



State of California

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February 10, 2023

The Honorable Chris Holden  
1021 O Street, Suite 5650  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Assemblymember Holden,

The Little Hoover Commission supports AB 304, the measure you authored that would place oversight of batterer intervention programs within the Department of Justice, establish statewide programmatic standards, require program providers to publicly post fee information to be shared with defendants, and require trauma-informed judicial training, among other measures intended to rehabilitate and hold accountable domestic violence offenders.

In its 2021 report, *Beyond the Crisis: A Long-Term Approach to Reduce, Prevent, and Recover from Intimate Partner Violence*, the Commission found that California's batterer intervention programs were "structured in such a way that it's nearly down to chance – except the odds are stacked against participants who are not financially secure – whether the program will work for a participant or leave them indebted in the county lockup." Among other concerns, the Commission found the programs were not always available in the geographic region or language offenders needed, affordable for lower-income Californians, nor formatted in a manner that addressed the spectrum of genders and sexualities found among Californians.

The Commission recommended that the state review its requirements for batterer intervention programs to determine if they facilitate rehabilitation; begin a process to determine how to tailor rehabilitative services to an individual's needs; and, ensure that rehabilitation is not contingent on an individual's ability to pay.

We believe AB 304 would help implement these recommendations; consequently we support this legislation. If I, the Commission, or our staff can provide any further assistance as this proposal moves through the legislative process, please do not hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,

Pedro Nava  
Chair