



## Women's Human Rights Campaign

Governor Gavin Newsom  
1303 10th Street, Suite 1173  
Sacramento, CA 95814

August 30, 2020

Dear Governor Newsom:

Please protect the rights, safety and dignity of women in California prisons by vetoing SB 132. Women prisoners should not be housed with men who identify as women. Research shows that better than 85% of men who identify as women retain their male genitalia and the 2015 US Transgender Survey indicates that a majority retain their sexual interest in women.

Further, a 2009 California inmate study found that transgender inmates in men's prisons were more frequently classified as sex offenders than were other men. Specifically, 20.5% of transgender inmates in men's prisons were registered sex offenders compared with 14.6% of the general male prison population. (Where the Margins Meet: A Demographic Assessment of Transgender Inmates in Men's Prisons. Sexton et al. 2009. University of California-Irvine.)

Corrections officials in Illinois are already facing a suit from a female prisoner alleging that she was raped by a male prisoner who identifies as a woman, after he was transferred to her facility. In Texas, incarcerated women sued the state over being forced to shower with male prisoners identifying as women, and being forced to endure their lewd threats. In the UK, female prisoners have been sexually assaulted by men who identify as women placed in the women's estate.

The United Nations Statement on the Treatment of Prisoners recognizes that people have a right to privacy on the basis of sex, which includes separating male and female prisoners. Sex is defined by the United Nations as the "physical and biological characteristics that distinguish males from females" (Gender Equality Glossary, UN Women). The United Nations Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners (1990) bans discrimination on the basis of sex. Housing males who identify as women with women prisoners is sex discrimination.

We of the Women's Human Rights Campaign-USA urge you to uphold international standards for the treatment of prisoners, and to protect the safety, dignity, and privacy of women prisoners in California by vetoing SB132. The WHRC is an international group of women organized to affirm rights and protections for women and girls enumerated in the 1979 United Nations *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (CEDAW). With signatories in 118 countries, and working in collaboration with 215 organizations worldwide, the WHRC is building a global movement to protect and defend these sex-based rights. For more information visit our website:

<https://www.womensdeclaration.com>.

Sincerely,

Co-chair, Interim Steering Committee  
Women's Human Rights Campaign-USA