

March 21, 2019

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The Honorable Reginald Jones-Sawyer, Sr.
Chair, Assembly Public Safety Committee
State Capitol, Room 2117
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 732 (Bonta) – Support

Dear Assemblymember Jones-Sawyer, Sr.,

On behalf of the California Women's Law Center (CWLC), we write in support of AB 732, which will improve reproductive health care for incarcerated people.

Pregnant or parenting people who are in the prison system are marginalized and stigmatized. Their complex pathway to the carceral system is usually embedded in gender-based violence, substance use or addiction. Unfortunately, currently California's laws criminalize, stigmatize, and harm pregnant, birthing, and parenting incarcerated people.

The lack of standardization of care in state prisons and county jails adversely impacts pregnancy and childbirth outcomes, including the health and wellbeing of parent and infant. It also increases the number of preventable pregnancy and childbirth-related deaths and other severe complications. Loose interpretation of existing guidelines continues to threaten incarcerated people's reproductive health and rights, and disproportionately harms women of color and LGBTQ people.

AB 732 will require the state to implement a reproductive health program that will hold these facilities accountable to providing dignified reproductive health care conditions, experiences, and outcomes. AB 732 will prohibit the use of solitary confinement for incarcerated people who are pregnant, allow the incarcerated pregnant person to elect a support person to be present during childbirth, and require menstrual products be given free of charge.

CWLC's mission is to advance the potential of women and girls through transformative litigation, policy advocacy, and education. For 30 years, CWLC has been on the frontlines fighting for reproductive health and justice. All people deserve access to dignified reproductive health care despite their income or incarcerated status.

For these reasons, the California Women's Law Center supports AB 732.

Sincerely,



Betsy Butler
Executive Director