

June 3, 2019

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

RE: AB 196 (Gonzalez) Paid Family Leave
AAP-CA Position: Support

Dear Assemblymember Gonzalez,


The American Academy of Pediatrics, California, representing over 5,000 board-certified pediatrician-members of California AAP Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4, strongly supports your proposed legislation AB 196 increasing the wage replacement rate for paid family leave (PFL) to workers who must take time off work to care for a seriously ill child, spouse, parent, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, or domestic partner, or to bond with a minor child to 100% of the worker's highest quarterly earnings in the past 18 months.

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) entitles eligible employees to take unpaid, job-protected leave for specified family and medical reasons. Many families, however, cannot afford to take that time without pay. The current PFL program provides a cash benefit set at 60% of "base period" wages for up to 6 weeks for those above poverty level income and 70% for those with below poverty level income. An estimated 3.3 million families in California live paycheck to paycheck. Taking time off to care for an ill loved one or to bond with a newborn or minor child could devastate these families financially.

One in four mothers feel they must return to their jobs within two weeks of giving birth to make ends meet. Single mothers who are their family's sole provider and who are also their family's primary caregiver are in a particularly distressing bind when faced with the choice between supporting their families and caring for them.

AB 196 would ensure that the family temporary disability insurance program provides workers with benefits comparable to their normal income, allowing more children and families to receive the care and attention they need. Pediatricians across the state support AB 196. Thank you for your public service and leadership on behalf of the health and wellbeing of the children, youth, and families of California.

Sincerely,



Kris Calvin
Chief Executive Officer
American Academy of Pediatrics, California

cc: AAP-CA Leadership