

April 9, 2021

The Honorable Marc Berman  
State Capitol P.O. Box 942849  
Sacramento, CA 94249-0024

**RE: AB-775 (Berman) Public postsecondary education: basic needs of students**  
**AAP-CA Position: SUPPORT**

Dear Assemblymember Berman,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA) representing over 3,000 pediatrician members strongly supports AB 775, as amended on March 23, 2021, which would establish a Basic Needs Center and Basic Needs Coordinator on each California community college campus.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, people with some form of higher education earn more and have a lower probability of unemployment.<sup>1</sup> Access to a college education can help break the cycle of poverty for a family.<sup>2</sup> California community college students pursuing degrees, however, are struggling to meet basic needs and are facing housing and food insecurity at alarming rates. A report released in March 2019 by the Office of the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges and the Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice found that 19 percent of the survey's respondents experienced homelessness in the previous year, 60 percent of respondents were housing insecure in the previous year, and 50 percent of respondents were food insecure in the prior 30 days.<sup>3</sup> According to another study, students who were food-insecure were more likely to have a lower grade-point average.<sup>4</sup>

Community colleges have begun taking steps to meet the basic needs of their students through food pantries, housing related efforts, and other services and resources; however, the current system is often fragmented with no single point of contact tasked with overseeing existing basic needs services and resources.

AB 775 would provide a coordinated and integrated approach to address students' basic needs by establishing a Basic Needs Center and Basic Needs Coordinator on each campus. A center and coordinator would provide a single point of contact for community college students to more easily access, gain awareness, and be connected to basic needs services and resources. AAP-CA strongly supports AB 775. 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, M.D. FAAP  
Chair, State Government Affairs Committee  
American Academy of Pediatrics, California

cc: AAP Leadership

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bls.gov/careeroutlook/2018/data-on-display/education-pays.htm>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.educationandcareernews.com/college-affordability/breaking-the-cycle-of-poverty-through-greater-access-to-higher-ed/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://hope4college.com/realcollege-during-the-pandemic/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://academic.oup.com/advances/article/8/1/4/4568361?login=true>