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February 25, 2022

Honorable Richard Pan, MD
Chair, Senate Health Committee
1021 10th Street, Room 3310
Sacramento, CA 96814-4900

RE: SB 855 (Newman) Childhood Drowning Data Collection Pilot Program – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Pan:

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California, representing nearly 3,500 pediatricians in California, supports SB 855 (Newman) which will establish a statewide drowning data collection system that will aid in the development of effective strategies and policies for drowning prevention at the local and state level.

The proposed program outlined in SB 855 will, through a 3-year pilot program administrated by the Department of Public Health, collect detailed data on childhood drownings and near-drownings. This program will focus on swimming pool incidents among children aged one through four years old. The collected data will inform proposed public policies designed to decrease instances of childhood drownings.

The CDC states that drowning among California's one to four-year-olds is the leading cause of accidental deaths and the second leading cause of death for those aged five to nine years old. Despite changes to the law, in recent years, California has experienced an increase in fatal drownings among one to four-year-olds. Seventy percent of near drownings occur overwhelmingly in residential swimming pools, with many experiencing lifelong disabilities ranging from minor to severe. A 2020 report from California's Department of Developmental Services, reported a caseload of 768 individuals requiring lifelong services because of near drownings, representing significant long-term costs to the state.

We concur with the national American Academy of Pediatrics' strong recommendation that the state establish a systematic reporting process on the circumstances of drownings to develop best practices, community interventions, and specific public policies addressing this critical issue.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jacques Corriveau".

Jacques Corriveau, MD
Chair, AAP-CA State Government Affairs Committee

CC: Senator Melissa Melendez, Vice Chair
Senator Susan Talamantes Eggman
Senator Lena A. Gonzalez
Senator Shannon Grove
Senator Melissa Hurtado
Senator Connie M. Leyva
Senator Monique Limon
Senator Richard D. Roth
Senator Susan Rubio
Senator Scott D. Weiner
Senator Josh Newman

Fact Sheet Attached

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA) is the state advocacy organization representing AAP Chapters 1, 3 and 4. Our mission is to promote the health and well-being of all children and youth in California and to support the professional needs of our member pediatricians. AAP-CA is a 501(c)4 nonprofit incorporated in California.