



July 19, 2018

The Honorable Anthony J. Portantino
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 2206
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 2579 (Burke) Medi-Cal: California Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children

AAP-CA Position: Support

Dear Chair Portantino:

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA), representing over 5,000 California pediatricians, strongly supports proposed legislation AB 2579 (Burke), which would implement an express lane eligibility pathway from the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) to Medi-Cal as a smart strategy for enrolling a large portion of the remaining eligible uninsured children.

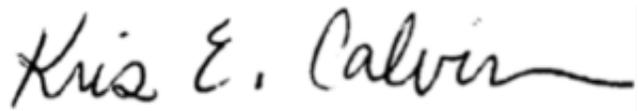
Based on recent CalWIC enrollment data, over 90,000 WIC children are not enrolled in Medi-Cal despite being eligible. While some of these children may have other coverage, Express Lane Eligibility for all the WIC children would offer expedited enrollment to those without coverage. In addition, up to 13,000 pregnant WIC women could gain Medi-Cal presumptive eligibility.

As California aims for universal coverage for Californians, the state should ensure that all those eligible for Medi-Cal coverage are enrolled. About half of the remaining 202,000 uninsured children in California are eligible for Medi-Cal but not enrolled. Smart enrollment strategies include working with public programs where a relative large number of eligible but unenrolled children are and streamlining their Medi-Cal enrollment based on similar eligibility information already collected.

AB 2579 would implement an express lane eligibility (ELE) pathway from WIC to Medi-Cal. WIC is a federally funded health and nutrition program for pregnant, postpartum and breastfeeding women, and infants and children under age 5 to improve birth and health outcomes. AB 2579 would 1) create presumptive eligibility for WIC pregnant women and 2) codify a WIC automated enrollment gateway for children.

Pediatrician members of AAP California Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4 statewide respectfully urge an AYE vote on AB 2579 (Burke). 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 Autumn Burke, author
Members of the Senate Appropriations Committee
The Children's Partnership (Sponsor)
Children's Defense Fund California (Co-Sponsor)
Children Now (Co-Sponsor)
California Coverage & Health Initiatives (Co-Sponsor)
United Ways of California (Co-Sponsor)