*Insert organizational letterhead*

*Replace all highlighted text, sign, save, and submit to the legislative portal at* [*https://calegislation.lc.ca.gov/Advocates*](https://calegislation.lc.ca.gov/Advocates)*. If you have please email* [*policy@cpedv.org*](mailto:policy@cpedv.org)*.*

*Email a copy of the letter to* [*nora.lynn@asm.ca.gov*](mailto:nora.lynn@asm.ca.gov) *and* [*policy@cpedv.org*](mailto:policy@cpedv.org)*.*

DATE

Assemblymember Mark Stone

Chair, Assembly Judiciary Committee

Legislative Office Building

1020 N Street, Room 104

Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 1726 (Aguiar-Curry) – Safe At Home Program – Support**

Dear Assemblymember Stone,

On behalf of *organization name*, I write today in support of AB 1726 (Aguiar-Curry). This important legislation will improve California’s Safe At Home program for program participants and applicants.

*Add information about your organization and connection to this issue.*

The Safe At Home program is a confidential address program administered by the California Secretary of State's office. Safe at Home offers victims of domestic violence, stalking, sexual assault, human trafficking & elder and dependent abuse, as well as reproductive health care workers, a substitute mailing address to receive first class, certified, and registered mail. This address is also accepted by California state, county, and city government agencies in lieu of a residential or other mailing address where a survivor can be tracked down, keeping the residence address confidential and out of the hands of someone who might want to cause harm.

This program is provided free of charge to California residents who qualify as participants. Since the program began in 1999, Safe at Home has helped protect thousands of victims and reproductive health care workers. In 2021, the number of participants in the program increased by 14% as compared to 2020, to 5,546. Of those participants, 3,641 identified as victims of domestic violence. The program office received and processed 130,424 pieces of mail, forwarding 81,159 of those items.[[1]](#footnote-0)

This program remains an important component of the overall safety plan for survivors of violence and abuse. AB 1726 will increase its functionality in several ways. The bill will clarify that applicants are only required to provide information about additional parents if there is a 2nd or 3rd legal parent. Currently, the application process requires this information even if there is no additional legal parent. AB 1726 will also clarify that participation in the program does not indicate children are at risk in the participant’s care, an important clarification to protect survivors in custody or dependency case proceedings. Survivors should feel confident enrolling in the program without worrying that it will negatively impact their ability to retain custody.

Additionally, AB 1726 will strengthen protections against disclosing a participant’s home address and contact information and will expand timelines for court documents to be served if the person is a Safe At Home participant. Since court documents must be sent to the Secretary of State’s office and then forwarded to the participants, extended timelines are needed to ensure that participants receive their court paperwork with sufficient time to respond.

Taken together, these updates to the program will provide for increased access for applicants and a more effective program for participants. For these reasons we are pleased to support AB 1726 (Aguiar-Curry) and respectfully urge your support.

Sincerely,

*Insert signature*

*Name*

*Organization*

Cc: Assemblymember Aguiar Curry

1. 2021 Annual Legislative Report for the Secretary of State's Safe at Home program. Available at <https://admin.cdn.sos.ca.gov/reports/2021/sah-annual-report.pdf>. [↑](#footnote-ref-0)