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April 17, 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: SB 300 (Monning): Sugar Sweetened Beverages-Health Warnings (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 SB 300 (Monning), a bill that would establish the Sugar-Sweetened Beverages Health Warning Act, requiring certain sugar-sweetened beverage container or multipacks to bear a health warning.

The prevalence of obesity in the United States with its associated health problems has increased dramatically over the past 30 years. Furthermore, the consumption of sugar sweetened beverages is a major contributor to the obesity epidemic. This has been known for years. Ludwig and colleagues reported in the Lancet back in 2001 that for each additional 12-ounce soda children consumed each day, the odds of becoming obese increased by 60% during a year-and-a-half follow-up\*. Individuals who drink one to two sugar-sweetened beverages per day have a 26 percent higher risk for developing type II diabetes than people who rarely have such drinks\*\*.

We know that adults and parents have the responsibility to make good choices for themselves and their families. However, people need reliable information to make good decisions and an environment that supports making healthy choices. SB 300 would provide both by requiring a warning label on the front of all cans and bottles of soda and fruit drinks with added sweeteners that have 75 or more calories per 12 ounces. This warning, stating "STATE OF CALIFORNIA SAFETY WARNING: Drinking beverages with added sugar(s) contributes to obesity, type 2 diabetes, and tooth decay." will allow consumers to make purchasing choices informed by the latest scientific evidence.

SB 300 is a major step forward in the fight against California's obesity and diabetes epidemic. It will protect consumers and promote informed purchasing decisions by requiring a warning about the harmful effects of consuming beverages with added sugars. We know from the successful tobacco control work in our state that health warnings can increase knowledge and perception of risk, this bill can make a major contribution to improving community health in California.

\*Ludwig DS, Peterson KE, Gortmaker SL. Relation between consumption of sugar-sweetened drinks and childhood obesity: a prospective, observational analysis. *Lancet*. 2001;357:505-8

\*\*Malik VS, Popkin BM, Bray GA, Despres JP, Willett WC, Hu FB. Sugar-sweetened beverages and risk of metabolic syndrome and type 2 diabetes: a meta-analysis. *Diabetes Care*. 2010;33:2477-83.

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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 sugar sweetened beverage warning labels is consistent with CCLHO's strategic priority of providing scientific expertise on public health matters, including population-based issues affecting the health of all Californians. Support for SB 300 is further consistent with the strategic priority of taking a leadership role in the practice of public health and policy development.

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "K Cutler MD". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

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