



California District IX

California District IX (AAP-CA)

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The American Academy of Pediatrics, California District IX (AAP-CA) is a Joint Venture of the four AAP-CA regional chapters.

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April 18, 2008

The Honorable Mervyn Dymally
California State Assembly
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0001

RE: AB 2662, AAP-CA Position: SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Dymally,

The California District of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP-CA), representing the over 5,000 board-certified pediatrician members of the four California AAP regional Chapters, supports your proposed legislation AB 2662. This bill seeks to add important components to the tobacco cessation benefits covered under the Medi-Cal program, and requires the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to undertake an outreach and education initiative to educate Medi-Cal recipients, primary care providers, and managed care contractors of these benefits.

California pediatricians are opposed to the use of tobacco by or near children. Children's exposure to environmental tobacco smoke (ETS) is one of the most hazardous of children's environmental exposures. Children's exposure to ETS has been linked to decreased lung growth and increased rates of respiratory tract infections, otitis media, and childhood asthma, with the severity of these problems increasing with increased exposure. Sudden infant death syndrome, behavioral problems and increased rates of adolescent smoking also are associated with such exposures. An important step toward eliminating this exposure is to offer comprehensive smoking cessation assistance to parents. AB 2662 requires Medi-Cal tobacco cessation benefits to include both personal counseling and all Federal Food and Drug Administration approved prescription and over-the-counter medications for tobacco cessation.

Smoking cessation treatments have been found to be safe and effective. AB 2662 will ensure that all Medi-Cal recipients receive quality, comprehensive smoking cessation services. This is an important step toward decreasing the number of ETS related health conditions for California's children.

California pediatricians applaud your leadership in protecting the health of California's children and families with the introduction of AB 2662.

Sincerely,

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

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

cc: Myles Abbott, MD, AAP-CA District Chair
AAP-CA Committee on State Government Affairs
Kris Calvin, AAP-CA CEO
Tom Riley, Legislative Advocate
Catherine McDonald, MD