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Betsy Butler

May 12, 2020

The Honorable Jerry Hill
Chair, Committee on Labor and Industrial Relations
State Capitol, Room 545
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Senate Bill 1399 (Durazo) – Support

Dear Senator Hill,

On behalf of the California Women's Law Center, we write in support of Senate Bill 1399 which seeks to prevent wage theft in the garment industry, thereby assisting a vulnerable workforce who are experiencing devastating impacts during the coronavirus pandemic.

Los Angeles has the highest concentration of garment industry workers in the country, with nearly 2,000 manufacturers employing more than 40,000 people. These garment workers are primarily immigrant women who spend 10 to 12 hours a day physically cutting, sewing, and dyeing clothing.

Many garment workers have lost their jobs due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Those who continue to work have had to endure poor working conditions under intensified circumstances. Many are working to create facemasks for healthcare systems, companies, and fashion brands.

SB 1399 will strengthen current law by expanding liability for retailers who enter into contracts with garment workers, prohibiting payment of garment workers by "piece," and authorizing the Labor Commissioner's Bureau of Field Enforcement to investigate and cite violators.

CWLC's mission is to break down barriers and advance the potential of women and girls through transformative litigation, policy advocacy, and education. We prioritize fair and safe working conditions for all people, especially women and immigrant populations.

For these reasons, the California Women's Law Center supports SB 1399.

Sincerely,



Betsy Butler
Executive Director

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