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Betsy Butler

June 15, 2016

The Honorable Kevin McCarty
California State Assembly
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 1661 as proposed amendment (McCarty) – Support

Dear Assembly Member McCarty:

On behalf of the California Women's Law Center (CWLC), I am writing in support of AB 1661 as proposed amendment, which would require local elected officials to complete multiple sexual harassment training and education courses. CWLC strongly supports AB 1661 because it will help make offices of city governments safe from sexual harassment.

Currently, the law requires that local elected officials complete training in "ethics." Because of this vague language, different cities and local governments provide different types of trainings, only some of which cover sexual harassment. AB 1661 as proposed amendment would make sexual harassment training mandatory for all elected officials within the first six months of their election and every two years thereafter.

Sexual harassment in the workplace is a pervasive problem in the United States. One in four women has experienced workplace sexual harassment. Many victims do not report the harassment because they are unfamiliar with the law or fear retaliation. This has created an environment in which people continue to be victimized. Proper training will clarify what constitutes sexual harassment and educate those being trained that it is unlawful.

Since its founding in 1989, CWLC has worked to break down barriers and advance the potential of women and girls through transformative litigation, policy advocacy and education. A vital part of our mission is to ensure that women are protected from sexual harassment and have access to the resources they need if it occurs.

California Women's Law Center strongly supports AB 1661 as proposed amendment, which will address workplace sexual harassment by mandating training and education.

Sincerely,



Betsy Butler
Executive Director