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October 12, 2016

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Samantha D. Pellón  
Associate Director  
California Medical Association  
1201 J Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Ms. Pellón:

The California Conference of Local Health Officers (CCLHO) Board of Directors voted to recommend support for Proposition 56, the Tobacco Tax Increase initiative on the November 8, 2016 ballot.

The passage of Proposition 56 would increase the cigarette tax by \$2.00 per pack, with equivalent increases on other tobacco products and electronic cigarettes. Increasing tobacco taxes has a positive influence on decreasing smoking rates, particularly among youth, as evidenced in states that have previously raised tobacco taxes, such as New York and Wisconsin.

Furthermore, Proposition 56 would not change how the current tobacco taxes are allocated, but would add an additional \$2.00 tax, bringing the total tobacco tax up the \$2.87 per pack of cigarettes, and would increase the excise tax on other tobacco products equivalently. Proposition 56 would also change the definition of "other tobacco products" in state law to include e-cigarettes, resulting in Proposition 99 and Proposition 10 taxes applying to e-cigarettes as well. The new revenue distribution would follow a four step process:

- Step 1: use new revenue to replace old revenue lost due to lower tobacco consumption resulting from tobacco tax increase.
- Step 2: use next five percent of revenue to pay the costs of administering the tax.
- Step 3: allocate \$48 million to enforcing tobacco laws, \$40 million to physician training to increase the number of primary care and emergency physicians in the state, \$30 million towards preventing and treating dental diseases, and \$400 thousand to the California State Auditor to audit funds from the new tax.
- Step 4: allocate 82 percent of remaining funds towards services related to Medi-Cal, 11 percent of remaining funds towards tobacco-use prevention, 5 percent of remaining funds towards research into cancer, heart and lung diseases, and other tobacco-related diseases, and 2 percent of remaining funds towards school programs focusing on tobacco-use prevention and reduction.

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The California Conference of Local Health Officers (CCLHO) is an organization of all legally appointed physician health officers in California's 61 city and county jurisdictions established in statute in 1947 to consult with, advise, and make recommendations to the California Department of Public Health, other departments, and the Legislature on matters affecting health.

This recommendation is consistent with CCLHO's strategic priority to promote and protect health and well-being through a focus on targeted outcomes for all people. Furthermore, Proposition 56 supports the CCLHO legislative priority of addressing a population-based issue affecting the health of vulnerable populations.

If you have questions, please contact me at [jberreman@ci.berkeley.ca.us](mailto:jberreman@ci.berkeley.ca.us) or at 510-981-5301. Thank you.

Sincerely,

*Original signed by Dr. Janet Berreman*

Janet Berreman, MD, MPH  
President, California Conference of Local Health Officers

Cc: Karen Smith, MD, MPH, Director and State Public Health Officer, California Department of Public Health