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April 7, 2021

The Honorable Tom Daly
Chair, Assembly Insurance Committee
State Capitol, P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 994249

Re: AB 123 (Gonzalez) – Support

Dear Assemblymember Daly,

On behalf of the California Women's Law Center, we write in support of AB 123 which will ensure that California's Paid Family Leave Program is available for all workers by guaranteeing ninety percent of their income during the period of their leave is available to them.

Currently under California law, workers have access to State Disability Insurance (SDI) and Paid Family Leave (PFL) to provide for them while they recover from an illness, bond with a new child, or care for a seriously ill family member. However, SDI and PFL only provide for sixty percent of most workers' wages. Many low-income workers cannot afford to live on sixty percent of their wages, so they are unable to take the time off they need, endangering their health or their family's.

The cost of living in already-expensive California continues to rise, creating an increasingly precarious and untenable situation for California's low wage workers. Further, low wage workers are more likely to be people of color, women, and immigrants who already face health disparities due to systematic racism, sexism, and xenophobia. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these problems and highlighted the importance of programs like SDI and PFL.

AB 123 would make the PFL program more equitable for low wage Californians by increasing the wage replacement levels to ninety percent. Also, family leave benefits are not subject to state income taxes, so income replacement would allow most lower- and middle-class families to receive their full regular pay on leave.

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 economic security for all, which includes fair wages and access to benefits.

For these reasons, the California Women's Law Center supports AB 123.

Sincerely,



Betsy Butler
Executive Director

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