



---

June 19, 2018

The Honorable Richard Pan  
Chair, Senate Committee on Health  
State Capitol, Room 2191  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 2143 (Caballero) Mental Health: Licensed Mental Health Service Provider Education Program.  
AAP-CA Position: Support**

Dear Chair Pan,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA), representing over 5,000 California pediatricians, strongly supports proposed legislation AB 2143 (Caballero) to create incentives for dual licensed individuals to practice in community mental health or other underserved settings by expanding criteria in the current loan repayment program to include them.

Mental health problems are increasing, including among pediatric populations. Currently, there is a dearth of psychiatrists working in community mental health programs and other underserved areas. Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants could provide many of the essential services required. However, many training slots for Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioners go unfilled and educational opportunities for Physicians Assistants in mental health are not always available. Few incentives to enroll in these programs exist.

The Mental Health Loan Assumption Program provides funding for a loan forgiveness program for qualified professionals such as licensed clinical psychologists, clinical social workers, and marriage and family therapists who work in designated underserved mental health areas. AB 2143 (Caballero) seeks to provide those incentives through expanding the current loan forgiveness programs to dual status trainees meeting certain criteria if they are willing to work in underserved rural communities.

Pediatrician members of AAP California Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4 statewide support proposed legislation AB 2143 (Caballero) and urge you to vote AYE. 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 cursive script, appearing to read "Jim D. Zyglidopoulos".

John Takayama, M.D., Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Executive Board Member, American Academy of Pediatrics, California

cc: Members of the Senate Committee on Health  
Honorable Anna Caballero, Author  
AAP-CA Leadership; Lobbyist Lydia Bourne