

April 12, 2019

Assembly Member Autumn Burke, Chair  
Committee on Revenue and Taxation  
1020 N Street, Room 167A  
Sacramento, California 95814

**RE: AB 984 (Lackey): Personal income taxes: Suicide Prevention Voluntary Tax Contribution Fund.  
AAP-CA Position: Support**

Dear Assembly Member Burke:

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 984 (Lackey) creating the Suicide Prevention Voluntary Contribution Fund.

Suicide is the third-leading cause of death for 15- to 24-year-olds. The 2013 Youth Risk Behavior Survey of 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders found that in the year before the survey, 1 in 5 boys and 2 in 5 girls had felt sad or hopeless almost every day for at least two weeks in a row, and 1 in 10 girls and 1 in 20 boys had attempted suicide. Sexual minority youth are especially likely to attempt suicide, with rates of suicidal ideation twice as high as those of their heterosexual, cisgender peers. This represents a public health crisis that demands a concerted response.

AB 984 (Lackey) would increase the funds available for suicide prevention efforts by creating the Suicide Prevention Voluntary Contribution Fund, so that taxpayers may choose to contribute to a fund managed by the State Department of Health Care Services for the purposes of reducing suicide risk. Grants allocated by the fund would prioritize underserved rural areas and organizations that have experience working with LGBTQ youth, so that those at high risk are better able to access suicide prevention resources.

Pediatricians across the state of California urge an AYE vote on AB 984 (Lackey).

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 Tom Lackey; AAP-CA Leadership; AAPCA Advocate Lydia Bourne