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May 14, 2019

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: SB 347 (Monning): Sugar-sweetened beverages: safety warnings

Dear Dr. Smith:

The California Conference of Local Health Officers (CCLHO) voted at the CCLHO Board meeting on May 1, 2019 to take a Support recommendation on SB 347 (Monning), a bill that would establish the Sugar-Sweetened Beverages Safety Warning Act, which would prohibit a person from distributing, selling, or offering for sale a sugar-sweetened beverage in a sealed beverage container, a multipack of sugar-sweetened beverages, or a concentrate, as those terms are defined, in this state unless the sealed beverage container, multipack, or packaging of the concentrate bears a safety warning, as prescribed.

Over the past 30 years, adult diabetes rates have nearly tripled in the United States. Currently, 9 percent of adults in the United States have diabetes and more than one-third have prediabetes. In California, an estimated 14 percent of adults have diabetes. Over the past 10 years, the percentage of teens nationwide that have diabetes or prediabetes has increased from 9 percent to 23 percent. There is overwhelming evidence of the link between obesity and the consumption of sweetened beverages, such as soft drinks, energy drinks, sweet teas, and sports drinks. The 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend that everyone reduce their intake of sugar-sweetened beverages. California adults who drink one soda or more per day are 27 percent more likely to be overweight or obese, regardless of income or ethnicity. Evidence suggests that safety warnings can increase knowledge and reduce consumption of harmful products. For these reasons, CCLHO recommends a support position on SB 347.

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 email at roldham@placer.ca.gov or by phone at (530) 745-3121. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Robert L. Oldham, MD, MSHA
President, California Conference of Local Health Officers