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August 2, 2018

The Honorable Lorena S. Gonzalez Fletcher  
Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee  
State Capitol, Room 2114  
Sacramento, California 95814

Re: SB 1023 (Hernandez) - Support

Dear Chair Gonzalez Fletcher,

On behalf of the California Women's Law Center (CWLC), we write in support of SB 1023, which would expand access to sexual and reproductive health services including contraception and STD testing, prevention and treatment, by ensuring coverage for those services via telehealth.

California's unintended pregnancy rates remain nearly double those of other developed countries. Even though California has made significant gains in reducing these rates, many barriers to accessing reproductive health care remain. Unintended pregnancies are costly to both the state and federal governments.

SB 1023 focuses on technology known as telehealth that helps eliminate geographic barriers and improves access to health care in rural and low-income communities. For example, mobile apps have the potential to transform health care by allowing advanced practice clinicians to diagnose patients outside of the traditional health care settings and help consumers manage their own health and wellness. SB 1023 will clarify that Medi-Cal managed care and commercial health insurers may cover sexual and reproductive health services that are provided appropriately through telehealth and will require the Family Planning, Access, Care and Treatment program (Family PACT) to determine client eligibility for telehealth and provide appropriate sexual and reproductive health services through telehealth. By reducing barriers to care, California can continue to reduce unintended pregnancy rates and tackle rising STD rates while also reducing costs.

CWLC's mission is to advance the potential of women and girls through transformative litigation, policy advocacy and education. For nearly three decades, CWLC has been on the frontlines in the fight to ensure that women have access to the health care opportunities they need in order to lead healthy and productive lives, including access to safe and affordable family planning options.

For these reasons, the California Women's Law Center supports SB 1023.

Sincerely,



Betsy Butler  
Executive Director