



CAOC-sponsored bill targets secret settlements in sexual harassment and assault cases

SB 820 protects women, declares that "enough is enough"

SACRAMENTO (Jan. 3, 2018) – People who commit sexual assault and sexual harassment in the workplace in California would no longer be able to keep their misdeeds hidden under a bill co-sponsored by Consumer Attorneys of California that was introduced today at the State Capitol.

SB 820, authored by Sen. Connie Leyva (D-Chino) and also co-sponsored by the California Women's Law Center, is known as the STAND (Stand Together Against Non-Disclosures) Act. It would prohibit secrecy clauses related to specified sexual misconduct in settlements involving California employers, both public and private, including the Legislature. In addition to sexual assault and sexual harassment, the bill would also forbid non-disclosure agreements in sexual discrimination settlements.

The bill was inspired by many recent reports of wrongdoers, most notably Hollywood movie producer Harvey Weinstein. Settlements for sexual misconduct were repeatedly paid but kept out of the public eye because of non-disclosure agreements included in the settlement terms. As a result, other victims were unknowingly put at risk.

The STAND Act would not prevent settlements in sexual misconduct cases, but it would prevent the terms of the settlement from being confidential. That secrecy has allowed some sexual predators to continue to harm other innocent victims.

"SB 820 will help end the cycle of sexual harassment and assault that continues to torment victims in the workplace," said Micha Star Liberty, a Consumer Attorneys of California vice president. "Too often, perpetrators have been allowed to offend again and again with no public accountability. By shining a bright light on this wrongdoing, Sen. Leyva's bill will have a deterrent effect. It declares that enough is enough."

Consumer Attorneys of California is a professional organization of plaintiffs' attorneys representing consumers seeking accountability against wrongdoers in cases involving personal injury, product liability, environmental degradation and other causes.

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