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March 1, 2019

The Honorable Jerry Hill
Chair, Committee on Labor, Public Employment and Retirement
State Capitol, Room 545
Sacramento, CA 95814-4900

RE: SB 142 (Wiener) – Support

Dear Senator Hill,

On behalf of the California Women's Law Center (CWLC), we write in support of SB 142, which will create a more equitable workplace for women in California by requiring employers to provide support for lactating mothers.

Breastfeeding is recommended by every major health care organization and produces long and short-term health benefits for infants and families. Although mothers are the fastest growing segment of the United States workforce, only 52% of mothers have workplace lactation support. When a mother has adequate break time and a private space to express milk, she is more than twice as likely to exclusively breastfeed at six months and reap the associated benefits.

Mothers are only able to breastfeed if their workplace provides proper support. Existing law requires employers to provide a reasonable amount of break time to employees to express milk and employers must provide a room or other location other than a bathroom for this purpose. But these requirements are insufficient to offer real, practical support to most workers, particularly lower income women and women of color who are more likely to face severe disparities in lactation support in the workplace.

SB 142 eases the transition of mothers who return to work by establishing minimum standards for lactation accommodation spaces, requires newly-constructed or renovated buildings to include lactation spaces, and ensures employees receive written information about their rights to a safe, comfortable lactation space at work.

CWLC's mission is to advance the potential of women and girls through transformative litigation, policy advocacy, and education. For 30 years, CWLC has advocated on behalf of pregnant and parenting employees and students and their right to breastfeed or express milk without discrimination.

For these reasons, the California Women's Law Center supports SB 142.

Sincerely,



Betsy Butler
Executive Director

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