



March 27, 2017

The Honorable Rob Bonta
State Capitol
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249
Fax: (916) 319-2118

RE: AB 1227 (Bonta): Human Trafficking Prevention Education and Training Act
AAP-CA Position: SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Bonta:

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA), representing over 5,000 California pediatricians, strongly supports your proposed legislation AB 1227 (Bonta). This bill would require school districts to provide abuse and human trafficking prevention education and to provide periodic staff training in abuse and trafficking issues for school staff. It would also amend the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act to explicitly require reporting of suspected human trafficking.

Human trafficking is among the most pressing human rights issues facing California today. Human trafficking has been estimated to be a \$32 billion per year global industry, and as of 2012, California was one of the nation's top four destination states for human trafficking, meaning that it is one of the most common states to which trafficking victims are brought. Of special concern to pediatricians are the many children and adolescents, often those already living in extremely challenging circumstances, who fall victim to traffickers. This leads to grave physical and emotional harm, with lifelong implications for the child—especially if the child receives insufficient physical or mental health care after his or her escape from a life of exploitation. Sadly, this is often the case because the signs of human trafficking go unnoticed and unreported.

AB 1227 (Bonta) would lend a lifeline to children who are being trafficked by making sure that school staff are trained in human trafficking and abuse issues, while also requiring that they report suspected human trafficking. It would also make a difference in the lives of thousands of children who are trafficked or abused by mandating that school districts provide human trafficking and abuse prevention education, so that children themselves are able to recognize the signs and ask for help if they require it.

Pediatricians across the state proudly support AB 1227 (Bonta). 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 "Susan Wu". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "S" and a distinct "W" at the end.

Susan Wu, 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