



Berkeley City Council, District 5  
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CONSENT CALENDAR

March 27, 2018

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
From: Councilmembers Sophie Hahn and Ben Bartlett  
Subject: Support for AB 2079, the Janitor Survivor Empowerment Act

RECOMMENDATION

Send a letter of support for AB 2079, the Janitor Survivor Empowerment Act, to Assemblymember Tony Thurmond, State Senator Nancy Skinner, and Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez Fletcher.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None

BACKGROUND

In 2016, Governor Brown signed into law Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez Fletcher's AB 1978, which established workforce protections against sexual assaults and harassment in the janitorial industry. AB 1978 was developed in response to a 2015 Frontline documentary that exposed widespread sexual abuse of immigrant women working as janitors, and was passed thanks to the tremendous organizing efforts of California janitorial workers, many of whom were survivors of rape or abuse. The new state law established specific protections for janitors, requires in-person sexual violence and harassment prevention training for janitorial workers and employers, and created a janitorial employer registration database.

AB 2079, introduced in February of 2018, will ensure that the sexual violence and harassment prevention training required under AB 1978 is specifically tailored and relevant to the circumstances that janitors confront on the job. If passed, the new law would certify promotoras and compadres, or female and male janitors serving as peer educators, to provide the training to other janitors. It is crucial that this training be implemented correctly and effectively to ensure that janitorial workers are protected from sexual violence and harassment.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

This recommendation supports Berkeley's environmental sustainability goals.

CONTACT PERSON

Councilmember Sophie Hahn, Council District 5, (510) 981-7150

ATTACHMENTS

1. Letter of support

To Assemblymember Tony Thurmond and Senator Nancy Skinner,

The Berkeley City Council wishes to express our strongest support for AB 2079: the Janitor Survivor Empowerment Act. This crucial bill will ensure that janitorial workers receive tailored, relevant sexual violence and harassment prevention training that applies directly to circumstances janitors face on the job.

In 2016, Governor Brown signed into law Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez Fletcher's AB 1978, which established workforce protections against sexual assaults and harassment in the janitorial industry. AB 1978 was developed in response to a 2015 Frontline documentary that exposed widespread sexual abuse of immigrant women working as janitors, and was passed thanks to the tremendous organizing efforts of California janitorial workers, many of whom were survivors of rape or abuse.

Assemblywoman Gonzalez Fletcher's AB 2079, introduced in February of 2018, will ensure that the sexual violence and harassment prevention training required under AB 1978 is specifically tailored and relevant to the circumstances that janitors confront on the job. If passed, the new law would certify promotoras and compadres, or female and male janitors serving as peer educators, to provide the training to other janitors. We hope you will support this important bill.

Respectfully,

Berkeley City Council