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April 27, 2021

The Honorable Brian Maienschein  
State Capitol  
P.O. Box 942849  
Sacramento, CA 94249-0019

**RE: AB-546 (Maienschein) Dependent children: documents: housing**  
**AAP-CA Position: SUPPORT**

Dear Assemblymember Maienschein,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA) representing over 3,000 pediatrician members strongly supports AB 546, as amended on March 18, 2021, which would require county welfare agencies to report information to the dependency court on whether foster youth have stable housing when exiting the system, and what additional referrals will be provided to prevent youth from becoming homeless.

Historically, foster youth have experienced alarming rates of homelessness as they transition out of care. While California has taken great strides to address this, nearly one in five youth experience homelessness while in foster care between ages 19 to 21 and one in four experience homelessness between ages 21 and 23. During the Covid-19 epidemic, existing challenges are even more severe, and youths who are exiting the system can be expected to face extreme challenges in locating stable employment, housing, and health care.

When a foster child turns 18, the county holds a hearing to terminate the county's jurisdiction over the youth. AB 546 would require that the county welfare department include whether housing referrals or assistance have been successful at securing stable housing for the foster child at that hearing. It would also require that if referrals or assistance have not been successful, the different or additional services the department would provide to prevent the minor or nonminor dependent from becoming homeless if jurisdiction is terminated be presented.

AB 546 would help ensure that all steps to avoid foster youth from becoming homeless after exiting the system are taken and that foster youth are aware of all the programs and possibilities that exist to help them. AAP-CA strongly supports AB 546. Thank you for your public service and leadership on behalf of the health and wellbeing of children, youth, and families in California.

Sincerely,



Nancy Graff, MD FAAP  
Member, State Government Affairs Committee  
American Academy of Pediatrics, California

cc: AAP Leadership