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March 29, 2021

The Honorable Dave Cortese  
Chair, Senate Committee on Labor, Public Employment and Retirement  
1020 N Street, Room 545  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Senate Bill 523 (Leyva) – Support**

Dear Senator Cortese,

On behalf of the California Women's Law Center, we write in support of SB 523 which will ensure Californians have access to birth control regardless of their gender, health insurance status, or place of employment.

California has codified the Affordable Care Act's contraceptive coverage mandate which requires that most of our health insurance plans cover a year's supply of birth control and that it be dispensed at one time. However, state workers, university employees, and college students may lack these coverage specifics.

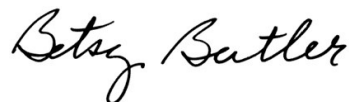
Black, Indigenous, people of color, LGBTQ, youth, and those living in poverty experience disparities in reproductive health outcomes, including disproportionate rates of unintended pregnancy, infant and maternal mortality, and Sexually Transmitted Disease. The COVID-19 crisis has illuminated the structural inequities that disproportionately affect these groups' ability to access birth control services.

SB 523 will extend contraceptive coverage benefits to millions of Californians including state workers, university employees, and college students, and will clarify that employers are prohibited from discriminating against their employees based on their reproductive health decisions. SB 523 will also make California's contraceptive equity laws gender neutral and will require insurance coverage for over-the-counter birth control to increase access to time-sensitive care.

CWLC's mission is to create a more just and equitable society by breaking down barriers and advancing the potential of women and girls through transformative litigation, policy advocacy, and education. SB 523 will ensure that Californians get the birth control they want, and without delay.

For these reasons, the California Women's Law Center supports SB 523.

Sincerely,



Betsy Butler  
Executive Director