



February 27, 2017

The Honorable Hannah-Beth Jackson
State Capitol, Room 2032
Sacramento, CA 95814
Fax: (916) 651-4919

RE: SB 55 (Jackson): Distinguished After School Health Recognition Program
AAP-CA Position: Support

Dear Senator Jackson:

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 SB 55 (Jackson). SB 55 (Jackson) would permanently establish the Distinguished After School Health (DASH) Program, which recognizes after school programs that meet certain health-related requirements, such as educating staff on healthy eating and physical activity, providing healthy food and drinks to attendees, and encouraging physical activity and limiting screen time.

In the past forty years, child obesity rates have risen dramatically across the country. Today, about one third of children in the United States are overweight or obese, a three- or four-fold increase since 1976. This is a matter of grave concern. Eating and exercise habits are often set during childhood, and most overweight children will grow up to become overweight adults. Those who suffer most are often lower-income children whose families often do not have access to affordable, nutritious food or safe spaces for outdoor recreation: a 2016 study found that in California, one in six 2- to 4-year-old WIC participants were obese. This adds yet another obstacle to the already daunting challenges faced by low-income children.

After school programs have a part to play in the fight against childhood obesity: by modeling healthy lifestyle choices, they can make a big difference in kids' lives. This is why we supported the creation of the Distinguished After School Health Program in 2014, and why we support its indefinite extension today.

Pediatricians across the state support SB 55 (Jackson). 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, consisting of several loops and a long, sweeping tail that extends towards the upper right.

Zoey Goore, M.D., M.P.H., Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics
Executive Board Member, American Academy of Pediatrics, California

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