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## **Cristina Garcia and Lorena Gonzalez Fletcher Introduce ‘Common Cents Tax Reform’ Act to End the Diapers & Feminine Health Products Tax**

*AB 479 Saves Young Families, Women, Seniors When Shopping for Health Necessities*

**SACRAMENTO** —(*Thursday, March 9, 2017*) – California State Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez Fletcher (D-San Diego) and Assemblywoman Cristina Garcia (D-Bell Gardens) were joined by a group of everyday women, mothers, senior citizens and caretakers today to introduce the Common Cents Tax Reform Act, which will exempt diapers, tampons, pads and other basic necessities from California’s sales tax.

“Diapers are an expensive necessity for every baby, and for many elderly and disabled Californians. It’s just common sense that we shouldn’t tax life necessities like diapers and tampons, and every dollar we can save parents and seniors is critical,” Assemblywoman Gonzalez Fletcher said. “We need our tax system to reflect our values.”

“Common sense is that liquor is a choice and a luxury and human biology is not,” said Assemblywoman Cristina Garcia, Chair of the California Legislative Women’s Caucus. “There is no happy hour for menstruation. Our tax code needs to reflect the fact that it’s not ok to tax women for being born women.”

California law provides exemptions food and prescription medicines, but health necessities such as diapers, tampons and other feminine hygiene products are taxed. If enacted into law, Assembly Bill 479, known as The Common Cents Tax Reform Act, will add diapers and feminine health products like tampons and pads to the list of exempted necessities. Studies show one in three American families struggle with purchasing baby diapers, which can cost young families between \$80 and \$100 per child per month. Under AB 479’s repeal of the diaper tax, a young family could save as much as \$100 annually – enough to pay for a month’s worth of diapers for a child.

“I am a senior citizen on a fixed income. I’ve been a caretaker, and I’ve been a patient myself. I can tell you from my own experience that those dollars and cents add up at the end of the month. We shouldn’t be charging senior citizens taxes on things they need to live,” said Sacramento County resident Bob Spencer, who worked as a caretaker for senior citizens.

“I do the best I can to provide for my child, but I have to stretch every dollar I have to make ends meet. The state shouldn’t charge sales tax on the diapers my children need,” added Marie Contreras, a Sacramento County resident and mother.

AB 479 was jointly introduced Thursday by Assemblywomen Garcia and Gonzalez Fletcher after both legislators steered bills exempting diapers and feminine health products from sales tax last legislative session through both houses to the Governor's desk. However, both tax repeal bills were vetoed by the Governor, who wrote that in his veto message that the revenue lost by the repealing the diaper and tampon taxes would threaten the state budget's stability.

To offset the modest loss in revenue from exempting diapers and feminine health products from sales tax, the Common Cents Tax Reform Act raises a corresponding amount by increasing the excise tax-per-gallon on hard liquor only by \$1.20 for liquors that are under 100-proof, which equates to less than 1.5 cents per serving. For liquors over 100 proof, which are less than 1 percent of all liquor sales, the increase under AB 479 would be twice the amount to align with longstanding excise tax practices. Tax on beer and wine would not increase under AB 479.

"No one can claim liquor is a basic necessity of life," added Garcia. "It's basics before booze and ladies over liquor."

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

# CRISTINA GARCIA

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## Press Release

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# 'Common Cents Tax Reform' Act Will End Diaper & Feminine Health Products Tax

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"This is about valuing the health of women, seniors and families over things that aren't necessary to the lives of tens of millions of Californians. It's babies over booze," Assemblywoman Gonzalez Fletcher said.

For more information on the Common Cents Tax Reform Act, or to schedule an interview with Assemblywoman Gonzalez Fletcher, contact John Vigna at 916.319.2080 or 916.212.0357.

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***Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez Fletcher represents California's 80th Assembly District, located in southern San Diego County, including the cities of San Diego, Chula Vista, and National City. She serves as Chair of the Assembly Committee on Appropriations, Chair of the Assembly Select Committee on Women in the Workplace, and Vice Chair of the California Latino Legislative Caucus. For more information on Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez Fletcher visit <https://a80.asmdc.org/>***