



CAOC-backed bill banning secret settlements for sexual misconduct is one step from governor's desk

Assembly passes SB 820, which aims to thwart workplace sexual predators

SACRAMENTO (Aug. 23, 2018) – A Consumer Attorneys of California-sponsored bill spawned by the #MeToo movement to protect victims of sexual harassment and discrimination in the workplace is now just one step from the governor's desk with its approval today by the state Assembly.

Authored by Sen. Connie Leyva (D-Chino) and co-sponsored by the California Women's Law Center, Senate Bill 820 targets secret settlements that have allowed offenders to keep their misdeeds out of the public eye and continue to abuse others.

Known as the STAND (Stand Together Against Non-Disclosures) Act, SB 820 would prohibit nondisclosure agreements – unless requested by the plaintiff – in settlements related to sexual assault, sexual harassment and sex discrimination involving California employers, both public and private, including the Legislature.

SB 820 was one of the first bills in the nation to address the #MeToo movement's focus on preventing sexual harassment and assault. The bill arose from the many recent accounts of harassment, including Hollywood movie producer Harvey Weinstein, whose sexual misconduct led to repeated settlements that were kept out of the public eye because of nondisclosure agreements.

Workplace sexual predators have been able to use secret settlements to silence victims and keep their transgressions hidden, putting other victims at risk and allowing predators to repeat again and again. SB 820 changes that by bringing this misconduct out in the open.

SB 820 was previously passed by the state Senate, but because it was amended in the Assembly it now goes back to the Senate for concurrence. California's legislative session ends August 31.

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.

For more information:

**J.G. Preston, CAOC Press Secretary, 916-669-7126, jgpreston@caoc.org
Eric Bailey, CAOC Communications Director, 916-669-7122, ebailey@caoc.org**