



May 3, 2016

The Honorable Shirley Weber
State Capitol, Room 5150
Sacramento, CA 95814
Fax: (916) 319-2115

RE: AB 841 (Weber) AAP-CA Position: SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Weber,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA) representing over 5,000 California pediatricians strongly supports AB 841 (Weber) to prohibit the marketing in schools of junk food that does not meet the “Smart Snack” standards.

In 2010, the federal government passed the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (HHFKA). Under the HHFKA regulations, schools that participate in the school breakfast and lunch programs are required to serve healthy food options to kids under the “Smart Snacks” standards. Last session, Senate Bill 1169 codified the new rules and regulations that govern competitive food and beverages as required under the HHFKA. On July 21, 2016, the USDA announced new rules requiring schools to ensure that any food or beverage that is marketed on school campuses during the school day meets the “Smart Snacks” standards.

Even though these new standards are in place, the marketing of junk food to children is big business. A report from the Federal Trade Commission showed that companies spend \$149 million on in-school food marketing. The marketing of junk food directly to our children and youth adversely. Research shows that food brand recognition by children even in preschool predicts a higher body mass index (BMI), demonstrating that name brand marketing/advertising has a strong impact on childhood obesity.

Pediatricians spend significant time counseling families and children on how to make healthy choices and establish healthy habits. Using unhealthy foods and beverages as incentives for school performance undermines the overarching goal of creating healthy habits. Schools must be places where kids receive a consistent set of messages about healthy eating. If the unhealthy food or beverage cannot be sold in school, then it should also not be promoted in school.

AAP-CA is proud to support AB 841 (Weber). We thank you for your leadership on behalf of the health and well-being of children, youth, and families in California.

Sincerely,

Kris E. Calvin

Kris Calvin
Chief Executive Officer
American Academy of Pediatrics, California

CC: AAP-CA Leadership; Lydia Bourne