

Western Center's 2019 Sponsored Legislation March 27, 2019

Following is a list of bills to help secure housing, healthcare and a strong safety net for low-income Californians that will be sponsored or co-sponsored by Western Center on Law & Poverty during the 2019 legislative session.

Economic Justice

[AB 24 \(Burke\)](#) would establish a targeted child tax credit for families with children with incomes below half of the supplemental poverty level. Co-sponsored by the End Child Poverty Campaign, Children's Defense Fund and the Western Center on Law and Poverty.

[AB 390 \(Frazier & Grayson\)](#) would reduce criminalization of people who are poor and drive cars by deleting motor vehicle exhaust system related violations as disqualifying for a "fix-it-ticket".

[AB 516 \(Chiu\)](#) would repeal the ability to tow cars for unpaid parking tickets and DMV registration. Co-sponsored by the Western Center on Law and Poverty, ACLU, the East Bay Community Law Center and the Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights.

[SB 36 \(Hertzberg\)](#) establishes standards for pre-trial assessments used by courts and probation departments across the state. Co-Sponsored by SEIU-California State Council, Anti-Recidivism Coalition (ARC), Ella Baker Center, NextGen and Western Center on Law and Poverty.

[SB 144 \(Mitchell\)](#) repeals state law authorizing criminal justice fees.

[SB 188 \(Mitchell\)](#) would "Create a Respectful and Open Workplace for Natural Hair" (the CROWN Act) by clarifying that traits historically associated with race, such as hair texture and hairstyle, should be protected in the Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA). Co-sponsored by the CROWN Coalition and Western Center on Law & Poverty.

[SB 616 \(Wieckowski & L. Rivas\)](#) will cap how much can be levied from a bank account at one time to ensure that basic needs of the consumer can be met. It does not relieve the consumer of the debt. The bill is co-sponsored by Western Center and the California Low-Income Consumer Coalition.



Health

[AB 318 \(Chu\)](#) Improving Readability and Translations of Medi-Cal Consumer Materials. This bill would require all consumer-facing materials translated by DHCS or the managed care plans to be field tested. This bill would also require a workgroup to identify the 10 most important Medi-Cal documents for consumers and use an outside contractor to improve readability, and once the materials are finalized, translate and field test those materials. Co-sponsored with California Pan Ethnic Health Network.

[AB 537 \(Arambula\)](#) Improving Quality in Medi-Cal Managed Care. Starting where AB 2275 left off last year, this bill would increase minimal performance targets for Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans, establish a financial incentive program to reward plans that meet high performance targets and reduce health disparities, and create a public stakeholder process to develop performance standards, measures by which performance is assessed, and the financial incentive program. Co-sponsored with California Pan Ethnic Health Network.

[AB 683 \(Carrillo\)](#) Increasing the Non-MAGI Assets Limit. This bill would eliminate the assets test for the Medicare Savings Programs (QMB, SLMB, etc.), simplify and expand the exemptions from the assets test for other Non-MAGI programs, and raise the assets limit to \$10,000 for individuals with an additional \$5,000 per family member. The assets limit of \$2,000 for an individual and \$3,000 for a couple has not been raised since 1989. Co-sponsored with Justice in Aging.

[AB 715 \(Arambula\)](#) Raising the Income Level for the Aged & Disabled Program. Our continued effort to bring parity to the A&D Medi-Cal program by increasing the income eligibility level to 138% of the federal poverty level. Currently seniors are only eligible up to 123% of the federal poverty level. Both a bill and a budget request. Co-sponsored with Justice in Aging and Disability Rights California.

[AB 1063 \(Petrie-Norris\)](#) Prohibiting 1332 Waivers without Legislative Approval. This bill would prohibit section 1332 waivers that do not ensure access to the same affordable and comprehensive coverage available under the Affordable Care Act. CMS has been offering states guidance on how to obtain 1332 waivers that undermine the protections of the Affordable Care Act and circumvent state legislatures. Co-sponsored with Health Access.

[AB 1088 \(Wood\)](#) Stops Seniors from Yo-Yoing between Free Medi-Cal and Share of Cost Medi-Cal. Some seniors qualify for free Medi-Cal, but when the state starts paying their Part B premium, they are moved into share of cost Medi-Cal. Once they start paying their own Part B premium again, they qualify for free Medi-Cal, until the state starts paying their Part B premium again.



[AB 1175](#) ([Wood](#)) Improving Care Coordination in Mental Health. This spot bill would improve access and coordination of mental health services for Medi-Cal enrollees by requiring require DHCS to produce detailed reports of non-specialty mental health utilization; require DHCS to report overlapping providers by county; and improve care coordination through shared process to track referrals. Co-sponsored with National Health Law Program.

[SB 260](#) ([Hurtado](#)) Improving Transitions to Covered California. This bill would help people losing Medi-Cal due to an increase in income by creating an opt-out auto enrollment that would help avoid a gap in coverage. The bill would also enhance Covered California's ability to do outreach to all Californians losing health coverage so they can enroll in Covered California or Medi-Cal. Co-sponsored with Health Access.

