

Board of Directors

Board Co-President

Mira El Sonbaty
Fox Corporation

Board Co-President

Diana Hughes Leiden
Winston & Strawn LLP

Board Treasurer

Edie Mermelstein, Esq.
FEM Law Group

Board Secretary

Pamela Palmer
Troutman Pepper

Immediate Past-President

Lois Thompson
Proskauer Rose LLP

Members

Thea S. Alli
Morgan Lewis

Stacey Armato

Atlantic Investors

Tony Blain

Blain & Associates

Christa M. Demeke

The Wonderful Company

Theane Evangelis

Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP

Kevin Feldman

Feldman Capital LLC

Kerry C. Fowler

Jones Day

Victor George

Law Offices of Victor L. George

Vanessa Gomez

Kirkland & Ellis

Genie Harrison

Genie Harrison Law Firm

Esra Hudson

Manatt, Phelps & Phillips LLP

Bethany Kristovich

Munger, Tolles & Olson LLP

Laura Lively

King & Spalding

Jessica Ludd

UNAC/UHCP

Anna Menedjian

2020 Inc.

Kim Nakamaru

Global Eagle Entertainment

Amy Quartarolo

Latham & Watkins LLP

Karen Rigberg

Arnold & Porter

Executive Director

Betsy Butler

April 6, 2021

The Honorable Richard Pan
Chair, Senate Health Committee
State Capitol, Room 2191
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 65 (Skinner) – Support

Dear Senator Pan,

On behalf of the California Women's Law Center, we write in support of SB 65, an omnibus bill to help improve prenatal outcomes, close racial disparities in maternal and infant mortality, and improve data collection and research to address these issues.

The United States has the highest rate of maternal mortality among higher-income countries with 700 deaths per year, 60% of which are preventable. Although California has reduced its rate of maternal mortality over the past 30 years, mortality rates for Black and Indigenous/Native American pregnant people and infants remain considerably higher than the state average. Between 2011 and 2013, the ratio of death for pregnant Black women was almost 3.8 times higher than white women.


California is headed toward a maternal health crisis, with critical shortages in maternity providers expected by 2025. Currently, California has nine counties that do not have any OBGYNs, and the state has licensed only two nurse midwifery programs and one direct entry midwifery program.

SB 65 creates solutions to help address these issues by requiring full spectrum doula care to be made available to all pregnant and postpartum people on Medi-Cal. The bill will also provide a monthly stipend to low-income pregnant and post-partum people starting at the sixth month of pregnancy and continuing until the child is two years old. SB 65 will also provide additional CalWORKS support for very low-income pregnant individuals.

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 equitable access to health care, including reproductive and maternal health care.

For these reasons, the California Women's Law Center supports SB 65.

Sincerely,



Betsy Butler
Executive Director

360 North Pacific Coast Highway, Suite 2070 | El Segundo, CA 90245

Phone: 323-951-1041 | Email: cwlc@cwlc.org

www.cwlc.org