American Academy of Pediatrics
DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS, CALIFORNIA

American Academy of Pediatrics, California
921 11th Street, Suite 1100, Sacramento CA 95814

Phone (626) 796-1632 | Fax (626) 628-3382
E-mail office@aap-ca.org | Website www.AAP-CA.org

March 10, 2017

The Honorable Ash Kalra
State Capitol
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0027
Fax: (916) 319-2127

RE: AB 796 (Kalra): Public social services: SSI/SSP
AAP-CA Position: Support

Dear Assemblymember Kalra:

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA), representing over 5,000 California pediatricians, strongly supports your proposed legislation AB 796 (Kalra). This bill would reinstate the cost-of-living adjustment for SSI/SSP payments, and would raise maximum payments that do not equal or exceed the 2018 federal poverty level based on family size.

During the budget crisis of 2009, SSI/SSP benefits were severely cut, at the same time that the cost of living adjustment was repealed. This severely affected over 1 million Californians, including heads of family and over 80,000 disabled children, who depend on SSI/SSP payments to get by. The crisis has passed for the state's budget, but not for these Californians who cannot work and must survive on SSI/SSP payments that do not even reach 91% of the federal poverty level. Poverty is one of the strongest predictors of poor outcomes in children, including infant mortality, chronic diseases, malnutrition, developmental delay, and school success.

AB 796 (Kalra) would lessen the strain on these Californians—adults and children alike—who depend on SSI/SSP income to fulfill their basic needs, and who continue to unfairly suffer the consequences of an economic crisis our state has made a strong recovery from. This would represent a strong step forward in making California a safer and more hospitable state for the most vulnerable among us.

Pediatricians strongly support AB 796 (Kalra). We thank you for your public service and for your leadership on behalf of the health and well-being of children, youth, and families in California.

Sincerely,

Susan Wu, 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