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March 3, 2021

The Honorable Scott Wiener
State Capitol Room 5100
Sacramento, CA 95814-4900

RE: SB 234 (Wiener): Transition Aged youth Housing Program
AAP-CA Position: SUPPORT

Dear Senator Wiener,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA) representing over 3,000 pediatrician members strongly supports SB 234 as introduced on January 19, 2021, which would establish the Transition Aged Youth Housing Program for the purpose of creating housing for transition aged youth under 26 years of age who are experiencing homelessness.

According to the Legislative Analyst's Office, an estimated 151,000 people in California are experiencing homelessness. The number of homeless people in the state increased by 16 percent from 2018 to 2019. A study in the *American Journal of Public Health* found that foster youth who are transitioning out of foster care are at an especially high risk for homelessness. These youth experience a variety of health risks, including greater exposure to violence and disease including COVID-19. They are at high risk of mental health disorders and substance abuse disorders and lack access to basic sanitation as well as medical care.

SB 234 creates a \$100 million forgivable loan program to fund new housing, or acquire existing housing, for transition age youth between ages 16 and 26. The housing will be targeted toward young people who are homeless, in or exiting foster care, or exiting the criminal justice system.

AAP-CA strongly supports SB 234. Thank you for your public service and leadership on behalf of the health and wellbeing of children, youth, and families in California.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wendy Hunter". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Wendy Hunter, M.D. FAAP
Member, State Government Affairs Committee
American Academy of Pediatrics, California

cc: AAP Leadership