

RE: AB 2093 (Pérez)

As a pediatrician and constituent in your District I am writing to urge you to vote “AYE” on AB 2093 (Pérez) when it comes before the Assembly Health Committee.

Childhood vaccinations protect individual children from potentially life-threatening vaccine-preventable diseases, and support the public health and save taxpayer resources by preventing community-wide epidemics.

AB 2093 supports childhood access to vaccines by building upon an existing law that protects physician groups from bearing undue financial risk for immunizations. The bill does not require any new vaccines, but rather, would ensure that payment for currently required vaccines is adequate to permit pediatricians to administer. Specifically, AB 2093 will 1) require health plans and insurers to fully reimburse physicians for the direct and indirect costs to acquire and administer recommended vaccines whose coverage is required under current law; 2) prohibit health plans and insurers from charging co-payments, deductibles or other out-of-pocket expenses that deter parents from immunizing their children; and 3) prohibit health plans and insurers from including the cost of immunizations in a policy's dollar limit.

Due to increasing numbers of approved and recommended life-saving vaccines, as well as increasing prices, the purchase costs to my practice for pediatric vaccines have increased dramatically in recent years, and could triple by the year 2020. I face higher vaccine prices than large public purchasers. When private health plans under-reimburse me for the cost of vaccines, I lose my ability to provide them in my office. As this happens to many small and solo pediatric practices statewide, it weakens local access to vaccines, increases the burden on the state's public vaccine delivery system, and increases the probability that vaccine-preventable diseases will spread in our community.

As a front-line provider of health care services for children in your District, I urge you to support this sensible, cost-effective measure to protect our children and the public health. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions.

Sincerely,