



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS, CALIFORNIA

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May 26, 2019

Senator Holly J. Mitchell
State Capitol, Room 5050
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 188 (Mitchell): Discrimination: hairstyles.
AAP-CA Position: Support**

Dear Senator Mitchell:

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, supports your proposed legislation SB 188 protecting against discrimination based on hairstyles, including those with traits historically associated with race identification, such as hair texture and hairstyles.

SB 188 would prohibit employers *and school administrators* from enforcing purportedly “race neutral” grooming policies that disproportionately impact persons of color.

Discrimination based on hairstyle is increasingly being recognized as a barrier to employment and education in various settings. Under new guidelines recently released by the New York City Commission on Human Rights “the targeting of people based on their hair or hairstyle, at work, school or in public spaces, will now be considered racial discrimination.” Moreover, hair discrimination affects people of all ages. In the past several years, there have been a number of cases of black students sent home or punished for their hairstyles. (<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/18/style/hair-discrimination-new-york-city.html>)

New research has documented the “...unhealthy effects racism can have on children, with reported exposure to discrimination tied to higher rates of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), anxiety and depression, as well as decreased general health.” (<https://www.aappublications.org/news/2017/05/04/PASRacism050417>) Pediatricians across the state of California strongly support proposed legislation SB 188 (Mitchell) and urge you to vote AYE.

Sincerely,

Kris Calvin
Chief Executive Officer, American Academy of Pediatrics, California

cc: AAP-CA Leadership

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California is the state-level advocacy organization of the four AAP California Chapters. Our mission is to promote the health and well-being of all children and youth in California and to support the professional needs of our California Chapter member pediatricians.