



# LOS ANGELES COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

## SACRAMENTO LEGISLATIVE OFFICE

GEORGE GASCÓN • District Attorney  
SHARON L. WOO • Chief Deputy District Attorney  
JOSEPH F. INIGUEZ • Chief of Staff

DANIEL FELIZZATTO • Legislative Advocate  
TAMAR TOKAT • Legislative Advocate

April 27, 2022  
Senator Connie Leyva  
1021 O Street, Suite 7610  
Sacramento, CA 95814

### **Senate Bill 916 SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Leyva:

The Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office is pleased to support Senate Bill 916 (Leyva).

Sexual assault survivors suffer tremendous trauma. After the crime, they may then undergo a sexual assault forensic exam, often referred to as a "rape kit," to receive important medical care and preserve possible DNA evidence that could be collected during the exam. The sexual assault forensic evidence collection process is an invasive procedure that can take hours. This bill proposes to amend section 680 of the Penal Code, otherwise known as the Sexual Assault Victims' DNA Bill of Rights, to specify that sexual assault victims have the right to access the department's Sexual Assault Forensic Evidence Tracking (SAFE-T) database for information involving their own forensic evidence kit and the status of the kit. In so doing, SB 916 builds upon existing law, which mandates the Department of Justice to establish a process that allows sexual assault survivors to track and receive updates privately, securely, and electronically regarding the status, location, and information regarding their sexual assault evidence kit in the department's Safe-T database.

Existing law further specifies that upon initial interaction with a sexual assault victim, a law enforcement officer or medical provider shall provide the victim with a card, explaining the rights of sexual assault victims in clear language and available in all major languages. Additionally, per Code of Civil procedure section 1219, "notwithstanding any other law, a court shall not imprison or otherwise confine or place in custody the victim of a sexual assault or domestic violence crime for contempt if the contempt consists of refusing to testify concerning that sexual assault or domestic violence crime."

This bill provides that the card given to a sexual assault victim shall also include a clear statement that under Section 1219 of the Code of Civil Procedure, a court may not imprison or otherwise confine or place in custody a victim of sexual assault or domestic violence for contempt if the contempt consists of refusing to testify about the crime.

**April 27, 2022**  
**Page Two**

SB 916 is an important piece of legislation in the ongoing effort to help survivors of sexual assaults know their rights and navigate the system with more ease.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Tamar Tokat in my Legislative Office at 916-442-0668.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George Gascón". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

GEORGE GASCÓN  
District Attorney