

May 20, 2019

Assembly Member Jim Wood  
Chair, Committee on Health  
State Capitol, Room 6005  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 577 (Eggman): Health care coverage: postpartum period.  
AAP-CA Position: Support**

Dear Assembly Member Wood:

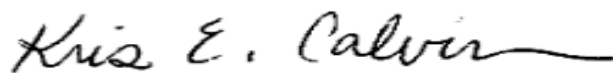
The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA) representing the over 5,000 board-certified pediatrician members of California AAP Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4 statewide, strongly supports proposed legislation AB 577 (Eggman), which would ensure that those receiving Medi-Cal coverage during their pregnancy continue to benefit from postpartum coverage for a year after giving birth.

Perinatal depression is the most common complication of pregnancy in our country, and can occur up to a year after birth. It can adversely affect the infant's brain development and is a risk factor for parental neglect and abuse, as well as increased costs of medical care, inappropriate medical treatment of the infant, discontinuation of breastfeeding, family dysfunction, and toxic stress. Studies suggest that as many as 12% of all women who are pregnant or in the postpartum period experience depression in a given year. Adolescent mothers with low income report depressive symptoms at a rate of 40% to 60%. Evidence shows that only about half of these cases are correctly diagnosed and many diagnosed cases are not properly treated. One contributing factor is that Medi-Cal only provides for treatment for pregnancy-related concerns up to 60 days after the last day of the pregnancy.

AB 577 (Eggman) would invest in the next generation of Californians at a critical time in their growth and development by offering Covered California enrollment assistance to those who disenroll from Medi-Cal 60 days after giving birth, and extending Medi-Cal coverage to eligible individuals for one year when no other coverage is available. This would vastly improve access to postpartum mental health services, while also making sure any other postpartum health concerns can be properly treated and thus avoid damaging the health of the infant.

Pediatricians across the state of California urge an AYE vote on AB 577 (Eggman). Thank you for your public service and leadership on behalf of the health and well-being of the children, youth, and families of California.

Sincerely,



Kris Calvin  
Chief Executive Officer  
American Academy of Pediatrics, California

Cc: The Honorable Susan Eggman; AAP-CA Leadership; AAP-CA Advocate Lydia Bourne