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Date

The Honorable Tina McKinnor
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Room 5520
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1144 (McKinnor) SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember McKinnor:

On behalf of the Members of the (ORGANIZATION), I am writing to express our strong support of AB 1144 (McKinnor), which would grant incarcerated individuals aged 55 and older—excluding those sentenced to death—the right to choose whether to continue working or reduce their hours. The bill would also prohibit the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) from punishing individuals for making this choice, including restricting privileges or altering their classification status.

Older adults in California prisons, including those with chronic but not fully disabling illnesses, are required to work daily with no option to reduce their hours. Incarcerated individuals, even those in their 70s and 80s, must continue working, often performing physically demanding tasks such as lifting heavy materials, working in extreme heat and laboring in high-risk environments like kitchens and prison yards.

This aging population faces a higher risk of workplace injuries, yet work assignments rarely consider age-related limitations. Without a medical exemption—difficult to obtain and often denied—older incarcerated individuals must either continue working or risk losing privileges, benefits, or even facing disciplinary action. The exemption process is lengthy, uncertain and inaccessible to many, forcing individuals with legitimate age-related health concerns to work under conditions that may be harmful.

By allowing older incarcerated individuals to make informed decisions about their work participation without fear of losing essential privileges such as visitation or canteen access, AB 1144 upholds their human dignity and recognizes their physical limitations. AB 1144 ensures that aging incarcerated people are not forced into labor that endangers their health, and provides reasonable accommodations to this aging population.

(DISCUSS WHY YOU AND/OR YOUR ORGANIZATION SUPPORT THIS BILL.)

Thank you for your continued leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

NAME
ORGANIZATION
CONTACT INFORMATION

cc: The Honorable (Chair Name), Chair, (Name of Committee)
Members of the (Name of Committee)