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February 9, 2016

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Karen L. Smith, MD, MPH, Director and State Public Health Officer
California Department of Public Health
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RE: Senate Joint Resolution 20: Gun Violence Research (Hall): Support

Dear Dr. Smith:

The California Conference of Local Health Officers (CCLHO) voted on February 4, 2016, at the CCLHO Board meeting to recommend a position of support for Senate Joint Resolution (SJR) 20. SJR 20 would urge the United States Congress to lift the existing prohibition against publicly funded scientific research on the causes of gun violence and its effects on public health. SJR 20 also urges the United States Congress to appropriate funds to conduct that research.

Lifting this existing prohibition would facilitate the development of a comprehensive, evidence-based federal approach to reduce and prevent gun violence. Federal research on other public health issues has resulted in targeted, successful strategies and policies that have reduced the number of lives lost from lead poisoning, motor vehicle accidents and other public health issues.

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 SJR 20 is consistent with CCLHO's strategic priority of providing scientific expertise on public health matters in that it promotes the building of a robust scientific basis for making recommendations related to gun violence. It 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 contact me at jberreman@ci.berkeley.ca.us or at 510-981-5301. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Original signed by Janet Berreman, MD, MPH

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