

## Talking Points

### California Assembly Bill No. 2539

### Protecting the Health of Fashion Models

*Sponsored by:  
Asm. Marc Levine*

1. Professional fashion models face serious occupational hazards.
  - Models are frequently pressured by their agencies to lose weight and often face dismissal from jobs if they are unable to do so.
  - Models are often incorrectly classified by agencies as independent contractors rather than employees. As a result, models lack the support, protection, and access to healthcare that U.S. employees are entitled to.
2. Many models suffer from eating disorders as well as sexual exploitation and wage theft.
  - One U.S. study found a third of models have struggled with eating disorders.
  - The majority of models begin working professionally as minors, putting them at heightened risk for sexual and economic exploitation. A U.S. study found almost 40% of models reported being pressured to have sex with someone at work. Models are frequently paid with clothing or are not paid at all.
3. California has a responsibility to protect models from this hazardous work environment just as it protects employees of other industries and to join the growing global movement to address this labor and public health issue.
  - Under California law, talent agencies are subject to licensing requirements, must keep detailed records, and are not allowed to send a model to a job that they know, or should know, will be unsafe for a model or violate child labor laws.
  - Assemblymember Marc Levine (D-Marin County) has introduced AB 2539, which, if passed, would improve regulation of the fashion industry and ensure that employers abide by California law.
  - This bill would require that models, like other performers, are correctly classified as employees rather than independent contractors and that the industry adopt health standards that ensure the health and safety of models. These health standards will be set by the state in consultation with eating disorders experts.