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April 14, 2017

The Honorable Lorena Gonzalez Fletcher  
State Capitol  
P.O. Box 942849  
Sacramento, CA 94249-0080  
Fax: (916) 319-2180

AB 479 (Gonzalez Fletcher): Sales and use taxes: exemption: menstrual and incontinence products: alcoholic beverage taxes: distilled spirits: additional surtax

AAP-CA Position: SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Gonzalez Fletcher:

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA), representing the 5,000 board-certified pediatrician members of all four California AAP regional chapters statewide, strongly supports your proposed legislation AB 479 (Gonzalez Fletcher). This bill would exempt diapers and feminine hygiene products from sales taxes, and impose an additional tax on distilled spirits in order to make up for lost revenues.

Diapers and feminine hygiene products are, obviously, necessities. However, they are taxed as if they were consumer products, exacting an unfair burden on women and mothers. Low-income women are especially affected by these taxes, which consume a disproportionate part of their income. An inability to afford sufficient feminine hygiene products can have negative consequences for hygiene and health that can result in expensive doctor's visits, while an insufficient supply of diapers can result in a parent changing their child's diaper less often than is healthy for the child. Painful diaper rash, skin infections, blisters and urinary tract infections are common outcomes that can be uncomfortable or even dangerous for the child.

AB 479 (Gonzalez Fletcher) would eliminate sales taxes on these essential products in order to make them more accessible for California women, children, and families while financing this change through an additional tax on distilled spirits. This is consistent with American Academy of Pediatrics policy, which recommends taxes on alcohol products be increased so as to discourage alcohol abuse and thus improve public health.

California pediatricians strongly support AB 479 (Gonzalez Fletcher). We thank you for your public service and leadership on behalf of the health and well-being of children, youth, and families in California.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nancy Graff". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Nancy" written in a more legible script and the last name "Graff" in a more stylized, cursive form.

Nancy Graff, M.D., Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
State Government Affairs Committee, American Academy of Pediatrics, California

CC: Kris Calvin, CEO; AAP-CA Leadership; Lydia Bourne