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P r e s s R e l e a s e

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Assemblymember Cristina Garcia Assembly Bill 453 on Nonconsensual Condom Removal/Stealthing Signed by the Governor making it the first law in the Nation to address Stealthing

(Sacramento)—Today, Governor Newsom signed trailblazing legislation that would include nonconsensual condom removal or ‘stealthing’ in the CA Civil Code. This new law is the first in the nation and confirms that ‘stealthing’ is an illegal act that causes long term physical and emotional harm to its victims and those guilty of ‘stealthing’ will now be held accountable under California law.

‘Stealthing’ is the nonconsensual and intentional removal or tampering with the condom during sexual intercourse. A study by Yale University (*Columbia Journal of Gender and Law, Vol. 32, No. 2, 2017*) calls “stealthing” “*a grave violation of dignity and autonomy*” and reports that cases of “stealthing” are on the rise among women and gay men. The article also encourages new Torts against the practice to allow victims to establish a cause of action. Stealthing has also been called rape-adjacent.

“I have been working on the issue of ‘stealthing’ since 2017 and I am elated that there is now some accountability for those who perpetrate the act. Sexual assaults, especially those on women of color, are perpetually swept under the rug. So much stigma is attached to this issue, that even after every critic lauded *Micheala Coel’s, I May Destroy You* for its compelling depiction of the horrors of sexual abuse including of ‘stealthing,’ it got zero Golden Globe nominations. That doesn’t seem like an accident or coincidence to me,” stated Assemblymember Garcia.

“It’s disgusting that there are online communities that defend and encourage stealthing and give advice on how to get away with removing the condom without the consent of their partner. It is now clear in California law that this is a crime. This law is the first of its kind in the nation, but I urge other states to follow in California’s direction and make it clear that stealthing is not just immoral but illegal. More importantly, I encourage us all to not shy away from important conversations about consent in order to ensure we reduce the number of victims,” concluded Garcia.

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The 58th Assembly District includes the cities of Montebello, Pico Rivera, Commerce, Bell Gardens, Downey, Norwalk, Bellflower, Cerritos and Artesia.