



March 16, 2018

The Honorable Kevin McCarty
State Capitol, Room 2136
Sacramento, CA 95814
Fax: (916) 319-2107

RE: AB 1754 (McCarty): Pre-K for All Act of 2018
AAP-CA Position: Support

Dear Assemblymember McCarty:

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA), representing over 5,000 California pediatricians, strongly supports your proposed legislation AB 1754 (McCarty). This bill would ensure access to preschool and early childhood programs for low income 4-year olds in California.

Longitudinal studies have shown that preschool improves long-term educational, economic, and health outcomes, particularly for low income children. Children who attend preschool are more likely to graduate from high school, use less special education, and earn higher wages. Low income children start elementary school almost 14 months behind their peers, and this gap continues to widen throughout the school years. Although low income children in California qualify for state-sponsored preschool or early childhood programs, there are insufficient slots. It is estimated that at least 40,000 eligible 4-year olds and 130,000 eligible 3-year olds do not have access to preschool. The American Institutes for Research reported that between 2008-2013, California eliminated 110,000 preschool and early childcare slots, and these have still not been fully recovered. A 2016 Public Policy Institute of California report found that 46% of low income 4-year olds compared with 33% of not low income children, are not enrolled in preschool.

AB 1754 would give California's children the best chance at success, by ensuring access to early care and education programs for all eligible low income 4-year olds. This would allow children to arrive at kindergarten ready to thrive and improve their long term academic and socioeconomic outcomes.

Pediatricians across the state support AB 1754 (McCarty). 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 "Suzanne".

Susan Wu, M.D., Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics
State Government Affairs Committee, American Academy of Pediatrics, California

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