



September 17, 2021

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
State Capitol, First Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 682 (Rubio) Childhood chronic health conditions: racial disparities – REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the California State Association of Psychiatrists (CSAP), I respectfully request your signature on SB 682 (Rubio), ensuring that California develops and implements a plan to reduce racial disparities in childhood chronic disease.

Approximately 25% of all children experience chronic health conditions—those conditions that last more than 12 months are severe enough to create limits in everyday life and reduce productivity in adulthood. Toxic stressors in childhood, or adverse childhood experiences, have been shown to significantly increase the risk of chronic diseases. For example, a child who has experienced 4 or more traumatically stressful events is 3 times more likely to suffer from depression, and prenatal and early-life psychological stress increases the risk for childhood respiratory disorders like asthma.

Some of the most prevalent and burdensome chronic health conditions among children also show significant disparities, which persist even after controlling socioeconomic status. Five major chronic diseases affecting children in California with known racial disparities include pediatric asthma, childhood diabetes, youth depression, childhood dental caries, and vaping-related diseases.

Although the State has signaled that racial equity in health care is a priority, there has been insufficient effort to operationalize that priority. Now more than ever, it is critical that California put a plan in place to reduce racial disparities for those illnesses that last a lifetime. SB 682 will ensure that California is taking a proactive approach to safeguarding the health and wellness of children and, ultimately, the adults that those children will become.

For these reasons, the California State Association of Psychiatrists is pleased to support SB 682 and requests your signature on this measure.

Sincerely,



Paul J. Yoder
Legislative Advocate

CC: Senator Susan Rubio