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March 8, 2021

The Honorable Susan Eggman
State Capitol, Room 4052
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 316 (Eggman) Medi-Cal: federally qualified health centers and rural health clinics.
AAP-CA Position: Support

Dear Senator Eggman,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA) representing over 3,000 pediatrician members strongly supports SB 316, as introduced on February 4, 2021, allowing community health centers to bill Medi-Cal for mental health services and other medical services administered to the same patient on the same day.

Existing law prohibits same day visits to a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) or Rural Health Center (RHC) for a physical health condition and a mental health condition and for them to be billed as two separate visits. FQHCs care for approximately 1.66 million children, nearly 30% of the Medi-Cal enrollment for children ages 0-21 years in California. These sites improve access to preventative primary care health services for our underserved populations. Currently, approximately 37% of children in need of mental health services are unable to obtain them, with a greater lack of access to mental health care for children with special health care needs.

Patients who qualify for Medi-Cal often experience transportation challenges, child care issues, or trouble getting off of work to make it to appointments. By requiring a 24 hour gap in services between referral from primary care and being seen by a mental health provider, for instance, many of these patients are not able to follow through and receive care, resulting in costly visits down the line. Allowing Medi-Cal patients to schedule and for providers to be reimbursed for two appointments on the same day will help millions of Californians more easily access mental health services by allowing community health centers to be properly reimbursed when a patient requires mental health care and other services on the same day.

AAP-CA strongly supports SB 316. 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 "Jacques Corriveau". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Jacques Corriveau, M.D. FAAP
Chair, State Government Affairs Committee
American Academy of Pediatrics, California

cc: AAP Leadership