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January 25, 2017

The Honorable Hannah-Beth Jackson  
Chair, Senate Committee on Judiciary  
State Capitol, Room 2187  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 31 (Lara) – Support**

Dear Senator Jackson:

Western Center on Law & Poverty was established 50 years ago following the Watts Rebellion during a time of upheaval in this nation. We now find ourselves in a new time of upheaval and we are as committed now more than ever to combat racism and race-biased policies in California. This is why we oppose the creation and use of a Muslim Registry proposed by President Donald J. Trump and support SB 31 (Lara).

Eradicating racism, xenophobia, misogyny, homophobia, Islamophobia, and bigotry in all of its forms for all people – immigrants, people of color, women, people with disabilities, and others who are marginalized – is essential to achieving justice, equity, and opportunity for all.

SB 31, as amended, protects the safety and well-being of all Californians by ensuring that state and local agencies and personnel do not participate in, or use agency resources to create a registry, list, or database of individuals based on religious beliefs, practices, or affiliations; national origin; or ethnicity.

California has a duty to protect the rights of its people and ensure equal justice under the law for all, regardless of race, religion, or national origin. Allowing state and state funded local agencies to participate in the creation, population or use of a religious registry not only conflicts with that obligation, it diverts the time, energy and attention of government employees away from pressing public safety issues that need their attention. With limited public dollars to fund government programs and services, allowing government employees to participate in the establishment of the Muslim Registry also undermines our commitment to programs and services we have already prioritized.

SB 31 promotes religious freedom and ensures that California is protecting basic civil and human rights for all while shielding our limited resources for priorities already codified by our voters and our elected officials. For these reasons, we support SB 31 and request your AYE vote.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jessica Bartholow", is written over a light blue circular watermark.

Jessica Bartholow  
Policy Advocate

cc: Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary  
Honorable Ricardo Lara, Member of the California State Senate (Author)