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April 25, 2017

The Honorable Susan Talamantes Eggman  
State Capitol  
P.O. Box 942849  
Sacramento, CA 94249  
Fax: (916) 319-2113

RE: AB 1136 (Eggman): Health facilities: residential mental or substance use disorder treatment.  
AAP-CA Position: SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Eggman:

I am writing on behalf of the American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA), representing over 5,000 California pediatricians, to let you know that we strongly support your proposed legislation AB 1136 (Eggman). This bill would direct the Department of Public Health to draft a proposal for funding under the federal 21st Century Cures Act to create a web-based psychiatric inpatient bed registry, in order to collect and display information about available beds. This registry would allow updates in real time so as to facilitate the efficient transfer of patients.

California faces a severe shortage of psychiatric beds. It is not uncommon for hospital staff or a family member of the patient to spend hours on the phone trying to locate an available psychiatric bed for the patient. Not only is this an inefficient use of hospital staff's time and very stressful for family members, but it is also highly detrimental to patients in crisis situations who must spend additional time in the stressful environment of a hospital emergency room while they await relocation to a psychiatric hospital. For the 1 in 12 California children who experience serious emotional disturbances and the approximately 1 in 12 adolescents who report a major depressive episode every year, these delays and stressful environments can severely aggravate symptoms.

AB 1136 (Eggman) would decrease wait times, allow hospital staff to use their time more efficiently, and improve the quality of care afforded to both children and adults seeking emergency psychiatric treatment by initiating the creation of a psychiatric bed registry to be updated in real time. This would represent a major boon to people undergoing psychiatric crises and their families.

Pediatricians across the state support AB 1136 (Eggman). We thank you for your leadership on behalf of the health and well-being of children, youth, and families in California.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JC', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jacques Corriveau, M.D., Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Chair, State Government Affairs Committee, American Academy of Pediatrics, California

CC: Kris Calvin, CEO; AAP-CA Leadership; Lydia Bourne