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April 20, 2017

Karen L. Smith, MD, MPH  
Director and State Public Health Officer  
California Department of Public Health  
P.O. Box 997377, MS 0500  
Sacramento, CA 95899-7377

**Re: AB 40 (Santiago): Controlled Substance Utilization Review and Evaluation System (CURES) (Support)**

Dear Dr. Smith:

The California Conference of Local Health Officers (CCLHO) voted at the CCLHO Board meeting on April 6, 2017 to take a Support recommendation on AB 40 (Santiago), a bill that would require the California Department of Justice (DOJ) to make the Controlled Substance Utilization Review and Evaluation System (CURES) information more readily available to prescribing health care practitioners, through the use of either an online Internet Web portal or an authorized health information technology system.

CCLHO recommends a position of support as AB 40 would permit authorized healthcare practitioners, such as physicians, pharmacists and other health care professionals to more easily interact with and utilize the CURES database. This bill would also authorize a health information technology system to integrate with and submit queries to the CURES database if the system can provide specific certifications and meets applicable patient privacy and information security requirements of state and federal law. These provisions through AB 40 would facilitate the use of modern technologies to increase the efficiency of utilization of the CURES database by healthcare practitioners.

Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs such as CURES continue to be an important intervention to improve opioid prescribing and to protect patients at risk.

As you are aware, CCLHO was established in statute in 1947 to advise the California Department of Health Services (now the California Department of Public Health), other departments, boards, and commissions, as well as officials of federal, state and local agencies, the Legislature and other organizations on all matters affecting health. CCLHO membership consists of all legally appointed physician health officers in California's 61 city and county jurisdictions.

This position of support for AB 40 is consistent with CCLHO's strategic priority of providing scientific expertise on public health matters. It is further consistent with the legislative priority of providing recommendations on population-based issues that affect the health of all Californians.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at [Ken.Cutler@co.nevada.ca.us](mailto:Ken.Cutler@co.nevada.ca.us) or at 530-265-7154.

Sincerely and on behalf of the CCLHO membership,

Ken Cutler, MD, MPH  
President, California Conference of Local Health Officers

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