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May 5th, 2022

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

SENATE BILL 1245 (KAMLAGER)
SUPPORT
Senate Appropriations Committee
Hearing Date: May 9, 2020

Dear Senator Portantino:

The Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office strongly supports Senate Bill (SB) 1245 (Kamlager).

If the United States Supreme Court overturns *Roe v. Wade*, women in over half of the states in the country, who may become pregnant, will lose access to abortion care. According to one report, if *Roe v. Wade* is overturned, the number of out-of-state patients who would find their nearest abortion provider in California would increase from 46,000 to 1.4 million – an increase of nearly 3,000%. Recently, the Orange County Register published an article noting that since Texas enacted its abortion restriction law in September 2021, the number of out of state patients seeking care at Southern California's Planned Parenthood facilities has quadrupled.

Across the country there have been hundreds of pieces of legislation introduced to preclude or restrict access to abortion services. Some of these measures ban virtually all access to abortion services and do not contain exemptions for cases involving domestic violence, child abuse, sexual assault, rape or incest. Forcing victims of these crimes to deliver a baby in these situations and possibly become further dependent on their abusers, can lead to increased instances of domestic violence, homelessness, suicide, infanticide, PTSD, and child abuse.

States, like California, that choose to maintain safe, legal access to abortion services are likely to become the focus of radical pro-life activists if *Roe v. Wade* is overturned. In the past, anti-abortionists have vandalized health clinics and have assaulted, stalked, kidnapped and even murdered reproductive health care workers, patients and those hired to protect them. Increasing the demand for abortions in California will likely fuel protests and violent incidents resulting in the victimization of more women and health care providers. If access to abortion services becomes the next powder keg there is an even greater likelihood of violence because of the radical zealots leading a small, but potentially dangerous faction.

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SB 1245 would establish the Los Angeles County Abortion Access Safe Haven Pilot Program, subject to appropriation by the Legislature, for the purpose of expanding and improving access to the full spectrum of sexual and reproductive health care, including abortion, in Los Angeles County. This program would establish a pilot project to support innovative approaches and patient-centered collaborations to safeguard patient access to abortions in Los Angeles County, regardless of residency.

SB 1245 authorizes funds allocated to the Los Angeles County Abortion Access Safe Haven Pilot Program be used to implement recommendations made by the County of Los Angeles, which include, but are not limited to, the following:

- provide medically accurate education and training tools to the community;
- provide training to health care workers and abortion providers;
- build secure infrastructure;
- counter misinformation campaigns and provide medically accurate information to health care providers and patients;
- coordinate care and patient support services; and
- advance and improve access to abortion.

As the Chief Law Enforcement Officer in the County of Los Angeles, I view it my obligation to both prosecute crimes committed and do everything in my power to increase public safety by supporting legislation which will prevent crimes from occurring and avoid the victimization of individuals who make private and very personal decisions relating their reproductive rights.

Funding appropriated pursuant to SB 1245 can be effectively used to build secure infrastructures to protect patients and health care workers.

SB 1245 would provide direct benefits to victims of rape and incest and reduce both direct and indirect harm and violence to innocent parties, and it reaffirms California's position as a "Reproductive Freedom State." For all of the above reasons, our Office is pleased to support this measure.

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,


GEORGE GASCÓN
District Attorney

cc: Senator Kamlager
Members, Senate Appropriations Committee