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**Contact: Sulema Landa**  
**Sulema.Landa@asm.ca.gov**

## **Legislative Women’s Caucus Announces Priority Legislation**

SACRAMENTO – Earlier today, members of the California Legislative Women’s Caucus announced a robust package of legislation to further improve the lives of women, children, and families, as well as help reverse the devastating impacts the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the economic well-being of women.

“The hardworking members of the Women’s Caucus are united to ensure that all women have a pathway to overcome the tremendous challenges and obstacles brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic and will continuously fight to ensure all women be treated, respected, and paid as we rightfully deserve,” said Assemblywoman Cristina Garcia (D-Bell Gardens), Chair of the California Legislative Women’s Caucus. “This pandemic has further exacerbated and highlighted the work we need to do to lift up all women, especially low-income women of color, and given us a greater sense of urgency.”

“The COVID-19-induced recession is the first economic downturn in history in which a far larger number of women lost jobs or left jobs, due to the lack of available care for household members, than men. In the month of December alone, women, and specifically women of color, accounted for all of the nation’s job losses,” said Senator Nancy Skinner (D-Berkeley), Vice Chair of the California Legislative Women’s Caucus. “I’m proud that the legislative package supported by the Women’s Caucus is focused on important and much-needed legislation designed to address gender and workplace inequity, increase access to child care and preschool, improve women’s health and safety, and respond to economic and other needs specific to women and their families.”

Six pillars reinforce the Legislative Women’s Caucus’ priority legislation for 2021: Workplace equity, access to child care/family-friendly policies, gender equity, health & safety, protecting vulnerable communities, and addressing poverty.

### **Workplace Equity**

- ***SB 62 (Durazo)***  
"Los Angeles remains one of the top regions in the world for garment manufacturing, where companies seek the benefit of this highly skilled workforce and the necessity of a

local manufacturing hub to meet demand and to avoid supply chain disruptions from this pandemic. But over the years, a culture of “fast fashion” has taken over Los Angeles’ fashion industry. It’s centered around the demands of quick turnaround and has put tremendous pressure on those at the bottom of the production line - our garment workers, who are primarily immigrant women,” said Senator Maria Elena Durazo. “Every year, millions of dollars are stolen out of the pockets of these workers by a deeply flawed compensation system and ill-intentioned contractors who are not held accountable. These workplace violations in the garment industry deeply affect our most vulnerable workers and hinder the strength and resilience of local communities. These loopholes have made the industry hostile to ethical garment companies trying to eliminate sweatshops, build a more inclusive and fair garment industry economy, and ensure that “made in the USA” represents quality and justice. We must end these harmful practices.”

### **Access to Child Care/Family-Friendly Policies**

- ***AB 865 (Quirk-Silva)***

"Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted how fragile our state's child care and early learning system really is. California’s child care and early learning system is carried mainly on the backs of low-income Black and Brown women who are struggling more than ever to make ends meet. Our subsidized child care system further harms the fiscal health of these family child care providers by only allowing for reimbursement when a family actually shows up,” said Assemblywoman Sharon Quirk-Silva. “AB 865 will lessen the financial hardships imposed on California’s family child care providers by removing discrepancies on family child care providers that accept subsidized families and allow for parity with private pay providers.”

- ***AB 1363 (Rivas)***

“California is home to the nation’s largest population of dual language learners, where 60% of children under age six come from homes where English is not the primary language. Research shows children and students benefit from being able to speak multiple languages because it broadens their cognitive flexibility, enhances their ability to learn, and makes individuals competitive in the global workforce. It is important that through AB 1363, we start to identify and foster dual language learners because a child can become completely monolingual, choosing to respond to English within six or eight weeks of starting preschool,” said Assemblywoman Luz Rivas.

### **Gender Equity**

- ***AB 1287 (Bauer-Kahan)***

“In one year, a woman in California pays as much as \$2,381 more for the same goods and services than her male counterpart does. AB 1287 prohibits the practice of applying higher prices on goods marketed to women, known as the “Pink Tax.” The Pink Tax is a sexist burden on women’s financial security and only adds to the gender wage and wealth gaps,” said Assemblywoman Rebecca Bauer-Kahan.

## **Health & Safety**

- ***AB 124 (Kamlager)***

“We know that survivors of sexual violence are more likely to be incarcerated, yet during sentencing, California’s legal system fails to consider the relevant experiences that contribute to these individual’s actions. AB 124 creates a clear path for survivors to receive justice by allowing the courts to consider how a defendant’s own trauma contributed to the offense and even their conviction,” said Senator Sydney Kamlager.

- ***AB 925 (Dahle)***

“AB 925 provides greater reimbursement to providers of Sexual Assault Medical Forensic Examinations, which are a critical avenue for justice and essential healthcare service for victims. I am excited that this bipartisan issue has been selected as a priority for the Women’s Caucus, as access to these exams is a statewide problem, but especially magnified in rural areas like those I represent in the First Assembly District,” said Assemblywoman Megan Dahle.

- ***SB 352 (Eggman)***

“The problem of sexual assault in the military is well-established and has been on the rise in recent years. SB 352 ensures that there will be greater transparency about these crimes and provides increased tools to the military justice system to ensure the perpetrators of sexual assault are brought to justice.”

## **Protecting Vulnerable Communities**

- ***AB 14 (Aguiar-Curry)***

“Only miles from our State Capitol there are areas of our state, home of the Silicon Valley, where Californians have no access to broadband connectivity. In partnership with Sen. Gonzalez and nearly two dozen of our Legislative colleagues, we have the momentum to get this effort across the finish line,” said Assemblywoman Cecilia Aguiar-Curry.

- ***SB 4 (Gonzalez)***

“In order to improve the lives of women across our state, we must close the digital divide once and for all,” said Senator Lena A. Gonzalez. “Recent studies have found that 53% of all low-wage workers in California are women—SB 4 will ensure that we meet the internet connectivity needs of all Californians—empowering more women with the digital skills and tools they need to advance in their education and careers.”

- ***AB 1225 (Waldron)***

“We must reflect on how much work there is left to do in reimagining justice for women. The experiences of women behind bars receive far less attention, even as the number of incarcerated women between 1980 and 2016 increased seven-fold,” said Assemblywoman Marie Waldron. “Women’s unique needs, from pregnancy, motherhood, and high rates as victims of abuse and trauma need specialized solutions. AB 1225 will ensure that women are given the resources and support needed to successfully rehabilitate.”

### **Addressing Poverty**

- ***AB 27 (Rivas)***

“In 2018-2019, there were nearly 270,000 K-12 students in California experiencing homelessness, and due to this pandemic, we can expect this number to get higher. Children experiencing homelessness includes those temporarily staying with families due to economic hardship, and individuals living in motels, shelters, vehicles, public spaces, or substandard housing, and we know that these students are more likely to be chronically absent from school, and struggle academically. AB 27 will invest in our students by identifying homeless students so that they can be connected to resources,” said Assemblywoman Luz Rivas.

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