

SACRAMENTO FOR WOMEN & GIRLS

A VOLUNTEER EFFORT TO ESTABLISH A
WOMEN'S COMMISSION IN SACRAMENTO COUNTY

Media Contact: Dina Howard / (916) 212-0481/ dinaonline@sbcglobal.net

Sacramento County Board of Supervisors Approves Blue Ribbon Commission on the Establishment of a Sacramento County Women's Commission

23 July 2019 – Sacramento, CA – **The Sacramento Board of Supervisors** unanimously approved the creation of a **Blue Ribbon Commission** to look into the necessity for and feasibility of a **Sacramento County Commission on the Status of Women and Girls**. The Blue Ribbon Commission has 9 to 12 months to complete its task.

“With this vote today, the women and girls of Sacramento County now have a public forum for voicing their concerns, identifying their needs and exploring ideas for effective county response,” said Erin Saberi, a member of the ad hoc citizen’s effort that has been spearheading the effort to establish a county women’s commission. The group has brought together a diverse group of grassroots women representing both the community and local non-profits that serve the needs of women and girls. Beginning in 2018, the group has sponsored community meetings, facilitated polling, and hosted a series of “How Are The Women & Girls Listening Circles” with women and girls across the county. Issues such as domestic violence, living wage, housing, mental health, access to transportation and rapidly rising poverty rates consistently arose as areas of concern in each of these venues.

Supervisor Phil Serna, who introduced the resolution, to establish the Blue Ribbon Commission pointed to the success of a previous Blue Ribbon Commission he sponsored in 2011 to address the issue of disproportionate African American child deaths in the county. The highly successful Black Child Legacy Campaign emerged out of that effort and continues to save and support lives today. “This Blue Ribbon Commission will explore the important issues facing women and girls in Sacramento County and the value of a permanent women’s commission to help promote gender equity and equality,” said Serna. “We look forward to the activity and work of the Blue Ribbon Commission and to receiving its advisory report.”

The California State Commission on the Status of Women and Girls was established in 1965, and there are currently 25 California Counties and Cities with established women’s commissions that work to lift up and address the needs of women in their jurisdictions. Sacramento County, the seat of government for the State and California's 5th largest metropolitan area, does not have one.

The resolution voted on today defined women's commissions as “existing to promote economic, social, and political equity and well being for women and girls. The vision of women's commissions internationally, nationally, and across California is that all women and girls will experience fairness and equity in housing, health care, safety, high-quality education, criminal justice, employment and economic opportunity.” It goes on to say

that “the purpose of a Sacramento County Women's Commission would be to ensure greater understanding, accountability and integrated planning of services and programs for women and girls in Sacramento County.” The purpose of the Blue Ribbon Commission would be to determine and establish best practices for the “structure, role, value and responsibility” for the proposed Commission.

When Saberi and a few other women from their Committee met with **Sacramento Supervisor Phil Serna** and explained the community’s desire to establish a commission for women and girls, Supervisor Serna declared “Let’s get this done, and do it thoughtfully.” Ms. Saberi and a host of others in support of the formation of the **Blue Ribbon Commission** were in the Supervisors' chamber to speak, show solidarity for the cause, and answer any questions the Supervisors had.

The Blue Ribbon Commission will pick up where the Committee for Women and Girls left off with listening circles, data gathering, and public input. In 9-12 months the Supervisors will have the information they need to make a decision about the creation of a permanent Sacramento County Commission For Women and Girls.

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