



LOS ANGELES COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE SACRAMENTO LEGISLATIVE OFFICE

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June 22, 2022

The Honorable Akilah Weber
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 4130
Sacramento, CA 95814

ASSEMBLY BILL 2185 (WEBER) SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Weber:

The Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office is pleased to support Assembly Bill 2185.

AB 2185 provides domestic violence victims access to medical evidentiary exams, free of charge, by Local Sexual Assault Response Teams (SART) or other qualified medical evidentiary examiners.

Currently, victims of domestic violence assault have unequal access to care as they are not provided the same right to medical evidentiary exams as sexual assault victims. This bill would give domestic violence victims access to medical evidentiary exams free of charge.

Early detection, assessment, and treatment of strangulation related injuries are critical to reduce health consequences of domestic violence assaults, and in many cases, to save lives. A domestic violence medical evidentiary exam is the best way to do this. Forensic medical evidentiary examiners conduct a comprehensive examination to document serious injury, provide basic healthcare screening, examine the patient for immediate need for transport to the emergency room, and connect patients to critical victim and supportive services.

Domestic violence medical evidentiary examinations are medically necessary, especially in serious assault cases such as those involving strangulation, which are potentially life threatening. Strangulation injuries are often internal with no external visible injuries; making life-threatening injuries easy to miss without proper training for examiners, and immediate assessment, accurate diagnosis, and treatment. Research shows a victim strangled even one time is 750% more likely to be killed later by their abuser compared to a domestic victim who has never been strangled.

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Utilization of forensic medical examinations saves lives. Proof of this can be found in a report from the San Diego Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team. The report found that after San Diego County implemented a pilot project similar to what is provided for in AB 2185, domestic violence homicides dropped by 15% between 2017 and 2020.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact Daniel Felizzatto in my Sacramento Legislative Office at (916) 442-0668.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gascón", written in a cursive style.

GEORGE GASCÓN
District Attorney