

April 1, 2019

Senator Nancy Skinner, Chair
Committee on Public Safety
State Capitol, Room 2031
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 257 (Nielsen): Firearms: prohibited persons.
AAP-CA Position: Support

Dear Senator Skinner:

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 SB 257 (Nielsen), which would require the Department of Justice to notify local law enforcement if someone prohibited from owning firearms attempts to acquire one. County departments of mental health would also be notified if appropriate.

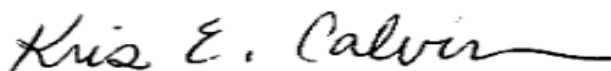
As stated in American Academy of Pediatrics policy, “the most effective measure to prevent suicide, homicide, and unintentional firearm-related injuries to children and adolescents is the absence of guns from homes and communities.” This is especially true when it concerns guns held in the possession of those far more likely to be violent or volatile than the general population, such as convicted felons and people deemed by a court to be a danger to themselves or others. However, there is no requirement that law enforcement or mental health services be notified when people who are prohibited by law from owning a gun attempt to acquire one, even though this act represents an attempted crime in and of itself and a possible signal of a dangerous mental health crisis.

SB 257 (Nielsen) would remedy this situation by requiring the Department of Justice to notify local law enforcement and, when applicable, county mental health agencies when someone who is prohibited from owning a firearm attempts to acquire one, in contravention of the law. This would allow law enforcement and mental health agencies to react appropriately to a potentially dangerous situation before it worsens—or costs lives.

Pediatricians across the state of California urge an AYE vote on SB 257 (Nielsen).

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 Jim Nielsen; AAP-CA Leadership; AAPCA Advocate Lydia Bourne