

California Commission ON THE  
**STATUS OF  
WOMEN**  
... AND GIRLS ...



**CALIFORNIA REPUBLIC**



**POLICY 2024**  
**PRIORITIES**

women.ca.gov



# WE'RE GOING TO GET IT DONE

## A LOOK AT OUR 2024 POLICY PRIORITIES

For nearly 60 years, the California Commission on the Status of Women and Girls has identified and worked to eliminate inequities in state laws, practices, and conditions that affect California's women and girls. The Commission provides leadership through research, policy and program development, education, outreach and collaboration, advocacy, and strategic partnerships.

Through our partnerships, the Commission also provides direct support to the California Equal Pay Pledge, College Student Right to Access Act, and the Women's Recovery Response grant program.

Commissioners represent a diverse cross section of the California population. The Commission is allocated nine (9) public members, six (6) legislative members, one (1) designee of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the California Labor Commissioner assigned through statute to our Commission.

All references to 'women and girls' include gender-expansive individuals including cis women and girls, trans women and girls, nonbinary individuals, gender-nonconforming individuals, genderqueer individuals, and any women or girl identified individuals.

## CALIFORNIA COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN AND GIRLS

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The Policy Committee reviews, comments, and recommends positions on significant proposed legislation, regulations, policies, procedures, and practices that come before the Commission. The Committee also assists Commissioners and staff in formulating and implementing legislative policy and positions on state and federal regulatory proposals, and reviews legislative proposals and administrative regulations that have an impact on California's women and girls. Additionally, the Policy Committee helps to ensure oversight of the Budget Advocacy Subcommittee on securing the necessary funding for Commission operations and programming.

For the first year of the 2023-24 legislative session, the Commission took a support position on a total of 50 bills backed by the research outlined in the California Blueprint for Women's Pandemic Economic Recovery. Of those, 30 were sent to the Governor's desk and 21 were ultimately signed into law by the Governor.

For the second year of the 2023-2024 legislative session, the Policy Committee has reviewed 29 legislative proposals and recommended that the Executive Committee support 14 bills to become part of Commission's Policy Priorities for this legislative session.



At the March 13, 2024, Executive Committee meeting, Commissioners approved 11 of the 13 proposals that were recommended by the Policy Committee; that list of proposals included co-sponsorship, support+ and support levels of engagement.

Commissioners requested additional information on two of the bills, which the Policy Director was able to provide, and recommended that the Full Commission support these two bills as was originally recommended by the Policy Committee.

The Policy Committee also recommended that the Full Commission vote to adopt one additional bill, which was in spot bill form at the time of the Executive Committee meeting, to finalize the Commission's Legislative Package for 2023-2024 Session.

A breakdown of the levels of engagement and bill summaries for each of the 14 legislative proposals that the Policy Committee recommended adopting, including the 11 legislative proposals that were voted on by the Executive Committee, the two bills that Commissioners requested additional information for, and one additional bill that the Policy Committee is recommending the Full Commission support, can be found in the following pages.

These policies are grouped into three broad policy category pillars which the Commission has adopted as representative of the policy issues where there is the greatest need, and the Commission can have the greatest impact:

- Racial and Gender Equity
- Economic Security
- Women and Wellness

**2024 SUPPORT SUMMARY**

**CO-SPONSORED**

SB 782      Limón                      Gubernatorial Appointments

Requires the Governor to publish demographic information for gubernatorial appointments.

**SUPPORTED**

SB 953      Menjivar                      Period Equity Now

This bill would add menstrual products to the schedule of covered benefits under Medi-Cal.

SB 959      Menjivar                      Gender Affirming Care

This bill will create a website modeled after [abortion.ca.gov](http://abortion.ca.gov) for access to gender affirming care resources and information.

SB 1137      Smallwood Cuevas      Recognizing Intersectional Discrimination

Recognizes discrimination based on one or more protected characteristics, such as race and gender, under our discrimination laws.

SB 1245      Ochoa Bogh                      Streamlining IHSS Paramedical Forms

Streamlines the process of obtaining paramedical services by allowing licensed healthcare professionals to sign the form simultaneously with those authorized through In-Home Supportive Services.

AB 1808      Nguyen                      Childcare and Development Services: Eligibility

This bill will align the eligibility period for childcare support under the CalWORKs program with other subsidized programs, extending it from 12 to 24 months.

