



August 14, 2015

Assemblymember Wood
State Capitol, Room 5164
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: ABX2-8 (Wood) Tobacco Minimum Age
AAP-CA Position: SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Wood:

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA), representing nearly 5,000 primary care and subspecialty pediatricians statewide, strongly supports the proposed legislation ABX2-8 to raise the legal age to buy tobacco in California from age 18 to age 21.

The American Academy of Pediatrics supports policies that keep tobacco out of the hands of youth. A recent Institute of Medicine report finds that raising the age of legal sales of tobacco would likely prevent or delay initiation of tobacco use by adolescents and young adults and reduce smoking-related mortality. Raising the age would also reduce children's exposure to secondhand smoke, and improve infant health through reductions in smoking rates by parents. This is strongly consistent with the American Academy of Pediatrics advocacy for smoke-free environments where children learn, live and play.

According to Sandra G. Hassink, MD, FAAP President of the American Academy of Pediatrics: "We know that one-third to one-half of young people who try a cigarette will go on to become daily smokers, and many of them will die prematurely from a smoking-related disease. Smoking harms nearly every organ in the body. Protecting young people from addiction will improve their health in the short term, and will dramatically reduce their risk of long-term health problems including heart disease, stroke and lung cancer."

ABX2-8 represents an evidence-based, reasonable and important step to protect and promote the health and well-being, not only of young adults 18 to 21 who might otherwise start to smoke, but also for their children and families—those around them—and for the public health of our communities.

Pediatricians strongly support ABX2-8. Thank you for your public service and leadership on behalf of children across California.

Sincerely,

Kris E. Calvin |

Kris Calvin
Chief Executive Officer
American Academy of Pediatrics, California