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March 30, 2017

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Director and State Public Health Officer
California Department of Public Health
1615 Capitol Avenue
P.O. Box 997377, MS 0500
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Re: AB 62 (Wood): Public Housing – Smoke Free Policy (Support)

Dear Dr. Smith:

The California Conference of Local Health Officers (CCLHO) voted at the CCLHO Board meeting on March 2, 2017 to take a Support recommendation on AB 62 (Wood), a bill that would require all public housing agencies to implement a policy prohibiting smoking of tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, in all public housing living units, interior areas, and outdoor areas by July 30, 2018. This policy is similar to a rule issued on November 30, 2016 by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), except the federal rule does not include e-cigarettes.

CCLHO recommends a support position given the known harms of second-hand tobacco smoke exposure, the documented elevated exposures in multi-unit housing complexes, the rapidly rising prevalence of e-cigarette use, and the unknown harms of unregulated e-cigarette vapor. This bill would help further reduce the smoking-attributable mortality rate in California. In addition, the policy would ensure the protection of public housing residents in California if the federal rule was ever reversed. CCLHO also recommends that focused efforts to link public housing residents who smoke to tobacco cessation services should accompany the implementation of this smoke free policy by public housing agencies.

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.

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This position of support for implementing smoke free policies in public housing is consistent with CCLHO's strategic priority of taking a leadership role in the practice of public health and policy development. It is further consistent with the legislative priority of providing recommendations on population-based issues that affect the health of all Californians, including vulnerable populations.

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

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