AB 1846      Bauer-Kahan                      Judicial Officers Training: Sexual Abuse/Assault

This bill directs the Judicial Council to create training for judges on sexual assault with an emphasis on appropriate treatment and trauma.

AB 1863      Ramos                      Emergency Services Act: Notification Systems

The California Highway Patrol, in collaboration with tribal nations, will be required to create policies and procedures for handling missing persons, and the issuance of a Feather Alerts.

**2024 SUPPORT SUMMARY - CONTINUED**

**SUPPORT - CONTINUED**

AB 1908      Schiavo                      Department of Veterans Affairs: Internal Audits  
Requires Veterans Affairs to submit a report on significant problems discovered by the department's internal auditor during the previous year.

AB 2099      Bauer-Kahan                      Crimes: Reproductive Health Services  
This bill creates new penalties to deter funded and organized anti-choice extremists at reproductive health care centers.

AB 2319      Wilson and Weber      CA Dignity in Pregnancy and Childbirth  
Requires evidence-based implicit bias training to perinatal or prenatal care providers to ensure all birthing people have access to health care.

AB 2515      Papan                                      Menstrual Products: PFAS  
The bill mandates the Department of Toxic Substances Control and State Department of Public Health to assess and publicize the hazards of chemicals in menstrual products that could impact vulnerable populations.

AB 3031      Lee and Low                      LGBTQ+ Commission  
Would establish an LGBTQ+ Commission in state government.

AB 3106      Schiavo                                      Infectious Diseases: Excluded Workers  
This bill would require an employer to make certain accommodations to employees who have tested positive for COVID-19.

**Prepared for the Commission by:**

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# RACIAL & GENDER EQUITY

*Intersectional topics that have disparate impact on women, especially women of color, people with disabilities, LGBTQIA+, and historically marginalized populations.*

## **SB 782 (LIMÓN) GUBERNATORIAL APPOINTMENTS**

### **CO-SPONSOR**

**SUMMARY:** This bill requires the Office of the Governor to maintain on its internet website a list of every state board and commission, including specified data of every state board and commission. In addition, this bill requires the Office of the Governor to publish on its internet website a report that contains aggregate demographic information of appointments by the Office of the Governor.

**COMMISSION NEXUS:** Women make up 50% of our population, yet that isn't represented in our state boards and commissions. We need more data to better understand where these gaps exist and in order to better address this issue.

## **SB 1137 (SMALLWOOD CUEVAS) RECOGNIZING INTERSECTIONAL DISCRIMINATION**

**SUMMARY:** This bill will explicitly recognize intersectionality (discrimination based on one or more protected characteristics such as race and gender) under our discrimination laws.

**COMMISSION NEXUS:** Women wear many hats and if we don't recognize that intersectionality, we can't end the cycle of discrimination in our laws.



## **AB 1863 (RAMOS) EMERGENCY SERVICES ACT: NOTIFICATION SYSTEMS**

**SUMMARY:** This bill would require the Department of the California Highway Patrol, in consultation with specified groups including tribal nations, to develop policies and procedures providing instruction specifying how a law enforcement agency and certain entities involved in emergency warnings are required to proceed after a missing person has been reported to a law enforcement agency and prescribed conditions are met. The bill would require those policies and procedures to include, among other things, procedures for the transfer of information regarding the missing person and the circumstances surrounding the missing person's disappearance. The bill would also require the Department to issue a Feather Alert within 48 hours of receiving a request from law enforcement or a tribe.

**COMMISSION NEXUS:** National studies have found that Indigenous Women are murdered at a rate ten times (10x) higher than all other ethnicities. Yet, in too many instances tribal people are not receiving timely information or conclusions. A 2016 study by the National Institute of Justice found that more than 84.3 percent American Indian and Alaska Native women have experienced violence in their lifetime, including 56.1 percent who have experienced sexual violence. In the year leading up to the study, 39.8 percent of American Indian and Alaska Native women had experienced violence, including 14.4 percent who had experienced sexual violence. Additionally, the Commission co-sponsored last year's Missing and Murdered Indigenous People week with Assemblymember James Ramos, and will be doing so again this year.

## **AB 1908 (SCHIAVO) DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS: INTERNAL AUDITS**

**SUMMARY:** This bill would require the department to, on or before July 1, 2025, and on or before July 1 each year thereafter, submit a report to the Governor, the Legislature, the Senate Committee on Military and Veterans Affairs, and the Assembly Committee on Military and Veterans Affairs. The bill would require the report to include a description of significant problems discovered by the department's internal auditor and a summary of investigations and reviews conducted by the department during the previous year.

