



March 28, 2017

The Honorable Tony Thurmond
State Capitol
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0015
Fax: (916) 319-2115

RE: AB 1164 (Thurmond): Foster care placement: funding
AAP-CA Position: SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Thurmond:

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA), representing over 5,000 California pediatricians, strongly supports your proposed legislation AB 1164 (Thurmond). This bill would establish the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children, and would require participating counties to provide monthly childcare vouchers for qualified children involved in the foster care or child welfare systems. It would also require that each participating child be provided with a child care navigator, that each child care resource and referral program provide a child care navigator to support children in foster care and children previously in foster care upon return to their home of origin, and that the child care resource and referral program provide trauma-informed training and coaching to child care providers working with children in the foster care system.

Foster children are among the most vulnerable populations in California. Many have lived through multiple, often severe traumas, receive little or no family support, and must regularly integrate themselves into entirely new living environments. It is incumbent on us to do what we can to support their education and enrichment, as well as their development of a sense of stability, both by making sure that they have access to stable educational environments and by facilitating their placement with a loving resource family as soon as possible. However, many potential resource families are not able to take in foster children because they are unable to afford child care, leaving these children without the support they need. In some cases, foster children may not be placed with willing and capable family members, simply because these family members cannot afford child care.

AB 1164 (Thurmond) would help place foster children with caring resource families by assuring that they will have access to both quality child care and a child care navigator, so that they will be able to care for the child even if members of the resource family are not able to stay home with the child at all times. This would be beneficial to the California foster children who are currently waiting for a placement with a resource family.

Pediatricians across the state support AB 1164 (Thurmond). 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 "Nancy Graff". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Nancy" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Graff".

Nancy Graff, M.D., Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics
State Government Affairs Committee, American Academy of Pediatrics, California

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