



April 9, 2018

Honorable Blanca Rubio
Chair, Assembly Human Services Committee
1020 N Street, Room 124
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 2905 (Acosta): Foster youth: enrichment activities
AAP-CA Position: Support

Dear Chair Rubio:

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA), representing over 5,000 California pediatricians, supports proposed legislation AB 2905 (Acosta), which would establish the California Foster Youth Enrichment Grant Pilot Program.

Foster youth face some of the most challenging circumstances of all California children. Often removed from their families due to abuse, neglect, or other traumatic experiences, they are frequently shuffled between homes and often removed or isolated from their support networks due to multiple moves. 70% of foster children experience more than three foster placements during their time in the system; at the same time, only half complete high school.

AB 2905 (Acosta) would help foster youth find meaning in their lives and integrate into their communities by establishing the Foster Youth Enrichment Program, which would provide grants to foster youth so as to enable the youth to participate in activities that enhance their skills, abilities, self-esteem, or overall well-being. These might include extracurricular tutoring, sports programs, music or art education, summer camps, wilderness education programs, or other opportunities, all of which help provide foster youth with a sense of well-being and belonging. Not only is this beneficial in and of itself, but it also could assist foster youth in graduating from high school and making a successful transition to postsecondary education or technical training, which few foster youth are able to complete.

Pediatrician members of AAP California Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4 across the state strongly support proposed legislation AB 2905 (Acosta). 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, consisting of a large, sweeping loop followed by a horizontal line and a small flourish at the end.

Melissa Ruiz, M.D., Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics
Executive Board Member, American Academy of Pediatrics, California

cc: Honorable Dante Acosta, author
Members of the Assembly Human Services Committee
AAP-CA Leadership; Lobbyist Lydia Bourne