



## Office of the San Diego City Attorney

**Mara W. Elliott**  
City Attorney

September 29, 2017

Governor Jerry Brown  
Office of the Governor  
c/o State Capitol, Suite 1173  
Sacramento, CA 95814

### *Assembly Bill 41 (Chiu) - SUPPORT*

Dear Governor Brown:

The San Diego City Attorney's Office supports Assembly Bill 41 (Chiu) which will require local law enforcement agencies to track the handling of sexual assault evidence kits and to provide annual reports to the California Department of Justice.

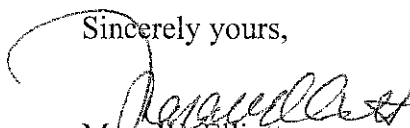
In recent years, the federal government identified hundreds of thousands of rape kits that have gone unanalyzed, known as the "rape kit backlog." Some jurisdictions have worked to decrease their backlogs to varying degrees. However, in California, no comprehensive data is currently available about the number of sexual assault evidence kits that local law enforcement agencies collect annually, how many of those kits are analyzed, or the reasons some are not analyzed.

The data collected as a result of Assembly Bill 41 is a tool to help law enforcement agencies improve on their treatment of sexual assault survivors. The highly invasive procedures used to collect forensic evidence for rape kits can last several hours and, in many cases, re-traumatize survivors. Yet they willingly undergo this grueling process in the pursuit of justice, and to protect others, as the evidence they provide can help identify repeat offenders and prevent future sexual assaults. It is contrary to the interest of the survivors and the community when kits are collected and neglected.

The scope of this problem cannot be properly estimated due to a lack of effective tracking and reporting at the local level. Through documented tracking, agencies would provide rape survivors and policy makers with data that can help address the rape kit backlog and make better use of the evidence they contain.

For these reasons, the San Diego City Attorney's Office supports AB 41.

Sincerely yours,

  
Mara W. Elliott  
City Attorney

MWE:vj  
cc: Assemblymember David Chiu, District 17