

A Stronger California:

*Securing Economic Opportunity
for All Women and Families*

2019 Legislative Agenda

Stronger California Advocates Network

About the Stronger California Agenda:

California is home to millions of families who rely on common sense public policies helping them build assets, succeed in safe workplaces, and access affordable and quality care for their children. That is why advocates, legislators, and other community members throughout the state stand together in support of the Stronger California Agenda.

The Stronger California Agenda has four pillars that frame the policy initiatives critical to the economic security of women and families in this state. It recognizes that women are critical to a strong and vibrant California economy and play a pivotal role in spurring economic growth in California. California is home to 12 percent of the country's women, comprising almost half the workforce in our state and primary income-earners in many households. They influence the economy as decision-makers for their families, as consumers, and as workers. In fact, women workers predominated in industry sectors whose growth is credited for California's recovery from the Great Recession of 2007-2008.

The Stronger California Agenda provides concrete policy solutions to address the fact that many women and their families in California face obstacles to enjoying economically secure lives. California has the fifth largest economy in the world, but one of the nation's highest poverty rates, disproportionately harming women and children. Sexual harassment and violence in the workplace, and retaliation for speaking out, continue to push women out of jobs and entire industries. Child care access is lower in California than in other states. Women are paid less than their male counterparts for the same work in virtually every job sector. They are also more likely to work in low-wage jobs and have fewer opportunities to advance in their careers. California's families also suffer without family-friendly work policies that allow women and men to earn a living while also caring for their families. In a dramatically altered federal landscape, policies that address the myriad of obstacles confronting women and families are now more important than ever.

This Agenda is not just about women. It promotes policies that will improve the economic security of all Californians. Thank you for standing with the Stronger California Advocates Network in supporting this Agenda. To learn more about this historic effort, see **StrongerCalifornia.org**. A list of partners in the Stronger California Advocates Network is on the back page.

Onward,



Noreen Farrell
Executive Director of Equal Rights Advocates
Chair of the Stronger California Advocates Network

A Stronger California: Securing Economic Opportunity for All Women & Families

The 2019 Stronger California Advocates Network Agenda

Ensure Fair Pay, Job Opportunities, & Workplace Justice

- **AB 9 – Extend Filing Deadline for Harassment & Discrimination Claims** (*Introduced by Assemblymembers Reyes, Friedman & Waldron*)

Under current law, a worker who has experienced harassment or other forms of discrimination at work has just one year to file a claim with the Department of Fair Employment and Housing. This is significantly shorter than the time allowed for filing other civil claims. This bill would extend the filing deadline to three years, ensuring that workers have the necessary time to seek justice.

- **AB 749 – Ban Retaliatory “No Rehire” Clauses in Settlement Agreements** (*Introduced by Assemblymembers Stone, Gonzalez & Reyes*)

AB 749 would prohibit the use of “no rehire” clauses in settlement agreements that broadly restrict future employment opportunities for workers settling a sexual harassment or other employment dispute.

- **SB 171 – Pay Data Reporting to Close the Wage Gap** (*Introduced by Senator Jackson*)

This bill would require California employers with 100 employees or more to submit an annual pay data report to the Department of Industrial Relations outlining the compensation and hours worked of its employees by gender, race, ethnicity, and job category. This would allow state agencies to more efficiently identify patterns of wage disparities and encourage employers to analyze their own pay practices to ensure they are fair and lawful.

- **AB 51 – Stop Forced Waivers of Workers’ Rights** (*Introduced by Assemblymember Gonzalez*)

This bill will prohibit employers from requiring workers to sign forced arbitration agreements, or other waivers of rights, as a condition of employment and would prohibit retaliation against workers who decline to sign. These agreements are used to trap victims of sexual harassment, wage theft, and other workplace violations in the employer’s private arbitration system and prevent workers from seeking justice in court

- **Budget Request: Domestic Worker Rights Education and Outreach Program**

A General Fund allocation of \$5 million would fund the establishment of a Domestic Worker Rights Education and Outreach Program within the California Division of Labor Standards Enforcement (DLSE). The program would provide education, outreach and training to domestic work employees and employers on minimum wage, overtime, sick leave, record-keeping, retaliation, and the DLSE wage adjudication and retaliation process. This program would increase awareness of and compliance with existing labor protections within the domestic work industry to promote fair and dignified labor standards across the industry.

