



June 17, 2011

Joel Ario, Director
Office of Health Insurance Exchanges
Center for Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight
Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Room 737F
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Mr. Ario:

I am writing to express my strong support of the application for a federal grant to support the planning and start-up of the California Health Benefit Exchange. The Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC) will partner with the Exchange on issues critical to implementation and coordination between our agencies.

The DMHC regulates health plans and guarantees health care rights for approximately 89 percent of the current commercial market in California and maintains a toll-free call center to provide assistance to consumers. The DMHC applied for and received a Consumer Assistance Program grant and will work closely with the Exchange to plan for the eventual transition of certain consumer assistance functions. The Exchange will provide an open and transparent marketplace for consumers to browse, compare, and purchase health insurance options; expanded consumer assistance will be a very important part of its functions.

The DMHC and the Exchange will be partners in the new world of the implementation of the Affordable Care Act in California and it will be crucial that the Exchange have the resources necessary for success. Thus, federal funding will ensure the successful implementation of the Exchange and a productive and lasting partnership between the Exchange and the DMHC.

Sincerely,

EDWARD G. HEIDIG
Interim Director

EDMUND G. BROWN JR.

GOVERNOR

980 9th Street
Suite 500
Sacramento, CA 95814-2724

BUSINESS,
TRANSPORTATION
AND HOUSING
AGENCY

916-324-8176 Voice
916-322-9430 Fax

320 West 4th Street
Suite 880

Los Angeles, CA 90013-2353

213-620-2744 Voice
213-576-7183 Fax

Edward G. Heidig
Interim Director

www.healthhelp.ca.gov
1-888-HMO-2219