



Advocate for intersex rights: contact your lawmakers!

How To Submit Support for SB 225

If you are supporting the bill on behalf of an organization:

- Sign on to support the bill via [this form](#).
- The link above will take you to a google form where you can read the joint support letter, submit your signature, and upload your organization's logo (which is required for the committee to list you as a supporter).

If you are supporting the bill as an individual:

- The California Legislature will only accept letters received through an online portal system called California Advocates. If you already have an account, you may proceed to the next step. If not, please follow these instructions first:
 - **Create an account with California Advocates** by clicking [here](#).
 - Fill out the necessary information to set up your account by following the steps on the portal.
 - Now you are ready to begin the letter submission process!
- **Create a letter of support:** There is a sample letter attached for your reference, but please personalize it or even start from scratch if you prefer to write your own! Feel free to include as much of your personal experience and perspective as you would like in order to help explain why this bill is necessary. *Keep in mind that this will be information available to the lawmakers once you submit.* Don't forget to **sign your letter**.
- **Submit the letter via the California Advocates portal.** Once you are signed into the portal:
 - Select "Submit a Letter" (top left corner).
 - Complete the "Select a Bill" portion by filling in the bill number ([SB 225](#)) and the session type ([Regular Session](#)). Ensure that the proper bill is populated and select [Next](#).

FOR MORE INFO VISIT:

[4INTERSEX.ORG](#)
[interactadvocates.org](#)



o Ensure that "Senate Business, Professions, and Economic Development Committee" is selected. (This will ensure that the appropriate legislative staffer will receive a copy of your letter.) Select Next.

o Upload your letter and select "Support" under *Stance*. If there is space for a subject line, enter "Support for SB 225."

o You will be prompted to a final "Review Your Submission" page where you can review to make sure the information you entered is accurate.

o Once you've done so, select *Submit*.

o You're done!

- Finally, help keep the author and co-sponsors updated by **emailing a copy of your letter** to severiano.christian@sen.ca.gov and tami@eqca.org.

Sample support letter for SB 225:

The Honorable Scott Wiener
State Capitol, Room 5100
Sacramento, CA 95814-4900

[DATE]

Re: SB 225 (Wiener) – Bodily Autonomy, Dignity, and Choice Act – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Wiener:

My name is [X], and I am a resident of the State of California *[if applicable]* who was born with variations in their physical sex characteristics *[if applicable]*.

I am writing in support of Senate Bill 225, which will prohibit specified surgeries on children born with variations in their physical sex characteristics who are under 12 years old unless required to address an immediate risk of physical harm.

Beginning in the mid-twentieth century, American physicians began performing surgeries on infants born with variations in their physical sex characteristics -- some of whom identify with the term "intersex" -- to make their bodies conform to stereotypical notions of male or female. These surgeries have included infant vaginoplasty, clitoral reduction, invasive relocation of a working urethra, and removal of gonadal tissues that are responsible for hormone production and fertility. Risks of these surgeries range from extreme scarring, chronic pain, incontinence, and lifelong

FOR MORE INFO VISIT:

4INTERSEX.ORG
interactadvocates.org



loss of sexual sensation to sterilization, post-traumatic stress disorder, and surgically cementing an incorrect gender assignment, among other complications.

For decades, infants and young children with variations in their sex characteristics have been operated on based on the theory that typical-appearing sex characteristics are necessary for a child's "normal" psychosocial and gender development. However, this claim is not supported by research, but is rather predicated on assumptions about how individuals relate to their bodies that fail to take into account the fact that many individuals who were born with these variations will *not* want or need the surgeries that may be recommended when they are young. While the practice of surgically erasing variations in children's sex characteristics without centering the input of the individual involved has been condemned by all major community-led groups as well as the World Health Organization, Physicians for Human Rights, the American Academy of Family Physicians, and multiple arms of the United Nations, a number of doctors continue to perform these irreversible surgeries on infants, including in the state of California. This practice undermines the child's right to bodily autonomy and self-determination, causes needless physical and psychological harm, and discriminates against individuals whose bodies may not fit narrow sex stereotypes. Not unlike the victims of LGBTQ+ conversion therapy and forced sterilizations, individuals living with the results of these childhood surgeries deal with the catastrophic consequences of attempted "treatment" for the rest of their lives.

SB 225 prohibits specified surgeries before the age of 12 except when required to address an immediate risk of physical harm. By prohibiting these surgeries which are non-essential to perform in childhood, SB 225 buys time for Californians born with variations in their physical sex characteristics to participate in personal, life-altering decisions about their bodies. The bill will also give clearer guidance to medical providers that accords with the basic injunction to "first, do no harm." I hope that the Legislature will take this opportunity to protect children with variations in their sex characteristics by passing SB 225.

Sincerely,

FOR MORE INFO VISIT:

[4INTERSEX.ORG](https://4intersex.org)
interactadvocates.org