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April 2, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Skinner  
Chair, Senate Committee on Public Safety  
State Capitol, Room 2031  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: SB 233 (Wiener) - Support**

Dear Senator Skinner,

On behalf of the California Women's Law Center (CWLC), we write in support of SB 233 which will prohibit the arrest of individuals engaged in sex work when they report sexual assault, domestic violence and other violent crimes. SB 233 also clarifies that possession of condoms cannot be used as cause to arrest someone for this type of work.

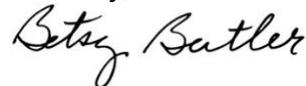
Those who engage in sex work experience and witness extremely high rates of violence, but are often reluctant to report these crimes due to fear of arrest or mistreatment due to their line of work. Currently, condoms can be used as a tool to incriminate sex workers, which discourages sex workers from practicing safe sex, thereby increasing the risk of HIV or other sexually transmitted infections.

SB 233 will ensure that when sex workers are the victim of or witness a violent crime, they are able to report these crimes without fear of being arrested for prostitution. SB 233 will also prohibit the use of condoms as evidence of prostitution, prioritizing the health and safety of people engaged in sex work.

CWLC's mission is to break down barriers and advance the potential of women and girls through transformative litigation, policy advocacy and education. For 30 years, CWLC has been fighting to protect and secure the rights of our most vulnerable Californians, including women of color and trans individuals who are disproportionately criminalized for sex work.

For these reasons, the California Women's Law Center supports SB 233.

Sincerely,



Betsy Butler  
Executive Director