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April 27, 2017

The Honorable Jim Beall  
State Capitol, Room 5066  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support SB 755 (Beall) – Support

Dear Senator Beall:

On behalf of the California Women's Law Center (CWLC), we write in support of Senate Bill 755, which would implement sensible parameters regarding how long a child under 15 years of age can be interviewed in any action where there is credible evidence the child has been sexually abused.

Attorneys who represent sexually abused children in civil lawsuits have reported a disturbing current practice of unnecessarily long and abusive psychological exams of the children by the defendant's paid mental health examiners. Needlessly long interviews are often traumatic for children who are already emotionally fragile because they are victims of abuse. In a recent case, three girls between the ages of five and seven who had been sexually molested at a daycare center were examined by the defendant's mental health experts for over four hours, causing the girls severe emotional distress.

CWLC's mission is to advance the potential of women and girls through transformative litigation, policy advocacy and education. We recognize the importance of ensuring that children who are victims of sexual abuse are not unnecessarily further traumatized by their pursuit of justice in the courts. SB 755 will limit such re-traumatization and give support to child victims of sexual assault by restricting defense psychological exams to a three hour maximum, inclusive of breaks.

For these reasons, the California Women's Law Center strongly supports SB 743.

Sincerely,

Betsy Butler

Executive Director