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3731 Stocker Street, Suite 201
Los Angeles, CA 90008

January 9, 2017

The Honorable Reggie Jones-Sawyer
Co-Chair, Assembly Special Committee- CA Attorney General Appointment
State Capitol, Room 4126
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Mark Stone
Co-Chair, Assembly Special Committee- CA Attorney General Appointment
State Capitol, Room 3146
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: The Honorable Xavier Becerra Appointment as California Attorney General – Support

Dear Special Committee:

The California Pan-Ethnic Health Network (CPEHN) is proud to support the nomination of the Honorable Xavier Becerra for the next Attorney General of California. As a statewide organization that advocates for health equity for low-income communities and communities of color, CPEHN believes that California's next Attorney General will play a critical role in protecting the health and well-being of all Californians.

In the coming years, California's values will likely be challenged by a new political landscape in which the incoming President and his Administration will look to undo decades of hard fought civil rights protections including access to quality health care, humane immigration policies and environmental laws aimed at making Californian a healthier place to live.

California's Attorney General must protect critical state consumer protections in health care. These protections are at risk if proposals to sell insurance across state lines espoused by President-elect Trump and Republican House Speaker Ryan advance. These types of proposals will have disproportionately negative impacts on communities of color. Since 2003, California has required all health care plans to provide language assistance including access to oral interpretation in any language and written translations of vital documents in a plan's threshold languages. Additionally, state law requires plans to provide timely access to care and access to

an adequate network of primary and specialty care providers in a given geographic area. Defending California's longstanding consumer protections and progress in health care should remain a top priority for the next Attorney General of California. Likewise, California will need to be a voice against any effort to repeal federal non-discrimination provisions that help to ensure equal access to affordable health care for individuals regardless of race, religion, national origin, ethnicity, age, sex, sexual orientation, or disabilities. California has proven that when more people have the opportunity for good health, we create healthier, more prosperous communities. Our next Attorney General should not allow any of our communities to be shortchanged.

California must also protect our diverse immigrant populations from discrimination and dragnet deportation policies. Our immigrant communities are critical to the financial stability of California's robust economy. The state should hold firm in defending against any attempts to tear apart our families and force certain populations such as Muslim immigrants to participate in a federal registry. The Attorney General should also fight to protect sensitive eligibility information from federal immigration enforcement agencies on enrollees in the state's Medi-Cal program including Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) youth and undocumented children. California's investment in ensuring access to health care coverage, higher education and driver's licenses for our immigrant populations is an investment in our state's economy and our future.

The President-elect and his nominees also hold troubling views on climate change and the need for environmental protection. California has always led with policies that strive to make the state a healthier place to live, especially with regard to the air and water quality in our most disadvantaged communities. It is well documented that communities of color are most likely to be impacted by poor air quality, and the chronic health problems that result.¹ The next Attorney General must challenge any federal action that would threaten our environment and harm the most vulnerable populations in California.

The Honorable Xavier Becerra has shown a commitment to advocating for the well-being of all Californians and his voting record shows a strong stance in standing up for the immigrant population that is so vital to the success of California. For these reasons and more, CPEHN urges confirmation of Mr. Becerra for the role of California's next Attorney General.

Sincerely,



Kimberly Chen
Government Affairs Manager

¹California Environmental Protection Agency Air Resources Board, *Asthma and Air Pollution*, report accessed at <https://www.arb.ca.gov/research/asthma/asthma.htm>.