



### **A Project of Community Partners**

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April 10, 2017

Senator Ricardo Lara  
State Capitol, Room 5050  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 562 (LARA and ATKINS) – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Lara:

**For Grace: Women In Pain** strongly supports SB 562 (Lara/Atkins), The Healthy California Act.

When enacted, the Healthy California Act will guarantee that every resident of California will receive comprehensive healthcare services. It’s like Medicare for All. Individuals will have free choice of licensed health professionals and services. Covered benefits will include services to keep people healthy—mentally and physically— as well as services that diagnose and treat diseases. In addition to emergency services, surgeries and hospital stays, services such as home healthcare, day care and hospice are covered. Vision and dental care are also included. The Healthy California Act has been crafted to provide a single high standard of safe, therapeutic care for all California residents in a manner that is financially sustainable. There will be huge cost-savings from reduced bureaucracy. No more insurance company runaround. No more bill collectors.

Our mission at For Grace: Women In Pain is to promote better care and wellness for women challenged by chronic pain. Chronic pain can become a disease in and of itself if not treated early and effectively. Without access to health care, acute pain can turn into chronic pain with a lifetime of physical and emotional devastation that can then lead to profound disability, loss of independence and social breakdown. In short, lives can be lost simply due to lack of appropriate medical intervention.

My battle with a chronic pain disease was mainly caused by delayed access to quality health care. Briefly I was a 21 year old ballerina 35 years ago when a minor ballet injury triggered the chronic pain disease, Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (aka, "The Suicide Disease.") For the first 13 years of my illness my doctors told me that my physical problems were all in my head, leaving me bedridden for a decade and unable to speak for five of those years while the CRPS spread throughout my body and ravaged my vocal chords.

Everyone deserves access to quality healthcare. However those deeply challenged by complicated chronic health conditions need it even more. There are six to seven million people in California who daily cope with persistent, high-impact pain – and without healthcare their lives can indeed become living nightmares.

The Healthy California Act will create a system that will serve all Californians equitably, efficiently, and affordably. SB 562 is needed now more than ever.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cynthia Toussaint". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Cynthia Toussaint  
Founder and Spokesperson  
For Grace: Women In Pain