



June 19, 2018

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

RE:? AB 2384 (Arambula) Medication-Assisted Treatment
AAP-CA Position: Support

Dear Chair Pan,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA), representing over 5,000 California pediatricians, strongly supports AB 2384 (Arambula) to require drug formularies to include listed prescription drugs approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration for medication-assisted treatment of opioid use disorders.

In 2016, over 42,000 Americans died of opioid overdoses. Over 3,000 of the overdose victims were adolescents or young adults between the ages of 15 and 24. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that for every young person who died of opioid overdoses in 2016, nearly 120 were admitted to the emergency room. Of the remaining victims, many were parents, older siblings, or community members whose deaths affected an untold number of young people. Faced with this devastation, we must make sure that we are taking every step we can to reduce opioid addiction.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) advocates for increasing resources to improve access to Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) of opioid-addicted adolescents and young adults.

Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) combines medications with counseling and behavioral therapies to provide a “whole-patient” approach to treatment. The prescribed medications normalize brain chemistry, block the euphoric effects of alcohol and opioids, relieve physiological cravings, and normalize body functions without the negative effects of the abused drug. Research shows this combination successfully treats these disorders and can help sustain recovery.

Effective treatments are underused and access to developmentally appropriate treatment is severely restricted for adolescents and young adults. Many barriers to treatment exist with existing law. People seeking MAT still struggle to access it and insurance utilization management policies pose a significant obstacle. AB 2384 (Arambula) would remove barriers to some of the most effective and innovative treatment of opioid abuse disorders.

Pediatrician members of AAP California Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4 statewide support proposed legislation AB 2384 (Arambula) 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 black ink, appearing to read 'SHS', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Suzanne Higgins Stewart, M.D.
Resident Representative Member, AAP-CA State Government Affairs Committee
American Academy of Pediatrics, California

cc: Members of Senate Health Committee
The Honorable Joaquin Arambula, Author
AAP-CA Leadership; Lobbyist Lydia Bourne