



Office of the San Diego City Attorney

Mara W. Elliott
City Attorney

August 12, 2020

The Honorable Lorena Gonzalez
Chair, State Assembly Appropriations Committee
California State Capitol, Room 2114
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: SB 1141 (Rubio) Domestic Violence: Coercive Control -- Support

Dear Assemblymember Gonzalez,

The San Diego City Attorney's Office is pleased to support SB 1141 (Rubio).

As an office that successfully prosecutes thousands of domestic violence cases every year, we believe SB 1141 will enhance victim protections by expanding California's Family Code definition of disturbing the peace to include conduct that destroys the mental or emotional calm of another party, including coercive control. This change will allow survivors to describe psychologically damaging abusive behavior during family court hearings and criminal trials and to obtain protection from that behavior.

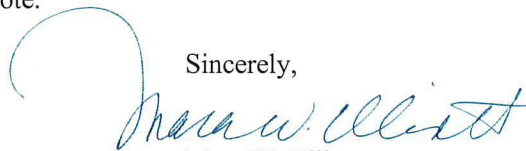
SB 1141 is needed because current language does not reflect the totality of domestic violence. The harm suffered by victims often stems as much from a deprivation of liberty achieved through a pattern of power and control as it does from discrete physical acts of violence.

The term "coercive control" explains the range of behaviors through which an abuser dominates and controls every aspect of a victim's life. Examples of coercive control include: isolating the victim from family, friends, and other potential sources of support; depriving the victim of basic necessities; controlling, regulating, or monitoring the victim's movements, communications, daily behavior, finances, economic resources, or access to services; and compelling the victim by force, threat of force, or intimidation.

Coercive control is already recognized as a category of domestic abuse by Alabama, Colorado, Delaware, Illinois, Maine, Missouri, Nevada, Washington, and most recently New York.

This important legislation ensures that victims of domestic violence in California are similarly given full protection against abuse, in all its forms. For these reasons, we are proud to support this important SB 1141 and respectfully ask for your "Aye" vote.

Sincerely,



Mara W. Elliott

Cc: Members and Consultants, Assembly Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Senator Susan Rubio