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Betsy Butler

June 12, 2018

Honorable Jim Wood
Chair, Assembly Health Committee
State Capitol, Room 6005
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 1004 (Wiener) – OPPOSE unless amended

Dear Chairman Wood,

On behalf of the Board and staff of the California Women's Law Center, we write to share our opposition to SB 1004 as currently written.

SB 1004 would establish new priorities for how Proposition 63 Mental Health Service Act funds can be spent for Prevention and Early Intervention programs (PEI), focusing those programs almost exclusively on children and youth to the detriment of PEI programs serving other populations, including older adults, and underserved minority groups.

SB 1004 would direct counties to focus their PEI dollars primarily on students, even though outreach and engagement are essential approaches to overcoming stigma and bringing services to underserved populations of all ages. Trauma prevention and early intervention are needed across one's lifespan, as traumatic events occur at every age.

Older adults are the only age group that is certain to face one or more of the following: loss of career/purpose, failing health, the death of friends and loved ones, isolation, economic insecurity, and vulnerability to exploitation. These factors place them at significant risk for depression, anxiety, psychological trauma and suicide and, keep in mind that older adults are the nation's fastest growing segment of the population.

LGBT elderly also suffer disproportionate levels of discrimination, victimization, anxiety, isolation, and substance abuse. [According to SAGE](#), more than 50% of LGBT elders in a national study had been diagnosed with depression, and 39% reported having seriously considered suicide, yet have few mental health resources available to them.

The California Women's Law Center is in support of the proposed amendments suggested by the California Commission on Aging. We believe these proposed amendments would ensure all underserved groups would be appropriately

considered for PEI program dollars and adhere to the spirit of Proposition 63 and the intent of the Mental Health Services Act.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Betsy Butler". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Betsy Butler
Executive Director

Cc: Senator Scott Wiener