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April 12, 2021

The Honorable Kevin McCarty
Capitol Office
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0007

RE: AB 22 (McCarty) Childcare: preschool programs and transitional kindergarten: enrollment.
AAP-CA Position: SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember McCarty,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA) representing over 3,000 pediatrician members strongly supports AB 22, as amended on March 29, 2021, which would expand eligibility for transitional kindergarten by adding one month of eligibility per year over a 10-year period and achieve universal eligibility by 2032-33.

Transitional kindergarten has been shown to improve school readiness with low-income children and English learners benefiting the most from these programs. American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Policy states, "Children who enter school ready to learn are expected to achieve more academically. Academic success has been linked to improved social, economic, and health outcomes."¹ Transitional kindergarten programs can help ensure that children enter kindergarten with the social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development needed to succeed. Currently, however, only children with birthdays that fall between September and December are eligible to enroll in a transitional kindergarten, leaving huge numbers of California children without the opportunity to take part in these advantageous programs.

AB 22 would phase in universal transitional kindergarten for all California four-year-olds, making sure that all the state's children have access to the program and its benefits. In addition, AB 22 would reduce class size, standardize the curriculum, and support teachers who want to build their skills.

AAP-CA strongly supports AB 22. Thank you for your public service and leadership on behalf of the health and wellbeing of children, youth, and families in California.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Angela Dangvu MD". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Angela Dangvu, M.D. FAAP
Member, State Government Affairs Committee
American Academy of Pediatrics, California

cc: AAP Leadership

¹ <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/144/2/e20191766>