

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Tuesday, April 4, 2017

CONTACT: Sarah Christiano, schristiano@equalrights.org, 408-605-2796

***A Stronger California* Advocates Network Representing Millions Launches Ambitious 2017 Legislative Agenda for Women's Economic Security**

Priority Legislation will focus on Reproductive Choice, Fair Pay, Affordable Child Care, Immigrant Protection and Asset Building to Benefit Women and Families across the State

SACRAMENTO – Today, on national Equal Pay Day, advocates and coalitions representing millions of Californians launched an ambitious 2017 *A Stronger California* legislative agenda for women's economic security. Building on two years of success, this year's agenda has an expansive platform designed to push back on the damage being done in Washington.

"We don't have time to waste when it comes to women's and families' economic security – and California is leading the nation's charge. When we invest in an economic agenda that puts women first, we build stronger communities and better workplaces," said **Noreen Farrell, Chair of the A Stronger California Advocates Network and Executive Director of Equal Rights Advocates**. "These policies make California a place people are proud to call home. And right now – more than ever – they are necessary to ensure our families' rights are not threatened by federal actions."

The *A Stronger California* Advocates Network's agenda of 12 bills includes policies needed to empower women and families, including immigrant families, to take care of themselves and their children, at home and at their jobs. The bills would ensure women's and families' economic security by promoting fair pay and working conditions, asset building, reproductive choice, affordable child care, and new parent leave.

Priority 2017 legislation for the advocates includes:

- **SB 54 (De León):** Ensure that California does not use resources to separate families through mass deportations.
- **AB 569 (Gonzalez Fletcher):** Make it illegal for employers to fire women for their reproductive health choices.
- **SB 63 (Jackson):** Expand the right to job-protected parental leave to more Californians.
- **AB 60 (Santiago, Gonzalez Fletcher):** Allow parents earning the minimum wage to keep their affordable child care.
- **AB 1209 (Gonzalez Fletcher):** Require business to report gender pay gap figures.

For a complete list of bills, visit strongercalifornia.org.

The *A Stronger California* Advocates Network has worked closely with members of the California Legislative Women's Caucus to promote the agenda over the past two years, and our agendas overlap substantially for

the 2017 legislative cycle. The caucus' priorities, also announced today, can be found at <http://womenscaucus.legislature.ca.gov/>.

“We are encouraged by the legislature's ongoing commitment to addressing pay equity and look forward to partnering with the Legislative Women's Caucus this year to try to close the gender and race wage gap that has persisted for far too long,” said **Mariko Yoshihara, Political Director of the California Employment Lawyers Association.**

“Over half of the state's CalWORKs recipient families are Latina-headed households. As a Latina-led reproductive justice organization, we know what is at stake when women are forced into silence or deterred from seeking the services they need due to fear for their own safety or that of their families. I don't believe it is a coincidence that the Los Angeles Times reported a sharp decrease in reports of domestic abuse among the city's Latino population at a time when there are intensified deportation raids in immigrant communities. AB 557 would ensure that CalWORKs applicants or recipients who are domestic violence survivors can safely access the critical benefits they need. CLRJ is proud to work with Assemblymember Blanca Rubio in taking this step towards ensuring the safety of Latinas in poverty,” said **Laura Jimenez, Executive Director of California Latinas for Reproductive Justice.**

“Because of outdated income eligibility guidelines, parents who will receive a much-needed minimum wage increase will no longer be eligible for the affordable child care their families need. AB 60 would ensure no parent has to turn down a raise or promotion to keep their child care and that wage increases will not unintentionally cause families to lose child care,” said **Mary Ignatius, Statewide Organizer of Parent Voices.**

For the past two years, *A Stronger California* Advocates Network – an historic collaboration of organizations that have deep experience advocating on behalf of women's economic equality – has worked with policymakers on both sides of the aisle in the legislature to pass bills that have advanced economic, educational, and civil rights for women and families around the state.

Past successes from the 2015 and 2016 legislative agendas include: passage of the 2015 CA Fair Pay Act and the Domestic Worker's Bill of Rights, repeal of the Maximum Family Grant Rule, and increases to child care spending in the state budget. Visit strongercalifornia.org for previous legislative agendas and successes.

###

The Stronger California Advocates Network is a historic collaboration of advocate coalitions with deep experience working with communities affected by the four pillars of the Stronger California Agenda. We seek to promote policy reform in order to 1) meet basic needs and provide better income support, 2) achieve fair pay and working conditions, 3) support workforce development, encourage asset building, and 4) ensure work-family flexibility and access to quality child care.