



August 29, 2018

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

RE: AB 1861 (Rodriguez) Pupil Instruction: Human Trafficking: Use of Social Media and Mobile Device Applications
AAP-CA Position: Support

Dear Governor Brown,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA), representing over 5,000 California pediatricians, supports AB 1861 (Rodriguez), to require that comprehensive sexual health education already being provided to pupils in grades 7 through 12 include information on how social media and mobile device applications are used for human trafficking.

Child sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) is a public health problem in the United States. The rapid evolution of our digital environment has created new channels and opportunities for exploitation. Traffickers use social media sites to identify victims who are depressed, socially isolated, have poor self-esteem, or have little to no supervision.. The sites also give the traffickers the ability to lure and exploit children and teenagers into human trafficking circles. The sheer volume of messages makes it nearly impossible for law enforcement to monitor all platforms for potential traffickers.

In 2017, the Governor signed legislation regarding education on human trafficking awareness and prevention in mandated sexual health education courses that take place in middle and high school. AB 1861 would enhance these efforts by ensuring social media use in trafficking is addressed with students.

It is imperative we provide children with information on how social media and mobile device applications are used for human trafficking and on strategies to reduce the risk of human trafficking by teaching them techniques to set healthy boundaries and to safely seek assistance. AB 1861 would add this information to the comprehensive sexual health education already being provided to pupils in grades 7 through 12 so children and youth can take steps to protect themselves.

For these reasons, pediatrician members of AAP California Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4 statewide respectfully request you to sign AB 1861 (Rodriguez) into law. 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, consisting of a stylized initial 'A' followed by a long horizontal line.

Addison S.Gearhart, M.D., Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics
Executive Board Member, American Academy of Pediatrics, California

cc: Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez (Author); AAP-CA Leadership; Lobbyist Lydia Bourne