

April 16, 2021

The Honorable Kevin McCarty
Capitol Office
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0007

RE: AB 940 (McCarty) College Mental Health Services Program.
AAP-CA Position: Support

Dear Assemblymember McCarty,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA) representing over 3,000 pediatrician members strongly supports AB 940, as introduced on February 17, 2021, which would establish the College Mental Health Services Program Act (CMHSPA) to increase campus student mental health services and mental health-related education and training.

College students face a number of stressors. Anxiety and depression among college students continues to rise.¹ The pandemic has only served to add to most of the population's stress, anxiety, and depression.² Suicide is the second most common cause of death among college students.³ Mental health funding has not kept pace with the rising demand, however. As a result, students face long wait times to get appointments. Inadequate facilities mean that those appointments may not take place in locations that guarantee privacy.

AB 940 would appropriate money from the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) administration fund to establish the CMHSPA, which would then use those funds to address the heightened need for mental health services on college campuses in California by hiring counselors and addressing infrastructure needs.

AAP-CA strongly supports AB 940. Thank you for your public service and leadership on behalf of the health and wellbeing of children, youth, and families in California.

Sincerely,



Angela Dangvu, MD FAAP
Chair, State Government Affairs Committee
American Academy of Pediatrics, California

cc: AAP Leadership

¹ <https://calbudgetcenter.org/blog/california-college-students-are-increasingly-experiencing-mental-health-issues-and-need-improved-support/>

² <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6932a1.htm>

³ https://www.researchgate.net/publication/271674123_Causes_of_Mortality_Among_American_College_Students_A_Pilot_Study