

February 16, 2016

The Honorable Ben Hueso
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 4035
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Senate Bill 899 (Hueso) – Gender discrimination in consumer pricing – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Hueso.

California Public Interest Research Group (CALPIRG) supports Senate Bill 899, your legislation to prohibit gender discrimination in the pricing of consumer goods.

A recent study by the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs found that in every industry that they studied – children’s toys, children’s clothing, adult clothing, personal care products, and senior home health products – products for female consumers were more likely to cost more than similar products marketed to male consumers. Girls/women’s products cost an average of 7 percent more than substantially similar or identical products marketed to boys/men.

Thanks to legislation authored by then-Assemblymember Jackie Speier in 1995, California law already prohibits businesses from discriminating based on gender with regard to the price of services provided. Additionally, in 2001, thanks to the leadership of then-Assemblymember Hannah-Beth Jackson, legislation was signed that require the posting of prices for common services and a notice that it is against California law to discriminate based on gender by charging women more for the same services.

SB 899 would add ‘goods’ to the laws already on the books and forbid gender discrimination in the pricing of similar or identical consumer goods.

For products that do not differ in the labor, materials and related costs of production, it is unfair to charge more based on the gender of the consumer to whom it is marketed. SB 899 would prohibit gender-based discrimination in pricing. Thank you for authoring this important consumer protection.

Sincerely,



Emily Rusch
Executive Director
CALPIRG
510-844-6803
erusch@calpirg.org