



For Immediate Release:

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Domestic Violence Coalition Sponsors Groundbreaking Dating Abuse Prevention Bill, AB 1880 (Lara)

Sacramento, February 23, 2012—Yesterday, Assemblymember Ricardo Lara (D-Bell Gardens), introduced Assembly Bill 1880, Dating Abuse Prevention: School Policies and Procedures. The bill, sponsored by the California Partnership to End Domestic Violence (the Partnership), would fill in gaps in existing law, to help California schools devise and implement effective school policies and procedures to prevent dating abuse on school campuses.

One in four adolescents report verbal, physical, emotional or sexual abuse from a dating partner. Victims of teen dating violence are at increased risk for a host of adverse outcomes, including truancy, alcohol and drug use, eating disorders, depression and suicide. Teen victims are also at higher risk for subsequent victimization in later life.

A significant number of incidents occur on campus, threatening the safety of students and staff, distracting students from learning, and compromising the school climate. Assemblymember Lara said the bill was designed to support schools in creating policies that target dating abuse.

“Most schools have policies to deal with peer-to-peer violence on campus, but many lack procedures to help students, teachers and staff address the dynamics of dating abuse and violence,” Lara said. “Research shows that effective policies and procedures are key in preventing dating abuse on campuses. This bill will ensure that schools are informed about dating abuse and have procedures in place to prevent, recognize, intervene and respond.”

Partnership executive director Tara Shabazz thanked Assemblymember Lara for taking the lead in helping address dating violence in schools.

“California badly needs to begin addressing the epidemic of dating abuse in our young people” she said. “AB 1880 would help schools take on this pressing issue in their communities. The school policy strategies outlined by the bill will give our educators the tools they need to help keep students safe.”

The Partnership thanks Assemblymember Lara for his leadership on this issue, and encourages California lawmakers to support this important legislation.

About the Partnership

The California Partnership to End Domestic Violence is California’s statewide domestic violence coalition, with organizational and individual members across California. Working at the local, state and national levels for nearly 30 years, the Partnership has a long track record of successfully passing over 100 pieces of legislation on behalf of domestic violence victims and their children. As the unified voice for California’s domestic violence agencies, the Partnership works to inspire, inform and connect all those concerned with this issue, because together we’re stronger. With offices in Sacramento, the Partnership’s member programs span the entire state.

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