



August 29, 2018

Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
California State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 972 (Portantino): Pupil and student health: identification cards: suicide prevention? hotline number
AAP-CA Position: Support**

Dear Governor Brown,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA), representing over 5,000 California pediatricians, supports SB 972 (Portantino), to require a public school, including a charter school, or a private school that serves pupils in grades 7-12 and higher education to issue a suicide prevention hotline telephone number on either side of pupil identification cards commencing July 1, 2019.

The suicide rate for white children and teens between 10 and 17 rose 70% between 2006 and 2016 and the rate for African-American children and teens rose by 77%, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Recently, the California Department of Education adopted a model youth suicide prevention policy to help educate and train counselors and school employees of the signs of suicidal behavior and mental illness. Information on suicide prevention hotlines is available online, on posters on campus, or in the school district's suicide prevention policy.

However, students may only see the information on suicide prevention hotlines sporadically or after searching online. Because students typically have identification cards on their persons, printing the prevention hotline number on the identification card would ensure that students have more ready access to what could be lifesaving information.

SB 972 (Portantino) would expand current policy by providing an easily accessible suicide prevention telephone hotline number on student's identification cards, which will be another necessary resource for potential life-saving help.

Pediatrician members of AAP California Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4 statewide respectfully request you to sign SB 972 (Portantino) into law. Thank you for your public service and leadership on behalf of the health and wellbeing of children, youth, and families in California.

Sincerely,

Addison S.Gearhart, M.D., Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics
Executive Board Member, American Academy of Pediatrics, California

cc: Office of Honorable Anthony Portantino (Author); Lydia Bourne, AAP-CA Lobbyist