**COMMISSION NEXUS:** Women veteran's face unique barriers including discrimination, wage gap, higher rates of homelessness and suicide. While AB 1908 is not specific to women, in order to capture the broader range of issues faced by all veterans, there will be issues specific to women that are expected to come out in this audit.

## AB 3031 (LEE AND LOW) LGBTQ+ COMMISSION

**SUMMARY:** This bill would establish the LGBTQ+ Commission in state government. The bill would provide for the appointment of 9 members, appointed by the Governor, the Speaker of the Assembly, and the Senate Committee on Rules. Establish the goals of the commission, which would include, among other things, acting in an advisory capacity to the Legislature and the Governor on policy matters affecting the state's LGBTQ+ community and its members. Commencing July 1, 2025, require the commission to convene quarterly meetings to identify the statewide needs of the LGBTQ+ community and to assist in implementing supportive policies and initiatives to address the needs of the LGBTQ+ community.

**COMMISSION NEXUS:** LGBTQ+ rights are under attack nationwide and as California becomes one of the few safe states this Commission will be uniquely positioned to better advise state leaders. There is much overlap and natural alignment with this Commission and CCSWG. CCSWG has also been supportive of the creation of other Commissions where there is overlap and alignment like the Racial Equity Commission.



CALIFORNIA REPUBLIC

# WOMEN & WELLNESS

*Health access, care and safety.*

## **SB 953 (MENJIVAR) PERIOD EQUITY NOW**

**SUMMARY:** This bill would add menstrual products to the schedule of covered benefits under Medi-Cal.

**COMMISSION NEXUS:** Period poverty remains a persistent issue for our most vulnerable communities. According to California data released in 2022 by the Alliance for Period Supplies, 1 in 3 Low-income menstruators reported missing work, school, or similar commitments due to lack of access to menstrual products. We must continue to advocate for a more inclusive and responsive healthcare system that prioritizes the well-being of Medi-Cal recipients through menstrual product coverage.

## **SB 959 (MENJIVAR) GENDER AFFIRMING CARE**

**SUMMARY:** This bill will create a website modeled after [abortion.ca.gov](https://abortion.ca.gov) for access to gender affirming care resources and information. It will direct the state to work in partnership with community stakeholders to create and maintain an online resource that offers information to patients, health care providers, and families about available support for transgender, gender nonconforming and intersex individuals and their families.

**COMMISSION NEXUS:** Trans people, and trans women and girls, experience widespread discrimination, violence, prejudice, and other forms of stigma. Many trans women and girls are underinsured or lack access to life saving gender affirming healthcare as well as resources and adequate support to help them thrive. Creating a safe place where resources are readily accessible is essential to their wellbeing.

## **AB 1846 (BAUER-KAHAN) JUDICIAL OFFICERS TRAINING: SEXUAL ABUSE AND ASSAULT**

**SUMMARY:** This bill directs the Judicial Council to create training for judges on sexual assault with an emphasis on appropriate treatment and trauma. This training will be informed by victim’s advocacy groups in order to ensure its survivor centered.

**COMMISSION NEXUS:** We have seen a lack of concern within the courtroom setting by some judges overseeing sexual assault cases. 1 in 6 women will be the victim of a rape or attempted rape in her lifetime. We need those impacted by sexual assault to feel safe and protected in an environment where they could be face-to-face with their offender. We need judges that comprehend the volatility of the situation and keep court-room proceedings fair and appropriate.

## **AB 2099 (BAUER-KAHAN) CRIMES: REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SERVICES**

**SUMMARY:** This bill creates new penalties to deter funded and organized anti-choice extremists at reproductive health care centers. This bill includes penalties for filming patients and providers with intent to intimidate. It further increases legal protections for providers and patients commensurate with the risks they face.

**COMMISSION NEXUS:** The ability to safely access reproductive health care is a fundamental necessity for women and girls and as California becomes one of the few safe places in the country to receive reproductive health care, it becomes even more essential that people seeking this care are able to do so safely and without fear.

