



April 2, 2019

Senator Connie M. Leyva
Chair, Senate Committee on Education
State Capitol, Room 4061, Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: SB 568 (Portantino) Postsecondary education: student housing: College-Focused Rapid
Rehousing Program**

AAP-CA POSITION: SUPPORT

Dear Senator Leyva,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA), representing the over 5,000 board-certified pediatricians statewide, strongly supports proposed legislation SB 568 (Portanio), which would establish the College-Focused Rapid Rehousing Program to provide housing options for homeless students and provide services to support homeless students in transitioning to stable housing and remaining enrolled in college.

There is a crisis of homelessness on college campuses today. In California, where about half of all students at the public universities are low-income, many students are forced into housing insecurity and homelessness in order to afford the cost of an education. One in ten California State University students say they have been homeless at some point in the past year. Over 4,300 homeless students are enrolled at San Jose State University alone, the most of any school in the CSU system. According to research conducted for the California Community College system, one in five students enrolled at community colleges in California are homeless.

Homelessness puts unique pressure on college students. According to a study conducted at Temple University, while homeless students on average study just as much as other students, they also work more, commute more and sleep less. Homeless students are less likely to graduate than other low-income students, and still often remain in a heightened position of financial instability when they do graduate.

SB 568 (Portanio) helps address the crisis of homeless on California campuses by giving colleges and universities the additional funds in order to bring students out of homelessness, as well as to provide them with other essential services such as life-skills training, employment support and financial aid advocacy.

No student should have to sacrifice housing in order to afford an education. Pediatricians across the state respectfully urge your AYE vote on SB568 (Portanio). 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, Weston Tountas AAP-CA Legislative Writer & Policy Analyst