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April 5, 2018

Honorable Patrick O'Donnell  
Chair, Assembly Education Committee  
1020 N Street, Room 159  
Sacramento, California 95814

RE: AB 2109 (O'Donnell): Pupils: pupils with a temporary disability: individual instruction: pupils who are terminally ill: honorary diplomas  
AAP-CA Position: Support

Dear Chair O'Donnell:

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA), representing over 5,000 California pediatricians, strongly supports proposed legislation AB 2109 (O'Donnell), which would improve the education of seriously ill students who require instruction in a hospital or at home by ensuring that students are able to return to their home school in a timely manner after a hospital stay and allow students who are enrolled in a hospital program for a partial week to attend school on days when they are at home.

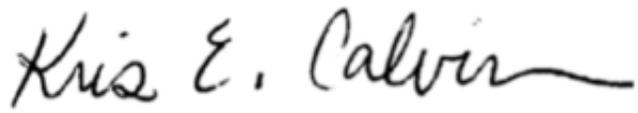
The bill would also require school districts to provide information to parents about their child's eligibility for home and hospital instruction, would require home instruction to commence within five days of a determination, and would avoid the sending of truancy notices for children receiving this instruction. The bill would authorize school districts to issue honorary diplomas to students who are terminally ill.

The practice of disenrolling hospital students has led to situations where students who require a partial week of instruction (e.g. two days per week of kidney dialysis) are unable to attend school in their home districts for the remaining days of the week. When a student remains enrolled during hospital instruction, they are sometimes marked absent by their home school district. As a result, the parents of seriously ill students, who are in fact attending school in a hospital, may receive truancy notices.

American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that education be available in an alternative setting, such as a rehabilitation center, hospital, or the home for children who are unable to attend school. AB 2360 (Rodriguez) would ensure that seriously ill students are able to access the education services they are entitled to in a timely manner.

Pediatrician members of AAP California Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4 across the state respectfully urge an AYE vote on AB 2109 (O'Donnell). 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 that reads "Kris E. Calvin" with a long, sweeping underline.

Kris Calvin  
Chief Executive Officer, American Academy of Pediatrics, California

cc: Assemblymember Patrick O'Donnell, author  
Members of the Assembly Education Committee  
AAP-CA Leadership; Lobbyist Lydia Bourne