



CALIFORNIA SOCIETY OF PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY

March 21, 2007

The Honorable Mervyn Dymally
Chair, Assembly Health Committee
State Capitol, Room 6005
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 834 (Hayashi)
California Children's Dental
Disease Prevention Program

Position: Support

Dear Assemblymember Dymally:

The California Society of Pediatric Dentistry strongly supports the passage of AB 834, which will improve and expand the California Dental Disease Prevention Program.

Dental disease for children in California is a health problem of epidemic proportions. By the time children enter kindergarten, more than half have already experienced dental decay, over a quarter have untreated decay, and almost 20% have rampant, extensive problems. Not all children are at equal risk. Children in poverty are twice as likely as their more affluent peers to develop cavities and when they do, they develop twice as many. Children in low-income households are more than twice as likely to suffer toothaches, but less than half as likely to obtain dental care.

Dental disease is largely preventable and simply treating these problems after they occur will do little to improve the oral health of California's most vulnerable children. Under AB 834, the California Dental Disease Prevention Program will focus on the most effective preventive services, including topical fluoride applications, dietary fluoride supplements, and dental sealants. It will do so in a cost-effective manner by maximizing available federal Medicaid and State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) funding.

Pediatric Dentists know that prevention efforts beginning at any early age are vital to improving the oral health of California's Children. The CDDPP brings effective preventive services and education to those children most at risk. We urge your support of AB 834.

Martin Steigner
President, California Society of Pediatric Dentistry

c: Officers and Directors, California Society of Pediatric Dentistry
Assemblymember Mary Hayashi
Members, Assembly Health Committee

The California Society of Pediatric Dentistry is the professional organization representing California's nearly 600 pediatric dental care specialists in teaching, research and clinical practice. Our mission is to advocate optimal oral health and general welfare of infants, children, adolescents and persons with special needs. We are the state component of the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry.