consideration.

Current law in the state of California generally limits the prosecution of a felony sexual offense to just 10 years after the offense is committed, unless DNA evidence emerges later. SB 813 does not change the burden of proof; victims will still have to prove their allegations in court. What the measure does provide to victims is time. If signed by the Governor, SB 813 will allow victims of rape and specified sex crimes to come forward *at any time* to seek justice in a court of law, regardless of when a rape or sexual assault is reported or discovered.

"I introduced SB 813 earlier this year for a simple reason: To ensure that rape victims always have the opportunity to seek justice in a court of law," said bill author Senator Leyva. "I thank the California Women's Law Center and its Executive Director Betsy Butler for their unwavering support of SB 813 which seeks to eliminate the statute of limitations on rape in California. I appreciate CWLC's co-sponsorship of the '*Justice for Victims Act*' and their ongoing commitment to ensuring victims of rape and related crimes have the ability to seek justice and hold their assailants accountable for their violent actions."

Advocating for justice on behalf of women and girls is CWLC's mission. "We thank Senator Leyva for her commitment to ensuring victims of rape and sexual assault have a path to legal justice, no matter how long it may take a victim to come forward to talk about the crime committed against them," said Betsy Butler, CWLC Executive Director. "CWLC actively supports survivors of sexual violence and works to advance policies to stop these crimes. We are proud co-sponsors of SB 813 and we hope Governor Jerry Brown will sign this important legislation."

Other supporters of SB 813 include district attorneys, civil rights attorneys, and advocates for women and children. At least 16 other states have abolished their statutes of limitations in rape cases.

###

## **About the California Women's Law Center**

For nearly 30 years, the California Women's Law Center (CWLC) has been a champion in the pursuit of justice for women and girls. CWLC works to break down the barriers and advances the potential of women and girls in California through transformative litigation, policy advocacy and education. Since 1989, CWLC has advocated for and achieved policy change on a wide range of issues affecting gender discrimination and equality, Title IX enforcement, women's health and reproductive justice, economic security and violence against women. For more information, please visit: [www.cwlc.org](http://www.cwlc.org).