

March 29, 2021

The Honorable Laura Friedman
State Capitol P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0043

RE: AB-452 (Friedman) Pupil safety: parental notification: firearm safety laws
AAP-CA Position: SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Friedman,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA) representing over 3,000 pediatrician members strongly supports AB 452, as introduced on February 8, 2021. This bill would require the governing boards of school districts to notify parents of California's laws regarding the safe storage of firearms and child access prevention.

As of 2019, firearm-related injuries (including accident, suicide, and homicide) are the second leading cause of death in American youth. The AAP estimates that nearly 2 million children live with unlocked, loaded guns and that there were 241 unintentional shootings by children in 2019.¹ A study by the National Violent Injury Statistical System (NVISS) of firearm suicides among youths ages 17 and under occurring over a two-year period found that 82% used a firearm belonging to a family member and, when storage status was noted, around two-thirds of the firearms had been stored unlocked.² According to the AAP, "the safest home for a child is one without guns. The most effective way to prevent unintentional gun injuries, suicide, and homicide to children and adolescents, research shows, is the absence of guns from homes and communities." Safe storage of firearms, however, can reduce the chances of children being injured.

There are already laws in California making it a crime to keep a firearm where a child can gain access. Not everyone is fully informed about these life-saving measures. AB 452 would make sure that parents and guardians know how to safely store firearms away from children and teens and understand the laws mandating that safe storage through a notification coming from schools on an annual basis.

The AAP affirms that the most effective measure to prevent suicide, homicide, and unintentional firearm-related injuries to children and adolescents is the absence of guns from homes and communities. In families that do own firearms, safe storage is vital for risk reduction. AAP-CA strongly supports AB 452. Thank you for your public service and leadership on behalf of the health and wellbeing of children, youth, and families in California.

Sincerely,



Jacques Corriveau, MD FAAP
Member, State Government Affairs Committee
American Academy of Pediatrics, California

cc: AAP Leadership

¹ <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/Handguns-in-the-Home.aspx>

² <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/means-matter/means-matter/youth-access/>