

June 26, 2019

Assemblymember Luz Rivas
State Capitol
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0039

RE: AB 1578 (Rivas): School Pavement to Parks Grant Program
AAP-CA Position: Support

Dear Assemblymember Rivas,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California, representing over 5,000 board-certified pediatrician members of California AAP Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4, strongly supports your proposed legislation AB 1578, as amended June 13, 2019, establishing the School Pavement to Parks Grant Program to provide grants to applicant school districts, county offices of education, or charter schools maintaining schools in disadvantaged communities, to convert portions of existing pavement at those schools to green space.

Childhood obesity is linked to poor health outcomes and serious chronic medical conditions such as diabetes and high blood pressure. Healthy lifestyle habits, including healthy eating and physical activity, can lower the risk of becoming obese and developing related diseases. Therefore, it is American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Policy to promote physical activity at home, in the community, and at school.

A study conducted on over 3,000 individuals in Southern California over an 8-year span found that children who lived closer to parks had significantly lower rates of obesity at age 18 than those who did not. Access to recreational programs was also shown to have a significant impact on reducing obesity. Additionally, green spaces positively affect public health by reducing air and heat pollution in cities.

Access to green spaces varies greatly by municipality. By increasing the number of green spaces near schools, and especially in disadvantaged communities, AB 1578 will help make our schools and educational institutions healthier and more enjoyable places for the children and families they serve.

Pediatricians across the state strongly support AB 1578. We thank you for your public service and leadership on behalf of the health and wellbeing of the children, youth, and families of California.

Sincerely,



Kris Calvin
Chief Executive Officer
American Academy of Pediatrics, California

cc:AAP-CA Leadership

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California is the state-level advocacy organization of the four AAP California Chapters. Our mission is to promote the health and well-being of all children and youth in California and to support the professional needs of our California Chapter member pediatricians.

We are a 501(c)4 nonprofit legally incorporated in California.