



CONSUMER ATTORNEYS OF CALIFORNIA

Seeking Justice for All

Backed by CAOC, Reyes and Friedman reintroduce a #MeToo inspired bill vetoed by Gov. Brown

AB 9 would give workplace harassment victims more time to file claims

SACRAMENTO (Dec. 3, 2018) – Undeterred by a veto last year and backed again by Consumer Attorneys of California, Assembly Members Eloise Gomez Reyes and Laura Friedman have reintroduced #MeToo-inspired legislation that would offer better protection against workplace sexual harassment and assault.

Assembly Bill 9 would extend the time to file claims of harassment and discrimination from the current one year to three years, giving victims a better chance of holding predators accountable.

It is the second attempt by Reyes (D-San Bernardino) and Friedman (D-Glendale) to push the legislation. During the 2018 legislative session, their AB 1870 marched through the Legislature with little opposition, but then was vetoed by Gov. Jerry Brown. The governor said he felt the one-year deadline, in place since 1963, ensured “prompt resolution while memories and evidence are fresh.”

But the reality in such cases is that victims are grappling with trauma, workplace pressure and other issues that can cause them to delay taking action until too late to meet the strict one-year deadline. Many low-wage workers who suffer harassment or discrimination are not aware of their legal rights and do not know that they cannot file a claim if they do not do so within a year.

By extending the limit to three years, victims would be allowed the same amount of time as those who file for civil actions such as fraud and contract disputes. Several other states already allow harassment and discrimination victims three years or more to file a claim.

“This bill is the very essence of the #MeToo movement and is very much needed in California,” said Mike Arias, Consumer Attorneys of California president. “It will give victims of harassment or discrimination, particularly low-wage workers unfamiliar with their legal rights, a better chance to hold sexual predators accountable and help protect other potential victims. The Legislature demonstrated its full support for this change at every step of the process last year, and we have high hopes our new governor, Gavin Newsom, will join in backing this important legislation.”

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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