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March 12, 2012

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Ron Chapman, MD, MPH
CA Department of Public Health
1615 Capitol Avenue, Suite 73.770
PO Box 997377, MS 0500
Sacramento, CA 95899-7377

Re: Personal Belief Exemptions

Dear Dr. Chapman:

The California Conference of Local Health Officers (CCLHO) Board voted unanimously on March 1, 2012 to support AB 2109 (Pan) Communicable disease: immunization exemption. The legislation requires the signature of a health care practitioner on a prescribed Personal Belief Exemption (PBE) form in order for a student to qualify for exemption from school entry immunization requirements. The CCLHO Board recommends that two modifications be sought to the bill language: 1) That the requirement for the filing of the PBE form be renewed upon entry into primary school, into middle school and upon entry into high school, each transition representing an important time to review immunization currency. 2) That the following language be included in the prescribed PBE form: "without vaccination, it is understood the child or emancipated minor is at higher risk of illness, disability, or death and that the child or emancipated minor is also placing others at higher risk of illness, disability, or death should the child or emancipated minor become a source of transmission of disease to their contacts."

CCLHO believes that vaccinations should follow the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) guidelines to prevent disease in communities and that PBE claims need to be made more difficult to prevent the increasing use of the exemption for the sake of convenience.

As you are aware, 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.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have questions, please feel free to contact me at wilma.wooten@sdcounty.ca.gov or 619-542-4181.

Sincerely,

Original Signed By:

Wilma Wooten, MD, MPH
President, California Conference of Local Health Officers