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Betsy Butler

March 22, 2016

The Honorable Miguel Santiago
Assemblymember, District 53
State Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Assembly Bill 1760 (Santiago) – Support

Dear Assemblymember Santiago:

On behalf of the California Women's Law Center (CWLC), I am writing in support of AB 1760, which would provide valuable safeguards to minor victims of human trafficking.

Under current law, trafficked children in California are arrested and punished for crimes their traffickers force them to commit. They are not being properly identified and served by first responders and caregivers in the child welfare system. AB 1760 would ensure that law enforcement would not arrest children for prostitution or solicitation offenses, and that law enforcement would properly screen all children prior to arrest so that children are not arrested for non-violent offenses their traffickers force them to commit. AB 1760 also would ensure that law enforcement refers all trafficked children to child welfare services. Finally, AB 1760 would require state agencies and action teams to develop screening tools and plans that would help trafficked children.

CWLC is dedicated to eliminating the barriers that keep women and girls in poverty. Since its founding in 1989, CWLC has worked to advance the potential of women and girls through transformative litigation, policy advocacy, and education. An important part of our mission is to ensure that victims of crime, especially those crimes that disproportionately affect women and girls, are not re-victimized by the systems and laws that are supposed to protect them.

The California Women's Law Center strongly supports AB 1760, which will fight human trafficking and prevent vulnerable children from being punished for their victimization.

Sincerely,



Betsy Butler
Executive Director