



April 9, 2018

Honorable Blanca Rubio
Chair, Assembly Human Services Committee
1020 N Street, Room 124
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 2043 (Arambula): Foster youth: family urgent response system.
AAP-CA Position: Support

Dear Chair Rubio:

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA), representing over 5,000 California pediatricians, supports proposed legislation AB 2043 (Arambula), which would create the California Coordinated Response System, including a toll-free 24/7 hotline available statewide to caregivers, children and youth in the foster care system who are experiencing emotional, behavioral or other difficulties and who feel they need immediate help.

Foster youth face some of the most challenging circumstances of all California children. Often removed from their families due to abuse, neglect, or other traumatic experiences, many are shuffled between homes and often removed or isolated from their support networks due to multiple moves. 70% of foster children experience more than three foster placements during their time in the system. Under these circumstances, it is no surprise that foster children and youth frequently experience behavioral or emotional issues that are too difficult to handle on their own. Caregivers, under these circumstances, are often forced to call the police as their only recourse for dealing with behavioral issues, including self-destructive behavior; this criminalizes what is often only a bid for help, and creates further difficulties for the foster child.

AB 2043 (Arambula) would offer a helping hand to overwhelmed foster children and their caregivers by creating the California Coordinated Response System, to make sure that they have professionally trained assistance available to them 24/7. This will be an invaluable resource to children and youth across California.

Pediatrician members of AAP California Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4 across the state strongly support proposed legislation AB 2043 (Arambula). Thank you for your public service and leadership on behalf of the health and wellbeing of children, youth, and families in California.

Sincerely,



Melissa Ruiz, M.D., Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics
Executive Board Member, American Academy of Pediatrics, California

cc: Honorable Joaquin Arambula, author
Members of the Assembly Human Services Committee
AAP-CA Leadership; Lobbyist Lydia Bourne

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