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August 18, 2020

Assemblymember Sydney Kamlager
State Capitol
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0054

RE: AB 2054 (Kamlager): Emergency Services: Community Response: Grant Program
AAP-CA Position: SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Kamlager,

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 your proposed legislation AB 2054 as amended on August 3, 2020. This bill, also known as the C.R.I.S.E.S. Act, would create a pilot grant program (Community Response Initiative to Strengthen Emergency Systems) for community-based response to the local emergencies, including public health crises, people experiencing mental health issues, unhoused people in crises, people exposed to partner violence, people struggling with substance use disorders, and people affected by natural disasters.

Currently, the primary option for people in crisis is to call the police, but the police aren't always the best solution. Sometimes, the nature of a crisis requires mental health or social welfare expertise or local solutions best provided by community-based organizations (CBOs).

In recent weeks, people across this nation have taken to the streets to demand an end to police violence. Re-envisioning policing starts with community-based organizations (CBOs) who can provide critically informed, compassionate, and potentially life-saving responses for vulnerable people. By expanding the participation of CBOs in emergency responses we can de-escalate crises, reduce reactive violence, and get vital services to people in need.

Pediatricians across the state strongly support AB 2054. Thank you for your public service and leadership on behalf of the health and wellbeing of children, youth, and families in California.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marti Baum". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Marti Baum, MD FAAP
Member, State Government Affairs Committee
American Academy of Pediatrics, California

Cc: Kris Calvin, CEO; AAP Leadership