



August 25, 2016

The Honorable Jerry Brown
Governor of California
State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 877 (Pan) Reporting and tracking of violent deaths
AAP-CA Position: Support

Dear Governor Brown:

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA) representing 5,000 California pediatricians strongly supports SB 877 (Pan). This bill would direct the State Department of Public Health to establish and maintain the California Electronic Violent Death Reporting System for collecting data on violent deaths. It would further authorize the department to seek grant funding from the National Violent Death Reporting System of the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Each year, 56,000 people die as a result of violence, including suicide and homicide, in the United States. Of these deaths, more than 17,000 are infants and children who die prematurely from injury. Yet, the majority of these childhood deaths are preventable.

In order to address this highly preventable public health crisis, it is essential to understand the personal, familial, and community conditions and behaviors that contribute to violent childhood death. Programs that collect information on violent deaths, like the National Violent Death Reporting System, can help pediatricians and policy makers understand why injury remains the leading cause of death among children and take steps to intervene. As pediatricians, we recognize that the California Electronic Violent Death Reporting System would help public health professionals and policy makers understand trends in child fatality review and identify effective prevention and intervention strategies. The AAP strongly supports the development of federal and state legislation to enhance the child fatality review process.

By expanding the availability of statistical data on violent deaths, SB 877 would give public health professionals and policy makers the necessary tools to develop effective strategies to prevent premature deaths in children and infants. This bill would ensure that effective and appropriate public health and legislative measures are being taken at the state and national level to decrease preventable child and infant deaths.

Pediatricians, therefore, respectfully urge you to sign SB 877 and thank you for your public service and leadership on behalf of the health and well-being of children, youth, and families in California.

Sincerely,



Kris E. Calvin

Kris Calvin
Chief Executive Officer
American Academy of Pediatrics, California

CC: Stuart Cohen, AAP-CA Chair; Lydia Bourne, AAP-CA Legislative Advocate; AAP-CA Leadership