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January 20, 2016

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
Governor, State of California
c/o State Capitol Building, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814
Fax: 916-558-3160

Re: Assembly Bill 908 (Gomez) – Support

Dear Governor Brown:

On behalf of the California Women's Law Center (CWLC), I am writing in support of AB 908, which would improve California's Paid Family Leave and State Disability insurance programs by raising the wage replacement rates, extending Paid Family Leave (PFL), and eliminating the waiting period to apply for PFL benefits. CWLC strongly supports AB 908 because it will allow more families time to bond with a new child, care for a seriously ill family member, or recuperate from an illness or injury.

CWLC applauds California's leadership as the first state to enact paid family leave and as one of only five states with a state disability insurance program. California should continue to lead by improving these laws to better support working families. Under the current laws, many workers are ineligible for PFL because of the existing waiting period. For those who are eligible, the wage replacement rates are so low that many workers do not apply. And when they do apply, the six weeks available is too short, which can seriously impact family health.

Family leave policies are tremendously important. Every developed country has them and most offer far more than six weeks. Extending California's PFL to eight weeks would improve breastfeeding rates and bonding, enhance early child development and result in positive physical and mental health benefits for families and children.

Since its founding in 1989, CWLC has worked to break down barriers and advance the potential of women and girls through transformative litigation, policy advocacy and education. A vital part of our mission is to ensure that women and children receive the resources necessary to allow their families to thrive.

The California Women's Law Center strongly supports AB 908, which will increase the security and stability of California's working families.

Sincerely,



Betsy Butler
Executive Director

CC: Assemblymember Jimmy Gomez