Expand Access to Affordable, Quality Early Childhood Care and Education

- **SB 321 – A Strong Start for CalWORKs Families** (*Introduced by Senator Mitchell*)

This bill seeks to fulfill the promise made when the CalWORKs program was created 20 years ago: that families would have affordable child care to keep their children safe and learning, and that families would experience no break in child care services as they transitioned between the three CalWORKs child care stages. The lack of initial, stable child care holds families back and threatens their ability to fully benefit from the safety net supports of the CalWORKs program. By aligning the technology, systems and infrastructure of our programs, this bill will give all children a strong start and their working parents the viable chance to attain economic security.

- **AB 194 – Building Equitable Futures for Families Act** (*Introduced by Assemblymember Reyes*)

This bill works to address the child care affordability crisis in California that leaves nearly 2 million eligible children without access to quality child care - 86% of whom are children of color. AB 194 invests \$1 billion over three years into the child care system. The funding will expand access to affordable, flexible child care that will have two-generational impact, by both supporting the child's healthy development and parents' ability to build their family's economic security.

- **SB 234 – Keep Kids Close to Home Act** (*Introduced by Senator Skinner*)

Licensed child care is available for only 23% of children with working parents, and the numbers keep getting worse. Because of gaps in the current state law, family child care providers face unnecessary red tape that keeps them from caring for children and providers are routinely turned down from places to live, despite state law and regulatory guidance that protects them. To meet the needs of California families, SB 234 equalizes the permitting requirements for small and large family child care homes, clarifies that family child care is allowed in apartments and condos, and updates housing protections for family child care providers so they can continue to offer early care and education for our children, and support parents working.

- **AB 378 – Building a Better Early Care and Education Act** (*Introduced by Assemblymember Limón*)

This bill gives family child care providers the right to collectively bargain with the state so they can negotiate for improvements that impact the work they do and the families they serve, including but not limited to reimbursement rates, rate add-ons for providers who complete additional training, access to subsidized care, expanded access to food programs, greater access to families for subsidized care, benefits, improve recruitment and retention of qualified providers and access to relevant training.

- **SB 174 – Child Care Stabilization Formula** (*Introduced by Senator Leyva*)

This bill addresses ongoing problems with the state's bifurcated and inadequate rate structure within the Early Care and Education (ECE) system. The bill seeks to establish a single, regionalized reimbursement rate system for child care, preschool, and early learning services that would recognize the true cost of providing care in different settings and parts of the state.

- **Budget Request: Child Care**

\$1 billion over three years to expand flexible, affordable child care and the necessary funds to implement 12 months of continuous child care in the CalWORKs Stage 1 child care program.

Support Family-Friendly Workplaces

- **SB 135 – Family Leave for a 21st Century California** (*Introduced by Senator Jackson*)

SB 135 will ensure that nearly all Californians who pay into the Paid Family Leave Program can use it without losing their job; that more newborns can receive individual care for their first six months of life, an essential time for early brain development; and that California's leave laws reflect the state's diverse, multigenerational families and caregiving needs.

- **SB 142 – Workplace Lactation Accommodations** (*Introduced by Senator Wiener*)

This bill addresses the barriers that working parents face that make it difficult to maintain breastfeeding after returning to work. It would require employers to have a written lactation policy and to provide employees with a safe and comfortable lactation space that meets minimum requirements. It also requires newly constructed or renovated buildings of a certain size and classification to include lactation spaces, and encourages the Department of Labor Standards Enforcement to provide a set of lactation accommodation best practices and a model policy for employers. If passed, this bill will be the most comprehensive lactation accommodation law in the nation.

Build Economic Security by Addressing Poverty & Building Assets

- **SB 268 – Repeal CalWORKs Asset Test** (*Introduced by Senator Wiener*)

This bill would repeal the CalWORKs Asset Test and the vehicle asset test, removing the bureaucratic barriers that discourage poor Californians from saving money and exiting poverty. The cash asset test discourages people from saving because they need the immediate program assistance, and are thus prevented from having money in cases of emergency. Vehicle asset tests also work as a barrier for families to exit poverty. With over 90% of CalWORKs families headed by women, SB 268 would help women and their children break through the cycle of poverty and gain economic security.

