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March 17, 2021

The Honorable Reginald Byron Jones-Sawyer Sr.
Chair, Assembly Committee on Public Safety
1020 N. Street, Room 111
Sacramento, California 95814

RE: AB 57 (Gabriel) – Support, If Amended

Dear Assemblymember Jones-Sawyer,

On behalf of the California Women's Law Center (CWLC), we write in support of AB 57, if amended, which would implement specific recommendations from the State Auditor to prevent, respond to, and document hate crimes in California.

Hate crimes are on the rise nationally and in California. Recently, we have seen a tragic surge in incidents targeting the Asian-American community in particular. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), California reported more hate crimes than any other state in 2019.

In 2018, the State Auditor released a report on hate crimes in California which found that law enforcement agencies failed to identify and report a significant percentage of hate crimes to the California Department of Justice (DOJ). The report recommended that the DOJ provide guidance to local law enforcement agencies in the identification and investigation of hate crimes, and reach out to vulnerable communities.

AB 57 would strengthen training requirements for peace officers and require improved guidance, data collection, and reporting by the DOJ. It would amend Penal Code Section 13519.7 to require instruction for peace officers on "multimission criminal extremism, which means the nexus of certain hate crimes, antigovernment extremist crimes, anti-reproductive rights, and crimes committed in whole or in part because of the victims' actual or perceived homelessness."

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 57 will help strengthen training and improve guidance and reporting which will combat the rising number of hate crimes in California and help educate peace officers about anti-reproductive rights crimes.

For these reasons, the California Women's Law Center supports AB 57, if amended.

Sincerely,



Betsy Butler
Executive Director

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