[SB 361](#) ([Mitchell](#)) Cleaning Up Health Homes (AB 361). The Health Home Program provides enhanced case management services and coordination for Medi-Cal beneficiaries with multiple chronic health conditions, or one serious mental illness, particularly for individuals who are chronically homeless but face several implementation challenges. This bill would remove restrictions around State funding and termination of program after two years to eliminate perception that program is "pilot" and ensure chronically homeless individuals are targeted through partnership with homeless systems, enhanced outreach rate, and data collection. Co-sponsored with Corporation for Supportive Housing and Housing California.

[SB 464](#) ([Mitchell](#)) Requiring Implicit Bias Training for Perinatal Providers. While California has drastically decreased maternal mortality surrounding childbirth, the mortality rates remain three to four times higher for black women. This bill would require implicit bias training for perinatal providers and improve data collection regarding maternal mortality and morbidity. Co-sponsored with Black Women for Wellness, ACT for Women and Girls, and NARAL Pro-Choice California.

[SB 503](#) ([Pan](#)) Increasing Oversight and Transparency for Managed Care Delegated Entities. This bill (still in development) would align state sanction authority with federal sanction authority; codify language that makes clear health plan's responsibility, regardless of subcontracting; require plans to conduct annual audits of delegated entities and report on data of delegated entities. Co-sponsored with National Health Law Program.

[SB 639](#) ([Mitchell](#)) Improving Protections for Medical Credit Cards. This bill would prohibit providers from offering third-party financial products with deferred interest provisions, and increase the existing notice requirements particularly regarding what is and is not covered by Medi-Cal for third-party financial products, and prohibit soliciting third-party payment arrangements in treatment areas.



Housing

[AB 1279 \(Bloom\)](#) would facilitate denser, mixed-income and affordable housing development in high-resource communities that lack racial and economic diversity through local zoning overrides and land use incentives. Co-sponsored with the California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation and Public Advocates.

[SB 329 \(Mitchell\)](#) The Housing Opportunities Act. The Housing Opportunities Act would add housing assistance as a protected source of income under California's Fair Employment and Housing Act. This means that landlords would no longer be able to refuse to let families receiving housing assistance apply for housing, even when their assistance allows them to afford the rent. The bill would give these families the same chance to apply for housing as others, and this policy has been proven to increase access to quality housing and areas of opportunity for families living in poverty. Co-sponsored with the California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation, Housing California, National Housing Law Project, and Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors.

[SCA 1 \(Allen\)](#) would place the repeal of Article 34 of the California Constitution, which requires voter approval before local governments can approve certain affordable housing developments, on the November 2020 ballot. Co-sponsored with Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, the California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation, and the California Association of Realtors.

Human Services

[AB 283 \(K. Chu\)](#) would remove Wilson era economic sanctions to parents in the CalWORKs bill. Co-Sponsored by the Coalition of California Welfare Rights Organizations and Western Center on Law and Poverty.

[AB 494 \(Berman\)](#) would maximize CalFresh eligibility among people with excess shelter expenses providing that they have the minimal verification required by federal law. Allows counties to request more verification if questionable. Co-Sponsored by the Coalition of California Welfare Rights Organizations and the Western Center on Law and Poverty.

[AB 534 \(Mayes\)](#) would create a process to bring together food system stakeholders to engage and collaborate at the local, regional and state levels to remove barriers to adequate, nutritious food choices and ensure that a vibrant and sustainable food system is available across all communities statewide. California Association of Food Banks, California Coalition Welfare Rights Organizations and Western Center on Law and Poverty.



[AB 807 \(Bauer-Kahan\)](#) would add to the list of CalWORKs exempt income to include certain scholarships, withdrawal from savings accounts and rental payments received by a government entity. Co-Sponsored by Coalition of California Welfare Rights Organizations and Western Center on Law and Poverty.

[AB 942 \(Weber\)](#) would extend access to the Restaurant Meal Program (RMP) to all CalFresh recipients who are elderly, disabled or homeless regardless of which county they live in. This bill is co-sponsored by the Women's Policy Institute team of the Women's Foundation of California.

[AB 944 \(Quirk\)](#) would allow counties to extend the 12-month exception period for an indigent exemption in the CalWORKs program as allowed in Section 1631 of Title 8 of the United States Code. Co-sponsored by the Alameda County Social Services Agency and Western Center on Law and Poverty.

[AB 960 \(Maienschein\)](#) would remove the consecutive day requirement for temporary housing assistance, would direct counties to use the Recipient Financial Eligibility Test, rather than the Minimum Basic Standard of Adequate Care, to determine eligibility for homeless CalWORKs Applicants, allow CalWORKs recipients to use permanent housing assistance payment towards shared housing and would give permission to counties to provide additional nights of temporary assistance if necessary to bridge to the local. Co-sponsored by the Coalition of California Welfare Rights Organizations and Western Center on Law and Poverty.

