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May 25, 2018

Karen L. Smith, MD, MPH
Director and State Public Health Officer
California Department of Public Health
1615 Capitol Avenue
PO Box 997377, MS 0500
Sacramento, California 95899-7377

RE: AB 2626 (Mullin): Child Care Services (Support)

Dear Dr. Smith:

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 2626 (Mullin), a bill that would make a number of statewide changes to the Child Care and Development Services Act (Act), which provides a set of subsidized child care and development programs. AB 2626 would define an income eligible family as one with an adjusted monthly income at or below 85 percent of the state median income, instead of the current 70 percent. The bill would also change the age restrictions for California State Preschool Programs (CSPP); delete the 6-month exception for families establishing initial eligibility or ongoing eligibility on the basis of seeking employment, provide opportunities for staff training; and increase flexibility in the use of contracted funds. Overall, AB 2626 would increase access to subsidized early learning and care programs throughout the state.

CCLHO recommends a support position on AB 2626, as the proposed changes to the Act would increase access to affordable childcare for low-income, working families. Childcare expenses frequently represent a significant cost to low-income families, with the statewide average cost in 2014 of \$8,462 (\$705 per month) for child care in a family child care home for an infant; for child care centers, this annual cost was even higher at \$13,327 (\$1,111 per month). Quality early childcare is linked with long term developmental benefits and we believe this bill can expand opportunities for that in California.

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