# AB 2319 (WILSON AND WEBER) CA DIGNITY IN PREGNANCY AND CHILDBIRTH ACT

**SUMMARY:** This bill makes legislative findings that the Legislature recognizes all birthing people and extends the evidence-based implicit bias training requirements to also include hospitals that provide perinatal or prenatal care. Requires an implicit bias program to include recognition of intersecting identities and the potential associated biases and would require, by February 1 of each year and that a facility provide the department with proof of compliance. This bill also authorizes the State Department of Public Health to issue an administrative penalty if it determines that a facility has violated these provisions, and would require the department to annually post on its internet website a list of facilities that did not submit timely proof of compliance and have been issued administrative penalties. Each health care provider that does not complete the required training constitutes a separate violation. Lastly, under this bill the State Department of Public Health will have full administrative power and jurisdiction to ensure full implementation of this bill.

**COMMISSION NEXUS:** The need for implicit bias training is necessary to ensure all birthing people have access to quality health care and to prevent maternal mortality particularly within communities of color.

# AB 2515 (PAPAN) MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS: PFAS

**SUMMARY:** This bill would require, no later than January 1, 2027, the Department of Toxic Substances Control, in consultation with the State Department of Public Health, to identify and assess the hazards of chemicals or chemical classes that can provide the same or similar function in menstrual products as regulated PFAS and that can impact vulnerable populations and to make this information publicly available on the DTSC's internet website.

**COMMISSION NEXUS:** Harmful chemicals have no place in necessary medical devices like period underwear, tampons, or pads used by our state's women and girls. Getting rid of these chemicals in menstrual products is vital to prevent serious illnesses, including cervical cancer.



# AB 3106 (SCHIAVO) INFECTIONS DISEASES: EXCLUDED WORKERS

**SUMMARY:** This bill aligns with the Commission’s California Blueprint for Women’s Pandemic Economic Recovery.

This bill would require an employer to make certain accommodations to employees who have tested positive for COVID-19. Requires an employer to continue and maintain the employee’s earnings, wages, seniority, and all other employee rights and benefits, including the employee’s right to their former job status while the employee is out sick.

Additionally, the bill requires OSHA, by February 3, 2025, to adopt a standard that extends these protections to any occupational infectious disease covered by any permanent infectious disease standard adopted to prevent the spread of COVID. Under this bill OSHA would be authorized to issue a citation alleging a violation and a notice of civil penalty. The bill would authorize any employer who receives a citation and penalty to appeal the citation and penalty to the OSHA Appeals Board.

**COMMISSION NEXUS:** As we continue to deal with the effects of COVID-19 we must ensure that employees are fully supported when they test positive and are able to return to their place of employment. Additionally, we know that COVID-19 will not be the last pandemic and therefore it is important that standards be created to extend these protections to any occupational infectious disease.



# ECONOMIC SECURITY

*Workplace equality, upward mobility, wealth building, social support services, and basic needs*

## **SB 1245 (OCHOA BOGH) STREAMLINING IHSS PARAMEDICAL FORMS**

**SUMMARY:** This bill would streamline the process for obtaining paramedical services by aligning which licensed healthcare professionals may sign the form to obtain paramedical services with those who can already authorize services through In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) to begin with. IHSS clients can therefore have both forms signed at the same time by the same provider, saving time and reducing delays in obtaining critical care.

**COMMISSION NEXUS:** A majority of our state's care givers and those receiving care are women. As of January 2024, there were 754,332 authorized IHSS recipients – a majority (58%) of whom are women – who receive an average of nearly 116 hours of authorized care a month, most (77%) of which is provided by relatives and spouses. By reducing administrative barriers to services, we will better ensure that our most vulnerable populations – especially women with disabilities – receive the care they need in a timely manner.

# AB 1808 (NGUYEN) CHILDCARE AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES: ELIGIBILITY

**SUMMARY:** This bill will align the eligibility period for childcare support under the CalWORKs program with other subsidized programs, extending it from 12 to 24 months.

**COMMISSION NEXUS:** In order to fully support working parents, we must eliminate disparities, streamline processes, and reduce burdens to access childcare support. Reliable childcare is vital for parents pursuing employment or education without worrying about the safety and wellbeing of their children.



This guide is designed to provide you with a quick overview of the bills that the California Commission on the Status of Women and Girls is supporting through our 2024 policy efforts. For more information on the Commission, and how we've been getting things done for women and girls, please visit:

[women.ca.gov](https://women.ca.gov)

# POLICY 2024 PRIORITIES

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