

April 9, 2021

The Honorable Tom Lackey
State Capitol, Room 2174
Sacramento, CA 94249

**RE: AB-637 Enabling Youth to Access Workforce Training Grant Program.
AAP-CA Position: SUPPORT**

Dear Assemblymember Lackey,


The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA) representing over 3,000 pediatrician members strongly supports AB 637, as introduced on February 12, 2021. This bill would create the Enabling Youth to Access Workforce Training Grant Program, which would fund supportive services for homeless youth and current or former foster youths, enabling them to join the workforce.

Homeless, foster, and former foster youth struggle to find jobs when they age out of the foster care system. A longitudinal study published in Children and Services Review found that low rates of employment and earnings persisted through at least age 24.¹ Another study, this one out of the University of North Carolina, found that being unemployed at an early age is predictive of earning less for years and being more likely to be unemployed.²

Work experience prior to age 18 improved employment outcomes in the mid to late twenties.³ It can be difficult, however, for homeless, foster, and former foster youth to find and maintain employment. The Enabling Youth to Access Workforce Training Grant Program would fund supportive services that are necessary for homeless youth and current or former foster youth to enable their participation in the workforce development program. These services may include assistance with transportation and childcare, legal aid services, referrals to health care, assistance with uniforms or other items necessary for work, and other services as needed and applicable.

AAP-CA strongly supports AB 637. Thank you for your public service and leadership on behalf of the health and wellbeing of children, youth, and families in California.

Sincerely,



Wendy Hunter, MD FAAP
Member, State Government Affairs Committee
American Academy of Pediatrics, California

cc: AAP Leadership

¹ <https://aspe.hhs.gov/basic-report/coming-age-employment-outcomes-youth-who-age-out-foster-care-through-their-middle-twenties>

² <https://epionline.org/studies/r51/>

³ https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/brookings_child-trends_pathways-for-high-quality-jobs-final.pdf