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March 14, 2017

Honorable Nancy Skinner
Chair, Public Safety Committee
State Capitol, Room 5064
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support SB 190 (Mitchell, Lara) – Ending Juvenile Administrative Fees

Dear Senator Skinner:

On behalf of the California Women's Law Center, we write in support of Senate Bill 190 which will end the harmful assessment and collection of administrative fees against the families of youth in the juvenile justice system.

Current state law permits counties to charge families of youth in the juvenile justice system for the costs of detention and probation-related expenses. Most California counties assess and collect fees for detention, supervision, electronic monitoring, drug testing, investigation, and even representation by a public defender.

Most youth in the juvenile system come from low income families that should qualify for fee reductions or waivers based on inability to pay, but jurisdictions often pursue collection indiscriminately and the burdens of these fees disproportionately fall on families of color. As experts have noted, juvenile administrative fees do not serve any legitimate purpose unlike restitution or other criminal fines.

For these reasons, the California Women's Law Center strongly supports SB 190.

Sincerely,

Betsy Butler
Executive Director