- **AB 24 – Targeted Child Tax Credit** (*Introduced by Assemblymember Burke*)

This bill would establish a Targeted Child Tax Credit (TTC) for families with children with incomes below half of the supplemental poverty level. If passed, the TTC would better account for the actual cost-of-living that California families face by deducting family expenses from wages and support through social safety net programs—helping to get families out of living in deep poverty.

- **AB 1434 – Increase SSI/SSP Grants for People Who Are Disabled or Elderly** (*Introduced by Assemblymember Kalra*)

This bill would increase the SSI/SSP Grants for people who are disabled or elderly so that their income is no less than the federal poverty line. Women represent a significant majority of SSI/SSP recipients, who rely on this benefit as their sole source of income.

- **AB 516 – Eliminating Poverty Tows** (*Introduced by Assemblymember Chiu*)

This bill ends the practice of towing cars as a debt collection tool and makes sure low-income drivers can continue using their cars for basic needs such as getting to work, taking children to school, or going to medical appointments.

- **AB 539 – Fair Access to Credit Act of 2019** (*Introduced by Assemblymember Limón*)

This bill would establish important consumer protections for Californians seeking a loan of more than \$2,500 but less than \$10,000, to contract for or receive charges at a rate not exceeding an annual simple interest rate of 36% plus the Federal Funds Rate.

- **Budget Request: End Childhood Deep Poverty**

Fully fund the plan detailed in the 2018-19 Budget Act to end childhood deep poverty in the CalWORKs program.

- **Budget Request: SSI/SSP**

The historic expansion of CalFresh to SSI/SSP recipients will actually harm some of our most vulnerable families currently able to access both programs. Making the “hold harmless” programs prospective state entitlements will protect these households from losing vital food assistance. This budget allocation would also increase SSI/SSP Grants for people who are disabled or elderly so that their income is no less than the federal poverty line.

The Stronger California Advocates Network

The Stronger California Advocates Network is a historic collaboration of organizations and advocate coalitions with deep experience working with communities affected by the four pillars of the Stronger California Agenda. The Network capitalizes on the strengths of our members to advance the economic security of women and families in California.

Network Roundtable

9 to 5

ACLU of California

Act for Women & Girls

Alliance for Community

Empowerment

American Association of University
Women

California Asset Building Coalition

California Child Care Resource &
Referral Network

California Domestic Workers
Coalition

California Employment Lawyers
Association

California Latinas for Reproductive
Justice

California Partnership

California Women's Law Center

California Work and Family Coalition

Center for Popular Democracy

Child Care Law Center

Equal Rights Advocates

Legal Aid at Work

Mujeres Unidas y Activas

National Council of Jewish Women

Organization United for Respect

Parent Voices CA

Raising California Together

Restaurant Opportunities Centersg
(ROC) United

Tradeswomen, Inc.

UFCW Western States Council

Voices for Progress

Western Center on Law and Poverty

Women's Foundation of California

YWCA- San Francisco & Marin

Network Supporters

Asset Building Strategies

Business and Professional Women of
Colorado

California Women Lawyers

Center for Responsible Lending

Centro Legal de la Raza

ChangeLab Solutions

Closing the Women's Wealth Gap
Initiative

Coalition of Labor Union Women – CA
Capitol Chapter

Community Legal Services in East
Palo Alto

Consumer Attorneys of California

County of Santa Clara Office of
Women's Policy

Courage Campaign

Equal Justice Society

Feminist Majority

Friends Committee on Legislation of
California

Insight Center for Community

Economic Development

It's Time Network

Justice in Aging

National Housing Law Project

National Women's Political Caucus,
LA Metro

Public Counsel

The Public Interest Law Project

UltraViolet

United Nations Association of
Boulder County

Women Lawyers of Sacramento

Women's March Oakland

For more information, contact:

Jessica Stender, jstender@equalrights.org

Noreen Farrell, nfarrell@equalrights.org