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January 26, 2017

The Honorable Catharine Baker  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 94249  
Fax: (916) 319-2116

RE: ACR 11 (Baker): Cervical Cancer Screening and Awareness Month  
AAP-CA Position: Support

Dear Assemblywoman Baker:

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 resolution ACR 11 (Baker). ACR 11 would declare January of every year to be Cervical Cancer Screening and Awareness Month, and would encourage all Californians, especially the State Department of Public Health and the State Department of Health Care Services, to observe the month with appropriate activities, including the promotion of screening, educational outreach programs and awareness-raising efforts.

As the resolution notes, while hundreds of Californians die from cervical cancer every year, 99% of those deaths would have been preventable with adequate screening. The recent development of the HPV vaccine has given us another tool with which to fight cervical cancer, as HPV infection is among the top risk factors for cervical cancer later in life. However, vaccination rates remain relatively low. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly 2 in 5 adolescent girls nationwide have not received even one out of the three recommended doses of the vaccine. Vaccination rates are even lower for adolescent boys, who not only suffer other effects of HPV infection but can also transmit HPV to sexual partners. Combating cervical cancer thus demands a public health effort to encourage both regular screenings and high vaccination rates. By declaring an annual Cervical Cancer Screening and Awareness Month every January, ACR 11 (Baker) would serve to educate Californians about the importance of such measures—and would contribute to saving lives.

Pediatricians across the state support ACR 11 (Baker). We thank you for your leadership on behalf of the health and well-being of children, youth, and families in California.

Sincerely,

Kris Calvin

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kris E. Calvin".

Chief Executive Officer  
American Academy of Pediatrics, California

CC: AAP-CA Leadership; Lydia Bourne