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March 31, 2015

Assemblymember Jim Beall  
California State Capitol, Room 5066  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: SB 11 (Beall): Behavioral Health Training for California Peace Officers**  
**AAPCA POSITION: SUPPORT**

Dear Assemblymember Beall,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California, representing the 5,000 boardcertified pediatrician members of all four California AAP regional chapters statewide (Ch 1 – Northern California, Ch 2 – Greater Los Angeles, Ch 3 – San Diego, and Ch 4 – Orange County), strongly supports your proposed legislation SB 11 (Beall). This bill would require POST (Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training) to include in its basic training course an evidencebased behavioral health classroom training course and instructorled active learning, such as scenariobased training, to train law enforcement officers to recognize, deescalate, and refer persons with mental illness or intellectual disability who are in crisis.

The existing California Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) curriculum for prospective officers mandates 664 hours (16 weeks) of training. This includes 72 hours on how to handle firearms and pepper spray? 40 hours for investigative report writing? 40 hours on fitness? and 40 hours on driving but just six hours of combined training for people with physical and intellectual disabilities and mental health training.

Six hours of training is not enough. The lack of training has had deadly results. With better training, we can reduce injuries and save lives – both for people with mental health illnesses and officers.

SB 11 responds to the growing public concerns by mandating additional evidencebased behavioral training proven to reduce the negative interactions between peace officers and people suffering from a mental illness or intellectual disability.

Pediatricians strongly support SB 11 and 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