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August 27, 2012

Honorable Governor Edmund "Jerry" G. Brown, Jr.
California State Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814
FAX: 916-558-3160

RE: ASSEMBLY BILL 1640: SIGN THIS EXCELLENT BILL, GOOD FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

Dear Governor Brown:

The California Academy of Preventive Medicine supports AB 1640 and asks you to sign it. We are the state medical specialty society for physicians in the fields of Preventive Medicine and Public Health.

Recent research has increased the adequate support and living conditions or pregnant women affect the resulting children not only as newborns but throughout their entire lifetime. The incidence of diabetes and other chronic diseases, decades into life, are increased in people whose mothers lived in poverty, failed to get prenatal care, and ate poorly, smoked and/or drank during pregnancy. Much of the most critical development of the newborn, and the activation of genes that will affect its entire lifetime health history, occur during the first five months of pregnancy. Current law that provides CalWORKS coverage only for the last four months of pregnancy, except for enrollees in the Cal-Learn Program, is based on past scientific ignorance.

AB 1640 will help to assure that some of our lowest income and most vulnerable young mothers do not encounter barriers to CalWORKS support throughout pregnancy. This will be an important advance in improving the health status not only of those mothers, but of a significant portion of the future population of our state.

We are pleased that the bill has passed both houses of the Legislature. Your signature will finalize an advancement for public health, and help assure that low-income infants and their mothers get off to a healthy start.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Gunzenhauser, MD, MPH
President, CAPM