



April 1, 2018

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

RE: AB 2291 (Chiu): School safety: bullying
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 2291 (Chiu), which would require public schools to publicize their policies and procedures on bullying and cyberbullying, and to share the California Department of Education's online training with school staff.

According to the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, victims of bullying are at risk for problems adjusting to school, mental health issues, and frequent headaches, and both bullied and bullying children are at increased risk for depression. Studies show that approximately 1 in 5 students are bullied, and the percentage is much higher for ethnic, racial, and sexual minority students. However, schools are not currently required to address bullying in their school safety plans, despite its prevalence and dangers.

AB 2291 (Chiu) would rectify this oversight by requiring that schools publicize their policies and procedures on bullying and cyberbullying, as well as to share a module developed by the Department of Education on bullying prevention with school staff. This stands to reduce bullying in public schools and increase the effectiveness of staff responses to bullying that does occur.

Pediatrician members of AAP California Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4 across the state respectfully urge an AYE vote on AB 2291 (Chiu). 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 that reads "Kris E. Calvin".

Kris Calvin

Chief Executive Officer, American Academy of Pediatrics, California

cc: Assemblymember David Chiu, author
Members of the Assembly Education Committee
AAP-CA Leadership; Lobbyist Lydia Bourne