

May 3, 2021

The Honorable Rebecca Bauer-Kahan
Capitol Office, Room 2130
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1356 (Bauer-Kahan): Reproductive Health Care Services
AAP-CA Position: SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Bauer-Kahan,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA) representing over 3,000 pediatrician members strongly supports AB 1356, as amended on April 19, 2021, which would increase penalties for current crimes under the California Freedom of Access to Clinic Act; would create new crimes directed at videotaping, photographing, or recording patients or providers within 100 feet of a reproductive health facility or disclosing or distributing those images; and would update and expand online privacy laws and peace officer trainings relative to anti-reproduction-rights offenses.

Although reproductive choice is a constitutional right, intimidation attempts and threats against patients and providers at abortion clinics continue to rise. According to HR 10 (Calderon) Relative to Women's Reproductive Health, which was adopted on January 25, 2021, "Providers of sexual and reproductive health care are still under serious, unrelenting attack for providing essential information and services, such as abortion, as evidenced by bomb threats, arson, and vandalism in California and the fact that death threats against abortion providers nearly doubled, incidents of clinic invasion doubled, and bomb threats were nearly tripled, nationally from 2018 to 2019 alone." According to the National Abortion Federation, anti-abortion internet harassment has continued to increase every year since 2015.¹

Physical security at many clinics in the form of cameras and bulletproof glass among other efforts has tightened, but the internet provides other ways for patients and providers to be harassed and threatened. Doxxing - the circulation of an individual's and that individual's family's private identifying information - can lay the foundation for targeted online harassment, intimidation, and physical danger.

AB 1356 would increase penalties and fines for those who seek to share photos and personal information of patients and providers at reproductive health clinics online. It would also update training for peace officers who would address these offenses. AAP-CA strongly supports AB 1356. 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, MD FAAP
Chair, State Government Affairs Committee
American Academy of Pediatrics, California

cc: AAP Leadership

¹ <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/how-a-hacking-case-could-shape-protections-for-abortion-clinics/>