



American Medical Women's Association  
The Vision and Voice of Women in Medicine since 1915

April 12, 2019

Honorable Reginald Jones-Sawyer, Sr.  
California State Assembly Member  
Chair, Assembly Committee on Public Safety  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for AB 1764 (Carrillo) – Compensation for Survivors of Forced or Involuntary Sterilization Act

Dear Chairman Jones-Sawyer:

American Medical Women's Association supports AB 1764, a bill that would provide monetary compensation to surviving individuals who were forcibly sterilized pursuant to California's eugenics law from 1909–1979 or who were subjected to coerced or involuntary sterilizations in women's state prisons after 1979. The sterilizations disproportionately affected people with disabilities, women, and Latinas/os. This bill serves as a vital first step to materially acknowledge the discriminatory harms inflicted on a large number of Californians and to prevent eugenic sterilization of vulnerable populations into the future.

Between 1909 and 1979, California was the most aggressive eugenics sterilizer in the nation, sterilizing 20,000 of 60,000 people nationally. The law explicitly targeted people with disabilities and others who state institutions, in their broad discretion, deemed unfit to reproduce. Although this law was repealed in 1979, a subsequent state audit revealed that an additional 144 women were sterilized during labor and delivery without required consents and authorization in California's women's prisons between 2006 and 2010. Research also indicates that there may be an additional 100 involuntary prison sterilizations dating back to the late 1990s.

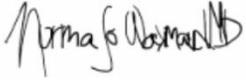
With AB 1764, California will become the third state to compensate survivors of forced sterilizations under eugenics laws, following North Carolina (2013) and Virginia (2015). And it will become the first state to compensate survivors of involuntary sterilizations in prison performed outside of formal eugenic laws.

AB 1764 plays an important role in advancing disability justice and reproductive justice. It recognizes the human right of each individual to control their reproductive capacity without state interference. It affirms



that all people should be treated with respect and dignity regarding their lives and reproduction, including those who have historically been disenfranchised: disabled people, women, people of color, LGBTQ people, people with felony records, and poor people. For these reasons, American Medical Women's Association is proud to support AB 1764.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Norma Jo Waxman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Norma Jo Waxman, MD, AMWA Advocacy Chair, CA

CC: Assembly Member Wendy Carrillo

Members and Committee Staff, Assembly Committee on Public Safety

