
March 10, 2020

The Honorable Luz Rivas
State Capitol
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0039

RE: AB 1922 (Rivas) Pupil Instruction: Science Requirements: Climate Change
AAP-CA Position: Support

Dear Assembly Member Rivas:

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 1922 as introduced on January 13, 2020. This bill would ensure that grades 1-12 receive a science course studying the causes and effects of climate change.

California pediatricians see the direct impacts of climate change on our patients every day. These include a higher incidence of dangerous heat-related illness, worsening allergies, and a growing risk of mosquito-borne illness, all as a direct result of climate change. The increased severity and frequency of extreme weather events, including wildfires and floods, cause both short and long-term harm to children, from respiratory distress to the trauma caused by loss, evacuation and displacement.

While all children can potentially suffer both physical and mental harm from the current trajectory of global warming, low-income children and children of color are at highest risk due to their generally closer proximity to fossil fuel extraction and burning and their decreased access to resources and protection during and after extreme weather events.

The AAP-CA has resolved to support evidence-based and best practice initiatives to educate our patients, their families, the medical community and the public about the effects of climate change on health.

AB 1922 would add the requirement that at least one of the science courses in the designated coursework required to receive a diploma include material on the causes and effects of climate change. Educating California youth will help to equip them to meet the challenges of climate change in the present and the future, and to be part of creating solutions.

Pediatricians across the state of California strongly support AB 1922.

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,



Nora Pfaff, MD
Member, State Government Affairs Committee
American Academy of Pediatrics, California

cc: AAP-CA Leadership