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## Reply to

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January 10, 2024

The Honorable Frank Pallone Jr.  
2107 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Robin Kelly  
2329 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Brittany Pettersen  
1230 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representatives Pallone, Kelly, and Pettersen:

On behalf of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), a non-profit professional organization of 67,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical sub-specialists, and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety and well-being of infants, children, adolescents, and young adults, I am writing to express our support for H.R. 6468, the *Ban Water Beads Act*, which would direct and empower the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) to enforce a ban on all water beads marketed for use by children.

Water beads are colorful, water-absorbing balls that are often sold as children's toys. These products are harmful to children as they absorb bodily fluids after being swallowed by children and expand to dangerous sizes, which can cause bodily injury and even death. With their candy-like appearance, water beads can be appealing to children. Young children are at greater risk of swallowing water beads as a result of their developmentally appropriate exploratory behaviors, where they try to put non-food objects in their mouth. When children swallow water beads, they can develop bowel obstructions, infections, and blocked airways that can lead to lung collapse, as well as hearing loss when children insert water beads into their ears.

While a child choking on water beads is a risk that is immediately visible, intestinal obstruction is not immediately obvious once a child has swallowed the water beads. A child may ingest the water bead, and then develop intestinal obstruction hours later when it might be too late for doctors and medical professionals to save the child's life. These injuries can create life-threatening emergencies, and survivors may have lifelong disabilities. According to estimates, between 2016 and 2022, 7,800 children have been treated in emergency departments after ingesting water beads.

For these reasons, the AAP supports the *Ban Water Beads Act* and appreciates your leadership on this important legislation. If the AAP can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact Zach Laris in our Washington, D.C. office at 202/347-8600 or [zlaris@aap.org](mailto:zlaris@aap.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "B. Hoffman".

Benjamin D. Hoffman, MD, FAAP  
President

BH/zml