

SAMPLE SUPPORT LETTER FOR SB 1569 (Kuehl)

Date

Assemblymember Judy Chu, Chair
Assembly Appropriations Committee
California State Capitol, Room 2114
Sacramento, CA 95814
VIA Fax 916.319-2149

Re: SUPPORT for SB 1569 (Kuehl)

Dear Assemblymember Chu:

Our organization_____is pleased to inform you that we support SB 1569 (Kuehl) which would provide services to human trafficking victims and other serious crime victims in California.

SB 1569 (Kuehl) will help to stabilize and protect prosecution witnesses, ensuring that we can successfully prosecute the perpetrators of human trafficking and other serious crimes. This bill serves as a "bridge" for these survivors, helping a small number of persons in great need before they transition to existing state or federal services. SB 1569 would treat these survivors like refugees for purposes of determining eligibility for state and local benefits and services, allowing them to access critical medical care, mental health, and basic assistance to help them secure safe housing, food, and supportive services (English as a Second Language programs, job training, etc.).

SB 1569 (Kuehl) will significantly enhance public safety and the ability of law enforcement investigators and prosecutors to hold criminals accountable by providing access to critical services for immigrant survivors of human trafficking, domestic violence and other violent crimes while they are awaiting processing from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

Under existing law, immigrant victims of serious crimes may have access to federal and state services, but not until federal certification is complete. During the interim period, victims in critical need cannot secure the services needed to protect their health and safety, due to bureaucratic delays and other barriers. For example, once an investigation is opened, it may take months for law enforcement officers or prosecutors to obtain approval from the appropriate federal authorities; the Department of Homeland Security may take months to process the victim's application for a visa; and some traumatized victims may need support before they are able to contact or work effectively with the authorities.

During this interim period, victims of serious crimes desperately need a safe and appropriate place to live, immediate attention to their physical and mental health needs, and an opportunity to acquire skills so that they can begin to rebuild their lives and participate in the prosecution of these criminals.

Sincerely,

Your Name and Title

CC: Senator Sheila Kuehl (FAX 916. 324.4823) & the California Immigrant Welfare Collaborative (FAX 916.448.6774)