

April 12, 2019

Assembly Member Jim Wood, Chair  
Committee on Health  
State Capitol, Room 6005  
Sacramento, California 95814

**RE: AB 763 (Gray): Medi-Cal specialty mental health services.**  
**AAP-CA Position: Support**

Dear Assembly Member Wood:

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA) representing the over 5,000 board-certified pediatrician members of California AAP Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4 statewide, strongly supports proposed legislation AB 763 (Gray), which would require the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to convene a stakeholder workgroup to streamline and standardize the most burdensome sets of paperwork that pediatric specialty mental health providers must complete when serving children in the Medi-Cal program.

Estimates suggest that 22% of low-income children have a behavioral health disorder, and far more may benefit from mental health services. Nevertheless, less than 5% of eligible youth in California receive any mental health services under Medicaid. These statistics make it all the more dismaying that mental health providers must spend so much of their time completing excessive, often redundant and inefficient paperwork. Provider organizations that contract with counties to provide specialty mental health services to children in the Medi-Cal program estimate that paperwork for these patients consumes 40-50% of a provider's time to complete—time that could be better spent with patients.

AB 763 (Gray) would increase the number of Medi-Cal-enrolled children who are able to access the mental health services they need to thrive by beginning a process that would reduce the paperwork burden on providers and thus free up more time for providing services to patients.

Pediatricians across the state of California urge an AYE vote on AB 763 (Gray). 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,



Kris Calvin  
Chief Executive Officer  
American Academy of Pediatrics, California

Cc: The Honorable Adam Gray; AAP-CA Leadership; AAPCA Advocate Lydia Bourne