



**LOS ANGELES COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE**  
**SACRAMENTO LEGISLATIVE OFFICE**

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July 14, 2022

The Honorable Anthony Portantino  
Senate Appropriations Committee, Chair  
State Capitol, Room 412  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**ASSEMBLY BILL 2717 (WALDRON)**  
**SUPPORT**  
**Senate Appropriations Committee**

Dear Senator Portantino:

The Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office is pleased to support Assembly Bill 2717 (Waldron).

AB 2717 establishes the California Health Start Act which would expand the community prison mother treatment program within CDCR to individuals regardless of their term of imprisonment or prior criminal history.

AB 2717 would also require CDCR to provide parenting classes, transportation for minor children to visit on a monthly basis in a dedicated child-friendly location on the prison grounds, and overnight family visits. AB 2717 also establishes an additional family visiting day and an additional family visiting opportunity for mothers with children.

Studies have found that pregnant women in state prison systems endure higher rates of miscarriage, premature birth, and cesarean section than those in the general population. Incarcerated pregnant women and new mothers suffer from higher rates of depression and anxiety. These studies have also found that state prison systems institutions fail to provide incarcerated pregnant women and new mothers with appropriate care, including but not limited to adequate medical care, nutrition, and support services.

In addition to the health care problems and mental health issues of incarcerated mothers, there are health and mental health issues that plague the children of incarcerated parents. Studies have found that young children of incarcerated parents are more likely to experience mental and physical health disparities such as depression, stress, and food insecurity. The children of incarcerated mothers frequently experience severe socioemotional problems such as negativity and aggression, which can cause future behavioral issues for these children.

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Our Office is pleased to support this legislation. AB 2717 is not a typical public safety bill in that it is focused on recognizing the importance of healthy mothers, children, and the mother-child bond and strives to carry this out through effective resources and medical care.

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

cc: Assembly Member Waldron