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September 10, 2020

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

RE: SB 912 (Beall) California Fostering Connections to Success Act
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 SB 912 (Beall) as amended on August 24, 2020, extending foster care support for nonminor dependents (NMDs) during a state of emergency.

Currently, foster youth are entitled to certain services that can extend up until they turn 21. Studies show that many youth who exit foster care have difficulties as they transition to adult life. They are more likely than their peers to be homeless or have housing instability. They are also more likely than peers to experience health and mental health problems and are less likely to earn a college degree. During the Covid-19 epidemic, these existing challenges are even more severe and youths who turn 21 and lose services can be expected to face extreme challenges in locating stable employment, housing, and health care.

On March 4, 2020, the Governor declared a state of emergency to exist in California due to the Covid-19 epidemic. Under SB 912 (Beall), a nonminor dependent would be eligible for continued services for six months, starting from their 21st birthday, as long as the state of emergency is in effect. This should cushion the transition from foster care to independence for nonminor dependants during this exceptionally challenging time in our history.

SB 912 (Beall) is a necessary and important measure to safeguard the future of foster youth during a time of unprecedented challenge. Pediatricians across the state respectfully request your signature on SB 912 (Beall). 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, appearing to read "Melissa Ruiz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Melissa Ruiz, MD MPH FAAP
Governing Board Member
American Academy of Pediatrics, California

Cc: Kris Calvin, CEO AAP-CA