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May 25, 2018

Ben Metcalf
Director

California Department of Housing and Community Development
2020 West El Camino Avenue
Sacramento, CA 95833

RE: AB 2132 (Levine): Building Permit Fees: Waiver (Support)

Dear Director Metcalf:

The California Conference of Local Health Officers (CCLHO) voted at the CCLHO Semiannual Business Meeting on May 9, 2018 to recommend a Support position on AB 2132 (Levine). This bill would allow cities and counties to waive or reduce all building permit fees associated with home improvements made to accommodate a qualifying physical disability of a person at least 60 years of age.

CCLHO supports the intent of AB 2132, which, according to the author, is to “alleviate the financial burden of permit building fees for seniors with disabilities so that they will be able to alter their homes to better accommodate those disabilities.” These accommodations would help reduce senior falls, which result in a significant number of hospital visits and deaths among older Californians. Falls cause 41 percent of the injury deaths and 70 percent of injury-related hospitalizations among seniors in California. For example, in 2013, 1,733 Californians ages 65 and older died from a fall, while in 2014 emergency departments treated 208,564 seniors aged 65 and older for falls, with 74,945 hospitalizations.¹ CCLHO also recommends the addition of income as a qualifier for the building fee waivers, to ensure the program is targeted to seniors with the most financial need.

CCLHO was established in statute in 1947 to advise the California Department of Health Services (now California Department of Public Health), other departments, boards, commissions, and 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.

Should you have any questions, please contact me by phone at 530-265-7154 or by email at ken.cutler@co.nevada.ca.us.

Sincerely and on behalf of the CCLHO membership,

Original signed by Dr. Ken Cutler

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

cc: Karen L. Smith, MD, MPH, Director and State Public Health Officer, California Department of Public Health

Sonja Palladino, Deputy Director, Legislation, Housing and Community Development

1. CDPH Older Adult Falls Prevention Website, accessed May 23, 2018 at: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDPHP/DCDIC/SACB/Pages/OlderAdultFallsPreventionProgram.aspx>