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March 26, 2020

Assembly Member Lorena Gonzalez  
State Capitol, P.O. Box 942849  
Sacramento, CA 94249-0080

**RE AB 1350: (Gonzalez) Free youth transit passes: eligibility for state funding**  
**AAP-CA Position: Support**

Dear Assembly Member Gonzalez:

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 1350 as amended on January 15, 2020, requiring transit agencies to offer free youth passes to persons who are age 18 and under.

Increasing use of public transit has many positive effects:

- According to the US Department of Transportation, public transportation produces significantly lower greenhouse gas emissions per passenger mile than private vehicles.
- According to a report from the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, African-American youth received a disproportionate number of fare evasion citations in their county. Free transit passes could decrease citations for fare evasion and the unfair targeting of a vulnerable population.
- Many children and teens rely on public transit to get to essential locations such as school, health care providers, and jobs or internships. Removing barriers to educational opportunities, essential health care, and employment can only benefit our children and our communities.

Research suggests that individuals who ride transit at a young age are more likely to use transit as adults. Helping teens start a transit use habit could reap benefits for everyone for years to come.

AAP California recognizes that climate change threatens the physical and mental health of all children and urges elected officials to take immediate action to mitigate its effects. By increasing use of public transit, AB 1350 would help combat climate change and the criminalization of minority youth while creating greater access to important opportunities for wellness and enrichment.

Pediatricians across the state of California strongly support AB 1350. Thank you for your public service and leadership on behalf of the health and well-being of the children, youth, and families of California.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stuart Cohen".

Stuart Cohen, MD, MPH, FAAP  
Board, Member, American Academy of Pediatrics, California  
cc: Kris Calvin CEO AAP California; AAP-CA Leadership