



April 24, 2017

The Honorable Autumn Burke
State Capitol
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249
Fax: (916) 319-2162

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

Dear Assemblywoman Burke:

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 resolution 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.

Pediatricians across the state strongly support AB 1520 (Burke). 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 the first name "Susan" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Wu".

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