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January 25, 2021

The Honorable Luz Rivas
State Capitol P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 95814

**AB-27 (Luz Rivas): Homeless children and youths and unaccompanied youths: reporting
AAP-CA Position: SUPPORT**

Dear Assemblymember Luz Rivas,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA) representing the over 3,000 pediatrician members of California AAP Chapters 1, 3 and 4 strongly support AB-27 as introduced December 7, 2020, which would address the significant issue of child and youth homelessness in our state through both improved data collection and better coordination of services.

According to a 2017 report from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), California's homeless population increased by nearly 14 percent from 2016 to 2017. It rose nearly 9 percent over the previous seven years. The California Homeless Youth Project estimates 200,000 California youth will be homeless for at least one day each year. The COVID-19 pandemic is likely to exacerbate this issue. Yet, according to the California Department of Education, over 400 school districts in the state have not identified a single homeless student. Homeless children are more than twice as likely to have health problems and are three times more likely to have severe health problems than children with homes.¹ If students struggling with homelessness are not identified, they and their families will not get the help they need to find stable housing and access other services, and their immediate physical and mental health, well-being and safety are threatened.

AB-27 would help identify students in need and help connect them with local resources by requiring each school to identify homeless and unaccompanied children and youths via a housing questionnaire to be delivered to each family or student and by requiring schools to post information listing resources regarding homelessness on their website.

Pediatricians of California AAP Chapters 1, 3 and 4 across the state strongly support AB-27. 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". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

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

cc: AAP Leadership

¹ Berti LC, Zylbert S, Rolnitzky L. Comparison of health status of children using a school based health center for comprehensive care. *J Pediatr Health Care*. 2001;15(5): 244–250