



February 28, 2020

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
State Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: COVID-19 Collaboration and Response

Dear Governor Newsom,

As you know, California is facing the emergence of a novel coronavirus (COVID-19). While the risks to the general public remain low according to California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), our counties and local health departments are actively engaged in efforts to protect the health of our communities. The California State Association of Counties (CSAC) and the County Health Executives Association of California (CHEAC) would like to underscore the critical role of our local health departments in responding to COVID-19 and urge the Administration to consider the increasing cost pressures of these activities on our jurisdictions.

As of February 27, there were 33 cases of COVID-19 confirmed in California, 9 of which are not associated with repatriation of American citizens. With each of the 9 confirmed cases, our local health department personnel conduct contact investigations, trace the individual's whereabouts, notify any individuals that may have been in close contact, and conduct the necessary testing and/or follow-up. In these instances, our local health departments must also coordinate with health facilities and often work extensively with the state and federal government.

An added responsibility to our local health department response was the repatriation of individuals to California. While the quarantine of these individuals was handled in coordination with the federal and state government, local health departments provided significant support and dedicated resources to those efforts, which included arranging for handwashing stations, WIFI and cellular communications, and providing medical and behavioral health care on site.

In addition, the CDC instituted local monitoring for travelers returning from mainland China. To date, over 8,000 travelers returned to California and local health departments are currently tasked with outreach to these individuals and appropriate follow-up.

Across most of our jurisdictions, our public health personnel are implementing evidence-based practices, which may include lab testing, patient monitoring, contact tracing, medical containment and care, transport, and crisis communications. Counties are now beginning to divert public health and other county staff from daily activities to help keep the public safe and informed. Should the need progress,

counties anticipate diverting additional staff and resources, hiring limited-term staff, and mobilizing our full public health, medical health, and emergency services infrastructure to meet the challenge.

Our county supervisors and local public health officials continue our commitment to protecting the health of all Californians. As key partners in these efforts, we look forward to continue working together to ensure our local systems are well positioned and resourced to respond.

Respectfully,



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cc Dr. Mark Ghaly, Secretary, California Health and Human Services Agency
Dr. Sonia Angell, Director, California Department of Public Health
Mark Ghilarducci, Director, California Office of Emergency Services
Senator Toni Atkins, Senate President pro Tempore
Assembly Member Anthony Rendon, Assembly Speaker
Senator Richard Pan, Chair, Senate Health Committee
Assembly Member Jim Wood, Chair, Assembly Health Committee
Michelle Baass, Deputy Secretary, California Health and Human Services Agency
Marjorie Swartz, Policy Consultant, Office of Pro Tem Atkins
Agnes Lee, Policy Consultant, Office of Speaker Rendon
Scott Ogus, Consultant, Senate Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review
Andrea Margolis, Consultant, Assembly Budget Committee