



CONSUMER ATTORNEYS OF CALIFORNIA

Seeking Justice for All

California Assembly approves end to forced arbitration for sexual misconduct in the workplace

CAOC-backed bill will give employees a choice of dispute resolution

SACRAMENTO (May 22, 2019) – Californians who are subject to sexual harassment and other misconduct at work will no longer be forced to resolve their disputes out of the public eye under a bill that was passed by the state Assembly today

Assembly Bill 51 by Asm. Lorena Gonzalez (D-San Diego), co-sponsored by Consumer Attorneys of California and the California Labor Federation AFL-CIO, will guarantee workers can choose to take claims of workplace sexual misconduct, discrimination or other labor violations to a public forum, such as a court or state agency, rather than being forced to use a secret arbitration proceeding as a condition of employment. In addition, employers would be prevented from retaliating against an employee who refused to agree to such an arbitration clause.

“Arbitration can be an appropriate forum for resolving workplace disputes, but only if it workers freely and voluntarily choose it and don’t have it forced upon them,” said Consumer Attorneys of California president Mike Arias. “That freedom of choice is preserved under AB 51. But many workers will choose to take their claims to a public forum to expose the misbehavior and prevent serial harassers from harming others.”

AB 51 will now go to the state Senate.

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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