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March 14, 2017

The Honorable Joaquin Arambula

State Capitol

P.O. Box 942849

Sacramento, CA 94249-0031

Fax: (916) 319-2131

RE: AB 992 (Arambula): CalWORKs: Baby Wellness and Family Support Home Visiting Program

AAP-CA Position: Support

Dear Assemblymember Arambula:

I am writing on behalf of the American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA), representing over 5,000 California pediatricians, to let you know that we strongly support your proposed legislation AB 992 (Arambula). This bill would establish the CalWORKs Baby Wellness and Family Support Home Visiting Program, which would work with counties to implement voluntary maternal, infant, and early childhood home visiting programs.

Home visiting programs have proven benefits. Since the length of postpartum hospital stays has decreased, these programs help monitor and care for the health of both mother and child in the critical period after birth, assisting with such routine issues as breastfeeding difficulties and maternal mental health care. However, the benefits do not end there. The Nurse-Family Partnership home visiting program, for example, has been shown to reduce child maltreatment by 48%, children's behavioral and intellectual problems by 67%, and youth arrests by 59%. As a result, this program is estimated to save nearly \$40,000 per participating California family. These monetary figures represent only the fiscal benefits of higher academic achievement, fewer infant deaths, lifelong poverty reduction, and reduced youth crime, among many other benefits. Yet despite these programs' incredible efficacy, only 11% of California children aged 0-3 have received one or more home visits—compared to 65% of children who have at least one risk factor that indicates they would benefit. This represents an incredible lost opportunity.

AB 922 (Arambula) would expand home visit programs to some of our state's most vulnerable populations, by allowing CalWORKs recipients to voluntarily opt in to home visiting programs that stand to vastly improve their children's lives, as well as their own quality of life as parents. In doing so, our state would make a wise investment in the next generation of Californians.

Pediatricians across the state support AB 992 (Arambula). We thank you for your 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 'M Patel', located at the top left of the page.

Mona Patel, M.D., Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
State Government Affairs Committee Representative, American Academy of Pediatrics, California

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