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DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF THE SAN FERNANDO VALLEY

August 10, 2021

RE: DPSFV Supports AB 1171 to End Spousal Rape Exception

Representatives of the Honorable San Fernando Valley Delegation:

On behalf of the Democratic Party of the San Fernando Valley (DPSFV), we are pleased to report that our Executive Board voted to support AB 1171. AB 1171 provides parity in California law and would require the same standards for spousal rape that are currently in the Penal Code (PC) for rape.

We urge you to please support this important piece of legislation.

DPSFV was founded in 1978 and is chartered by the Los Angeles County Democratic Central Committee. Our organization is the coordinating body for a coalition of twenty-one Democratic Clubs located in the six Assembly Districts (38, 39, 43, 45, 46, and 50) which are wholly or partially in the San Fernando Valley.

The DPSFV Political Action Committee met last month to discuss AB 1171 and voted to recommend that the DPSFV Executive Board support this vital piece of legislation. The committee noted that rape is universally acknowledged as a crime of violence that is both physically and psychologically harmful to the victim. Here in California, rapists who are convicted under spousal rape law may face less severe sentencing and may not have to register as a sex offender.

According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV), between 10-14% of married women have been or may experience rape by their spouse. Additionally, 18% of these victims state their children have witnessed the rape.

When marital rape is not treated as seriously as other forms of rape, it invalidates the victims' traumatic experiences and continues to promote rape culture. Moreover, a rapist should not be shielded from punishment simply because the rapist is married to the victim. Regardless of the relationship, rape is rape. AB 1171 eliminates this distinction so we can ensure justice for victims of sexual assault. We urge you to support AB 1171.

Please note that DPSFV will be tracking this bill as it travels through the Legislature. Your voting record will be noted and may be considered should you ever seek our endorsement. Your office is always welcome to contact DPSFV if you have any questions.

Sincerely and respectfully,



Chair Sean M. Rivas
Democratic Party of the San Fernando Valley

cc: Assembly Members Rivas, Friedman, Gabriel, Nazarian, Bloom, and Cristina Garcia (author)
Senators Hertzberg, Portantino, Stern, and Allen

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