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June 19, 2018

The Honorable Richard Pan  
Chair, Senate Standing Committee on Public Employment and Retirement  
1020 N Street, Room 568  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 2481 (Voepel) State Employment: Infant at Work 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 2481 (Voepel) to authorize state agencies to adopt an Infant at Work program to allow new parents to bring an infant to the workplace.

Under the California Family Rights Act, most employees can take up to 12 weeks of parental leave after the birth or adoption of a baby and may receive partial pay under the Paid Family Leave program, but parent/baby bonding needs don't end at twelve weeks. Infant brain development and social, emotional and cognitive development in the first two years depends on a loving bond with a primary caregiver, usually a parent. In addition, California has one of the highest rates for infant care in the country. Returning to work can also interfere with breastfeeding, which has been recognized to have positive health effects for mothers and children.

The Infant at Work pilot program helps parents create a strong parent/infant bond, makes breastfeeding easier, and helps parents save money on the high cost of infant child care. Similar programs have been established in Washington and Arizona resulting in increased employee productivity and morale. The state of Washington also reduced overall health care costs, which they attribute to making breastfeeding easier.

AB 2481 (Voepel) will make it easier for parents to strengthen bonds with their babies, relieve some of the burden of infant care costs, and support breastfeeding mothers all while increasing productivity and morale and helping make California babies happy and healthy.

Pediatrician members of AAP California Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4 statewide strongly support proposed legislation AB 2481 (Voepel) 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,

*Kris E. Calvin*

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

cc: Members of the Senate Standing Committee on Public Employment and Retirement  
Honorable Randy Voepel, Author  
AAP-CA Leadership; Lobbyist Lydia Bourne