

**We, the undersigned organizations, call on Governor Brown and the Legislature to allocate an additional \$50 million to domestic violence and sexual assault prevention and comprehensive services.**

The consequences of domestic and sexual violence are felt far beyond the immediate victim that include:

- a clear connection to poverty and homelessness for families
- the negative impact of incarceration on families and communities
- students and educators feeling unsafe in educational institutions
- a decrease in mental and physical health
- unsafe workplaces, schools, and other institutions

Domestic and sexual violence have an extensive and damaging reach in our state. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, an estimated 5.78 million California women and men experience intimate partner violence each year.<sup>i</sup> Compare that to the number of victims sheltered in California each year—an average of 18,485.<sup>ii</sup> Although programs in California supported 35,000 victims of sexual violence in 2016, the state is home to over a million survivors of sexual assault each year. In 2012 alone, an estimated 948,000 California residents were sexually assaulted, and given that some victims were assaulted repeatedly during the year, the total estimated incidents of sexual assault exceeded 1.1 million.<sup>iii</sup>

The State has not kept up with the burgeoning increase in demand for domestic and sexual violence services. A national one-day snapshot of domestic violence programs and services found that on just one day in 2016, while over 5,000 adults and children were served by domestic violence programs in California, 1,083 requests for services went unmet due to lack of resources. Over three quarters of those requests were for housing,<sup>iv</sup> showing just how much homelessness is intertwined with domestic violence. Data collected from the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, domestic violence crisis calls have increased by 45% over the last 6 years. During that same time, California's general fund investment in domestic and sexual violence services has remained stagnant at \$20.6 million for domestic violence and a mere \$45,000 for sexual violence. Similarly, survivors of sexual violence face reduced services and waiting lists. According to a 2017 national survey by the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence, more than half of sexual violence support programs have a waiting list for counseling services and more than one-third have a waiting list for trauma-informed therapy for life-changing supports. The cost of sexual violence also reflects the need to invest in response and prevention programs. The new report, *Costs and Consequences of Sexual Violence in California*, found that in 2012 an estimated 948,000 California residents were sexually assaulted and estimated that every prevented rape of an adult could save up to \$163,800 and for every prevented rape or sexual assault of a child could save up to \$227,700.

Survivors need more than the crisis intervention systems<sup>v</sup> we've built and financed over the last 40 years. Survivors and families often cycle from one crisis to the next resulting in reduced community safety, health and cohesion. Families and communities have been asking for new investments in prevention and comprehensive services.

We ask you to invest in California's domestic violence and sexual assault response with \$50 million in new general fund support to allow communities to:

1. Invest in community-based strategies to prevent domestic and sexual violence. By investing in community-based prevention efforts, we can stop this violence and abuse before it begins, and avoid these costs to survivors and the state. Prevention funding would also help

create and nurture protective community elements that counteract violence, ultimately shifting harmful social norms.<sup>vi</sup> No less than 50% of this fund would be allocated to prevention efforts.

2. Offer comprehensive wrap-around survivor support, including but not limited to housing assistance and legal advocacy. Eligible services would include mobile advocacy (meeting survivors where they are to provide support); housing solutions;<sup>vii</sup> legal assistance;<sup>viii</sup> counseling (individual and group counseling; parent-child-family intervention); culturally-responsive and culturally-specific approaches and coordinated community collaborations to strengthen systemic responses.<sup>ix</sup> No less than 40% of this fund would be allocated to comprehensive wrap-around services.
3. Research innovative approaches to effective family interventions,<sup>x</sup> accountability alternatives to the criminal justice system;<sup>xi</sup> and culturally-responsive and culturally specific approaches. Not more than 10% of the fund would go to support this research.

Californians understand how critical this issue is: Nearly 9 out of 10 see domestic violence as a serious societal problem, and 80% support increased government investments in prevention.<sup>xii</sup> And throughout the state, thousands of survivors of sexual violence are taking a stand through movements to prevent workplace sexual violence, acknowledging the pervasiveness of sexual violence, and saying #MeToo and #WeSaidEnough. Please listen to them, and fund the strategies necessary to turn the tide on domestic and sexual violence. With innovative approaches in prevention, accountability and comprehensive survivor support, California can take a bold step toward ending domestic and sexual violence.

### **Signers (Organizations listed in alphabetical order)**

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<sup>i</sup> Smith, S.G., Chen, J., Basile, K.C., Gilbert, L.K., Merrick, M.T., Patel, N., Walling, M., & Jain, A. (2017). The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010-2012 State Report. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

<sup>ii</sup> California Governor's Office of Emergency Services. Domestic Violence Assistance Program Data, available at: <http://www.caloes.ca.gov/GrantsManagementSite/Documents/DV.docx>

<sup>iii</sup> "Cost and Consequences of Sexual Violence in California," 2018, California Coalition Against Sexual Assault, <http://www.calcasa.org/the-cost-consequences-of-sexual-violence-in-california/>

<sup>iv</sup> NNEDV "2016 Domestic Violence Counts: California Summary." [https://nnedv.org/mdocs-posts/census\\_2016\\_handout\\_state-summary\\_california/](https://nnedv.org/mdocs-posts/census_2016_handout_state-summary_california/).

<sup>v</sup> Life-saving services include crisis lines, emergency shelters, law enforcement interventions, emergency restraining orders, hospital emergency room responses, and emergency food and clothing.

<sup>vi</sup> School-based interventions; curricula; athletic & club strategies; youth development and leadership approaches; community organizing and mobilization; culturally-responsive and culturally-specific approaches.

<sup>vii</sup> Housing services would include motel vouchers, shelter-in-place services; rapid re-housing; flexible housing financial assistance; transitional housing.

<sup>viii</sup> Legal services would include direct legal services and legal advocacy.

<sup>ix</sup> Coordinated community responses would include out-stationed advocates; county & regional partnerships; multi-disciplinary teams; institutional policy reform.

<sup>x</sup> Family interventions would include family counseling; mediation.

<sup>xi</sup> Accountability alternatives would include advocate collaboration with batterer intervention approaches; restorative justice circles; and transformative/community justice approaches.

<sup>xii</sup> Blue Shield of California Foundation. (2017). Californians' Views on Gender, Sexism, and Domestic Violence. 22, 40.