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STATEMENT ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

We, the Commissioners of the City of Los Angeles Commission on the Status of Women, express our solidarity with the women who have come forward to reveal their experiences of sexual assault or harassment in the workplace, and stand with Councilmembers in support of the adopted Motion (C.F. 17-1286) to place renewed focus on the City's sexual harassment policies with the objective of creating a streamlined reporting process where complaints are centralized and closure for victims is assured.

Whether it is today, at a time when high profile personalities from every corner of the American workforce are being felled by allegations of sexually charged misconduct, or any day in the course of the life of women in the workplace experiencing myriad forms of harassment, abuse, belittlement, disempowerment or demoralization as a form of intimidation or control, we condemn the conduct, and stand with women everywhere who speak out.

Our Commission has been tasked by the honorable Mayor Garcetti with advancing the general welfare of women and girls in the Los Angeles community and to ensure that all women have full and equal participation in City government. With this mandate in mind, we will collaborate with City staff to articulate strategies and measures that can be adopted and implemented by any and all workplaces, large and small, within the city of Los Angeles, to ensure a fair and safe environment for women to work and thrive.

It is unacceptable that in the 21st century acts of sexual harassment and gender bullying can still be met with tacit assent or purposeful silence. We applaud the City Councilmembers for articulating the need to face long-standing issues with a new lens of empowerment and transparency, implementing systems and safeguards to support the reporting of complaints and the tracking of progress through closure. The pervasive culture of acquiescence must be called out at every level, and City leaders should stand with ordinary people to say, no more. We will stand together, look for solutions, empower one another, and speak out. Together, we will be the change we want to see in this and every city, across America.