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Betsy Butler

March 31, 2021

The Honorable Ash Kalra
Chair, Assembly Committee on Labor and Employment
State Capitol, Room 155
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1041 (Wicks) – Support

Dear Assemblymember Kalra,

On behalf of the California Women's Law Center, we write in support of AB 1041 which will expand the definition of "family member" for family and sick leave to include one's chosen family.

Today, the overwhelming majority of households are not defined by the traditional "nuclear family" model and increasingly include other relatives as well as loved ones who are not biologically or legally related.


Many LGBTQ people, especially older adults, do not have relationships with biological or immediate family members. As a result, they often rely on their chosen family of friends and associates for support. Forty-two percent of LGBTQ adults said they would depend on close friends in an emergency, compared to 25% of the general population who would call on non-relatives for assistance. Aging adults also rely heavily on a wide network of relationships for their caregiving needs.

Currently, California's family leave laws permit workers to take time off to care for certain narrowly-defined family members. AB 1041 will expand this definition to include those "whose close association with the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship." The importance of expanding leave laws to cover one's chosen family has been underscored by the COVID-19 pandemic as many Californians have had to rely on people outside of their family for care due to pandemic-related limitations.

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. AB 1041 will ensure that all Californians have the right to support their loved ones, regardless of their blood or legal relationship to the person needing help.

For these reasons, the California Women's Law Center supports AB 1041.

Sincerely,



Betsy Butler
Executive Director