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Betsy Butler

April 5, 2021

The Honorable Steven Bradford
Chair, Senate Committee on Public Safety
State Capitol, Room 2031
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 357 (Wiener) – Support

Dear Senator Bradford,

On behalf of the California Women's Law Center, we write in support of SB 357 which will repeal the statute criminalizing loitering with the intent to engage in sex work.

The subjective nature of enforcing anti-loitering laws leads to discriminatory policing that targets Black women, Latinas, and transgender people. Black adults accounted for 56.1% of the loitering with intent to engage in sex work charges in Los Angeles between 2017-2019, despite the Black population of Los Angeles only being 8.9%.

The broad wording of the statute allows law enforcement to stop and arrest people for dressing in a certain way or standing in a particular area. By repealing this statute, SB 357 will eliminate a law that allows police to rely on inherent bias to criminalize otherwise legal activities which results in the harassment of people from the most vulnerable communities.

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. We prioritize advancing justice for all people, no matter their gender, race, sexual orientation or any other characteristic.

For these reasons, the California Women's Law Center supports SB 357.

Sincerely,



Betsy Butler
Executive Director