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Contacts:

Jennifer Donahue  
Washington Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Communications Manager  
Cell: 206.713.1087  
Email: jdonahue@wcaap.org

Graham Short  
Washington State Medical Association  
Associate Director of Communications  
Cell: 206.329.6851  
Email: gfs@wsma.org

WCAAP and WSMA Statement in Response to Supreme Court Public Charge Ruling

SEATTLE – The Washington Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatricians and the Washington State Medical Association issued the following statement today:

“We know that this public charge policy has already harmed children in our state and it is disappointing that the Supreme Court would affirm it,” says Elizabeth Meade, MD, FAAP, president of the Washington Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. “When families fear utilizing programs they are eligible for that help them access stable housing, adequate food and health care, children suffer. These are services that fill the most basic needs children require in order to grow, develop, and feel safe.”

“The physicians of the Washington State Medical Association are dismayed by the Court’s decision this week,” said WSMA President William Hirota, MD, MHA. “The Trump administration's public charge rule will essentially put basic health care out of reach for immigrants and their families—hundreds of thousands in Washington state alone. These are Washington residents who are legally in the state, many gainfully employed, and many with children, and who are now being told ‘the doctor is not in—not for you, and not your family.’ The WSMA supports access to safe, affordable health care for all Washingtonians—not just a select few.”

Washington state, led by Attorney General Bob Ferguson, and 13 other states filed a lawsuit in 2019 to block the public charge rule. The WSMA and WCAAP, along with the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of Physicians, and the American Medical Association, filed an amicus brief supporting the lawsuit, which is currently moving forward in the courts.
About the Washington State Medical Association
The Washington State Medical Association represents more than 11,000 physicians, physician assistants, resident physicians and medical students in Washington state. The WSMA has advocated on behalf of the house of medicine for more than 125 years. Our vision is to make Washington state the best place to practice medicine and receive care.

About the Washington Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
The Washington Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics has advocated for the health and well-being of Washington’s children and their families since 1934. The WCAAP represents over 1100 pediatric health care providers from across Washington State. Our mission is to optimize the health and well-being of children and their families while advancing pediatric care. WCAAP frames and leads the public discussion on child health issues, advances public policy to benefit children, and empowers pediatricians to provide quality medical care.

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