[AB 987 \(R.Rivas\)](#) would make changes to the CalWORKs special food benefit so that it is delivered on EBT as a food benefit (rather than a cash benefit, which makes it countable income in CalFresh) and add lack of fresh water and high blood levels as reasons to receive the CalWORKs special food needs supplement.

[AB 1022 \(Wicks\)](#) would prevent the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Able Body Adult Without Dependents (ABAWD) Time Limit from impacting low-income recipients of CalFresh. Co-sponsored by the Alameda County Community Food Bank, the California Association of Food Banks (CAFB), the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano Counties and the Western Center on Law and Poverty.

[AB 1070 \(Arambula\)](#) would expand access to voluntary home visiting services for pregnant people and parents of young children who are CalWORKs applicants or recipients. It does this by making changes to the CalWORKs Home Visiting Initiative (HVI) established by Assembly Bill 1811 (Chapter 35, Statutes of 2018). Co-Sponsored by Children Now and the Western Center on Law and Poverty.



[AB 1091 \(Jones-Sawyer\)](#) would improve implementation of the child support payment suspension for people institutionalized for more than 90 days and remove the sunset for the law establishing this policy. This bill is co-sponsored by Tipping Point, Insight Center, PolicyLink, Anti-Recidivism Coalition, the Good+ Foundation's Fatherhood Initiative and the Western Center on Law and Poverty.

[AB 1092 \(Jones-Sawyer\)](#) would prevent the state from charging a higher interest rate for delinquent child support payments than required by federal law and guidance. This bill is co-sponsored by Tipping Point, Insight Center, PolicyLink, Anti-Recidivism Coalition, the Good+ Foundation's Fatherhood Initiative and the Western Center on Law and Poverty.

[AB 1229 \(Wicks\)](#) would ensure that former foster youth are not denied CalFresh benefits because they have received transitional housing support or chose to take an off-campus internship. Co-Sponsored by Journey House and the Western Center on Law and Poverty.

[AB 1403 \(Carrillo\)](#) once amended, would clarify that an adult is only ineligible for General Assistance when they are no longer receiving CalWORKs and when the CalWORKs eligible child is still in the home. Co-Sponsored by Western Center on Law and Poverty and the Coalition on Welfare Rights Organizations.

[AB 1433 \(Stone\)](#) once amended, would level up the CalWORKs earned income disregard so that it reflects recent changes in minimum wage and keeps pace with increases to the wage. Would make conforming changes to the applicant test. Co-Sponsored by Western Center on Law and Poverty and the County Welfare Directors Association of California.

[AB 1434 \(Kalra\)](#) would increase the SSI / SSP Grants for people who are disabled or elderly so that their income is no less than the federal poverty line. Co-Sponsored by the SSI for California Coalition, Disability Rights California, California Association of Food Banks and Western Center on Law and Poverty.

[SB 265 \(Hertzberg\)](#) would expand the protections established by SB 250 to ensure that a child is not shamed or denied a meal and given an alternative meal when they don't have money for lunch.

[SB 268 \(Wiener\)](#) would repeal the CalWORKs Asset Test. Co-Sponsored by the Prosperity Now, EARN, California Association of Food Banks, Coalition of California Welfare Rights Organizations and Western Center on Law and Poverty.

[SB 337 \(Skinner\)](#) would require all child support payments made to be passed through to the child and would allow the Department of Child Support Services to expunge public debt from delinquent payments when this debt is believed to be uncollectable. This bill is co-sponsored



by Tipping Point, Insight Center, PolicyLink, Anti-Recidivism Coalition, the Good+ Foundation's Fatherhood Initiative and Western Center on Law and Poverty.

[SB 365 \(Durazno\)](#) would require the county human services agencies to document need for child care at application and certify a family to receive child care services immediately upon determination of eligibility. It would also consider lack of child care in the determination of eligibility for expedited determination of aid. Co-sponsored by the Coalition of California Welfare Rights Organizations and Western Center on Law and Poverty.

[SB 470 \(Skinner\)](#) would prevent online cash EBT purchases unless retailer has been approved by CDSS and would establish food safety requirements for online CalFresh EBT purchases. This bill is co-sponsored by the Western Center, the California Grocers Association and the United Food and Commercial Workers.

[SB 490 \(Hurtado\)](#) prevent low-income people who are disabled or elderly or people who are pregnant or live in a home with children under 5-years of age from being forced to pay back (in cash) CalFresh food aid that was incorrectly awarded to them as a result of a county administrative error. Co-Sponsored by the Coalition of California Welfare Rights Organizations and Western Center on Law and Poverty.

Contact Our Sacramento Advocates: For more information about Western Center and our advocacy priorities, go to www.wclp.org.

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