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Betsy Butler

April 9, 2021

The Honorable Connie Leyva
Chair, Senate Education Committee
State Capitol, Room 4061
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Senate Bill 363 (Leyva) – Support

Dear Senator Leyva,

On behalf of the California Women's Law Center, we write in support of SB 363 which seeks to ensure that the American Legion does not facilitate an educational program that discriminates based on gender.

California has long held that access to education is a fundamental right for all people, regardless of gender. Our state allows public resources, like the State Capitol in Sacramento, to be used by private organizations like the American Legion for educational purposes.

Unfortunately, girls participating in the American Legion's Girls State civics program are not afforded the same educational opportunities as the participants in the Boys State program. Around 1,000 boys take part in the Boys State program while only 500 girls are able to participate in Girls State. Girls State participants also receive inferior treatment and benefits compared to the boys. Among other examples, Boys State participants pay no fees to apply to the program, while Girls State participants are required to pay a \$75 application fee. American Legion also hosts a college night for the Boys State participants, but not for Girls State.

SB 363 will ensure that the California Education Code banning gender discrimination in educational programs applies to the American Legion by repealing the provisions currently exempting it.

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 363 will ensure that the American Legion treats all participants equally, regardless of gender.

For these reasons, the California Women's Law Center supports SB 363.

Sincerely,



Betsy Butler
Executive Director