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April 2, 2018

Honorable Jim Frazier  
Chair, Assembly Transportation Committee  
Legislative Office Building, 1020 N Street, Room 112  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 3077 (Caballero) Vehicles: children safety**  
**AAP-CA Position: Support**

Dear Chair Frazier,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA), representing over 5,000 California pediatricians, supports AB 3077 (Caballero), to increase efforts to get more children to wear bicycle helmets when going to and from school, and allow school districts to utilize modern technology to protect children coming on and off their school bus.

Traffic related pedestrian and bicycle crashes are part of eight leading causes of unintentional injury in California. Last year the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) released data showing California's traffic related crash fatalities increased 10% between 2015 and 2016, with more than 3,600 traffic related deaths in 2016. One-third of those fatalities involved bicycle and pedestrian vs. vehicle crashes.

Bicycling to school is an important mode of transportation for many California students. Safety research shows that bicycle helmet use can reduce serious head injuries by more than 65%. Recent school surveys show that helmet use has dropped to less than 20%. A 2010 American Academy of Pediatric study of 1,200 child involved bicycle crashes in Los Angeles showed that the primary reason for a fatality involving a bicycle crash was head injury/brain injury, and that eight out of nine childhood fatalities due to bicycle crashes the child did not have on a helmet. The report also found that the vast majority of these children were children of color from low income neighborhoods.

The original bicycle helmet law placed the traffic fine for not wearing a helmet at \$25. For a number of years after the passage of the helmet law local law enforcement, schools, and children's health and safety groups worked together to encourage use of and access to helmets. The helmet use in many California communities reached 60%. Since then the traffic fine involving helmets has risen to \$300, which has had the effect of breaking the collaborative efforts between schools, parents, local law enforcement and bicycle safety groups. If California is to get to a place where preventable unintentional injuries are no longer the leading cause of death and hospitalization of our state's children, we need to move forward with common changes to our public health laws like those contained in your AB 3077. AB 3077 (Caballero) will bring California's bicycle helmet enforcement fines back down from \$300 to \$25 and make the ticket a "fix-it- ticket" allowing a family to obtain a helmet and/or go through a local bike safety course to have the ticket waived.

With respect to school buses, the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation (NASDPT) reports that approximately 21,040 school bus stop sign violations go unenforced in California daily. California's CHP and law enforcement collision data system reports that since 2006 more than 114 children have suffered fatal or severe injuries due to pedestrian vs. vehicle collisions going to or unloading from their school buses.

AB 3077 would allow local school districts struggling with drivers ignoring and violating school bus flashing red light or stop arm safety laws, to use modern stop arm camera video technology to assist local traffic enforcement and schools protect students while getting on and off school buses.

Pediatrician members of AAP California Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4 across the state urge you to vote AYE on AB 3077 (Caballero). 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 cursive script that reads "Phyllis Agran".

Phyllis Agran, M.D., Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Executive Board Member, American Academy of Pediatrics, California

cc: Assembly Transportation Committee Members  
Office of Honorable Anna Caballero, California State Assembly (Author)  
AAP-CA Leadership; Lobbyist Lydia Bourne