

For Immediate Release:

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#MeToo Inspired Bill Wins Assembly Support

AB 9 Corrects Statute of Limitations for Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Claims

Sacramento – The California State Assembly today approved important legislation that would give victims of harassment and discrimination more time to file claims – fixing an unfair and unusual barrier to justice.

Currently, workers have just one year to file a claim under the California Fair Employment and Housing Act. Failing to means they would never get their day in court. Assembly Members Eloise Gomez Reyes, Laura Friedman, and Marie Waldron re-introduced this bill because it is long overdue.

In committee, lawmakers heard from Pomona electrician Gabriela Sanders. She was harassed and sexually assaulted by a co-worker. Afraid of pushing the issue because of pending lay-offs, Sanders didn't seek legal advice until the following year – missing the deadline to file a complaint by just a few days.

Co-sponsored by the **California Employment Lawyers Association (CELA)**, **Consumer Attorneys of California (CAOC)**, and **Equal Rights Advocates (ERA)**, AB 9 extends this time limit from one year to three years. That deadline is more consistent with other statutes of limitations: fraud is three years, contract disputes are four years, and personal injury is two years.

“Thanks to #MeToo, there is new awareness that California needs to change how we treat harassment and discrimination in the workplace,” says Mariko Yoshihara, Policy Director for CELA. “For too long, shortfalls in the law have amounted to no justice for survivors and an easy out for perpetrators. AB 9 would help fix that.”

“Many workers who survive sexual harassment, particularly low-paid workers, are not even aware the clock has begun to run,” says Jessica Stender, Senior Counsel for Workplace Justice & Public Policy at ERA. “The kind of trauma you experience as a victim of sexual harassment, lack of information about your rights, and fear of retaliation often makes victims wait to speak up or report. One year is not enough time.”

“This will give survivors of harassment or discrimination a better chance to hold sexual predators accountable and help protect other potential victims,” said Mike Arias, Consumer

Attorneys of California president. “The Legislature has backed AB 9 at every step of the process, and we have high hopes our new governor will join us in support.”

The bill now goes to the Senate.

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About California Employment Lawyers Association: CELA exists to protect and expand the legal rights and opportunities of all California workers and to strengthen the community of lawyers who represent them.

About Consumer Attorneys of California: Consumer Attorneys of California is a professional organization of plaintiffs’ attorneys representing consumers seeking accountability against wrongdoers.

About Equal Rights Advocates: Equal Rights Advocates is a national civil rights organization dedicated to protecting and expanding economic and educational access and opportunities for women and girls.

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