



June 19, 2018

The Honorable Benjamin Allen
Chair, Senate Standing Committee on Education
State Capitol, Room 2083
Sacramento, California 95814

RE: AB 2639 (Berman) Pupil suicide prevention policies: reviews: updates.
AAP-CA Position: Support

Dear Chair Allen,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA), representing over 5,000 California pediatricians, strongly supports proposed legislation AB 2639 (Berman) to create an online training program in suicide prevention for schools.

Suicide is the third leading cause of death among adolescents and that rate has been rising. Rates rise during the spring and fall pointing to a possible connection to increased stress during the school year.¹ While many teens identify a teacher as the first person they would go to for help, not all staff has the experience and training to address these issues.

Teachers and school counselors, among others who are on the front lines of suicide prevention, should be trained on suicide prevention.

AB 2639 (Berman) would require the California Department of Education to make an online training program in suicide prevention that schools can use to train school staff and pupils available, helping those most likely to see a student in distress or to have a student come to them in distress provide the help and support needed.

Pediatrician members of AAP California Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4 statewide strongly support proposed legislation AB 2639 (Berman) 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 that reads "Kris E. Calvin".

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

cc: Members of the Senate Standing Committee on Education

Honorable Marc Berman, Author
AAP-CA Leadership; Lobbyist Lydia Bourne

1 <http://www.aappublications.org/news/2018/05/16/suicideattempts051618>