



American Academy of Pediatrics, California
5000 Campus Drive Newport Beach, CA 92660
Phone (626) 796-1632 | **Fax** (626) 628-3382
Email: office@aap-ca.org | www.AAP-CA.org

September 17, 2020

Governor Gavin Newsom
1303 10th Street, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 826 (Santiago) Emergency Food Assistance: COVID-19
AAP-CA Position: SUPPORT

Dear Governor Newsom,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA) representing the over 5,000 pediatrician members of California AAP Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4 statewide strongly supports AB 826 (Santiago) as enrolled on September 4, 2020, which would require the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to establish a program to provide eligible immigrants with a cash benefit intended for food assistance.

Due to COVID-19, families across the state have lost their jobs and find themselves forced to choose between purchasing food or meeting other household expenses. These challenges are exacerbated for the over 2 million undocumented immigrants living in California who are not eligible for state or federal public benefits. A study conducted by Cambridge University found that even short-term lack of regular access to nutritious food in childhood decreases cognitive performance, which not only hinders students' ability to do well in school but also potentially poses lifelong challenges.

The Disaster Relief Assistance for Immigrants (DRAI) Project was established in April 2020 to help undocumented adults who are ineligible for other forms of assistance, including assistance under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and pandemic unemployment benefits, because of their immigration status. AB 826 (Santiago) would create a program effective immediately to provide critically important additional food assistance statewide to eligible immigrants and their children.

Pediatricians across the state respectfully request your signature on AB 826 (Santiago).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kris E. Calvin". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Kris Calvin, CEO
American Academy of Pediatrics, California

cc: AAP Leadership