



California District

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The Honorable Mark Leno
Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee
California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 2114
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Assembly Member Leno:

RE: SUPPORT for AB 2580 Middle School Immunization Requirement

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California District supports AB 2580, a bill which will require that incoming, transferring or returning 7th grade students receive a dose of pertussis containing vaccine to prevent against pertussis.

Pertussis (commonly known as whooping cough) is the only disease that remains widespread in California despite high levels of vaccination in early childhood. California physicians reported more than 3,100 cases of pertussis in 2005, which is nearly 3 times the number from the year before (1,109). Nationwide, pertussis cases increased from 1,730 cases in 1980 to nearly 26,000 cases in 2005. While routine childhood immunization against pertussis is highly effective, immunity from pertussis vaccine wanes after 5-10 years, requiring a vaccine booster at around the 7th grade age.

Older children and adults can easily contract pertussis and spread it to newborn infants and toddlers too young to have had all of their recommended vaccines. Young infants have the highest risk for death. Vaccinating preteens and adults will reduce the risk for transmitting pertussis to these infants.

Reducing the incidence of pertussis disease in California will save the State millions of dollars.

- Medi-Cal hospitalization charges for patients with diagnosed cases of pertussis in 2005 were ~ **17 million dollars**.
 - Average hospitalization charge is ~ **\$31,000** primarily for infants
- Total Medi-Cal costs related to pertussis in 2005, **representing the fee-for-service sector of MediCal but not its managed-care sector**, and primarily for hospitalization in 2005 were **4.5 million dollars**.

These costs are likely to be vastly underestimated, especially for outpatient costs, given the many cases which are never diagnosed but require services.

- The burden of pertussis to families, schools and the community is substantial due to economic expenses related to lost days and decreased productivity due to illness of children and family members.

The projected cost of implementing a pertussis booster requirement for middle school students in California is approximately \$200,000 + (for Medi-Cal reimbursement of provider administration fees).

This cost is far outweighed by the direct and indirect savings to Medi-Cal through reduced hospitalization, treatment and follow up. If ten children avoid hospitalization, this bill will pay for itself within the fiscal year.

We ask for your "aye" vote.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marc Lerner MD".

Marc Lerner, MD
Chair, AAP-CA Committee on State Government Affairs

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