



September 28, 2017

Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
California State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

AB 1520 (Burke): Lifting Children and Families Out of Poverty Act of 2017
AAP-CA Position: SUPPORT

Dear Governor Brown:

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA), representing over 5,000 California pediatricians, strongly supports the proposed legislation AB 1520 (Burke). This bill would commit the Legislature to a goal of reducing child poverty by 50 percent over 20 years, and provides a framework of research-backed solutions to achieve it.

Poverty is among the greatest contributors to poor health outcomes for children. According to the AAP Policy Statement “Poverty and Child Health in the United States,” “Children who experience poverty, particularly during early life or for an extended period, are at risk of a host of adverse health and developmental outcomes through their life course. Poverty has a profound effect on specific circumstances, such as birth weight, infant mortality, language development, chronic illness, environmental exposure, nutrition, and injury. ... Child poverty is associated with lifelong hardship.”

Moreover, society as a whole bears further costs: “A study compiled before 2008 projected a total cost of approximately \$500 billion each year through decreased productivity and increased costs of crime and health care, nearly 4% of the gross domestic product.” Our failure to dramatically curtail poverty rates most directly harms children who grow up poor, but it also diverts public funds away from other worthwhile causes and public health efforts.

AB 1520 (Burke) would reaffirm California’s commitment to doing right by our state’s children by committing the Legislature to a goal of reducing child poverty by 50 percent over 20 years, through a variety of evidence-based and proven programs such as childcare and early childhood education, home visiting programs, after-school and summer school programs, workforce development, Medi-Cal expansion, affordable housing, EITC expansion, CalWORKs increases, and investment in Housing & Urban Development-identified Promise Zones. If achieved, this program would have incredible benefits for all Californians—not just those who would not have to endure a childhood of poverty as a result.

California pediatricians respectfully request that you sign AB 1520 (Burke) into law. We thank you for your public service and leadership on behalf of the health and wellbeing of children, youth, and families in California.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan Wu', located at the top left of the page.

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