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April 17, 2025

#### RE: AB 1129 - Birth defects monitoring (Support)

Dear California Department of Public Health:

The California Conference of Local Health Officers (CCLHO), which represents the appointed physician health officers of California's 61 city and county jurisdictions, would like to express our recommendation to **support AB 1129**. On April 4, 2025, the CCLHO Board of Directors voted to approve the support recommendation.

Current law requires the State Public Health Officer to require general acute care hospitals and physician-owned or physician-operated clinics that regularly provide services for the diagnosis or treatment of birth defects, genetic counseling, or prenatal diagnostic services to make available to the Department the medical records of children suspected or diagnosed as having birth defects. AB 1129 would authorize a local health officer to maintain a system for the collection of information related to birth defects and other birth anomalies. This bill would authorize a local public health officer to implement a local birth anomaly reporting program and require healthcare facilities and laboratories to report birth anomalies to inform local healthcare needs.

AB 1129 is necessary because the California Birth Defects Monitoring Program (CBDMP) operates in only 10 counties, representing just 30% of the state's population. The state's most populous or diverse counties, including Alameda, Los Angeles, Santa Clara, and San Francisco, are not covered. This bill would allow, but not require, local health officers to make birth anomalies reportable in their respective jurisdictions and would allow them to monitor those conditions at no additional cost to the State. This is an "opt-in" measure for local health officers who choose to mandate birth anomalies reporting in their jurisdictions.

CCLHO was established in statute in 1947 to advise CDPH, other departments, boards, commissions, and officials of federal, state and local agencies, the Legislature, and other organizations on all matters affecting health.

Sincerely,

Aimee Sisson, MD, MPH  
President