

February 24, 2016

Diana Dooley, Chair  
Covered California Board

Peter Lee  
Executive Director, Covered California

Covered California  
1601 Exposition Blvd  
Sacramento, CA 95815

**Re: Covered California's 1332 Waiver Forum – Allow Undocumented Californians and DACA Recipients to Purchase a Health Plan through Covered California**

Dear Ms. Dooley and Mr. Lee,

I am writing on behalf of the California Black Health Network to urge Covered California to seek a 1332 Waiver that allows undocumented people and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients to purchase a health plan through Covered California, with their own money.

The California Black Health Network is a statewide policy and advocacy organization established in 1978. Our organization's mission is to improve the health status of people of African descent in California and to eliminate health disparities through legislative, administrative, and media advocacy. We believe that allowing undocumented Californians and DACA recipients to purchase a health plan is the first step to addressing the inequity in our health system.

Current policy specifically excludes undocumented people and DACA recipients from purchasing their own health insurance through Covered California due to their immigration status.<sup>1</sup> It does not reflect our values as a state, or serve the common good, to leave hundreds of thousands of workers, students, and family members without treatment for preventable ailments. Allowing undocumented people and DACA recipients to access Covered California ensures everyone has the opportunity to view and choose from a wide range of health care plans.

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<sup>1</sup> In 2010 Congress passed the Affordable Care Act that excluded undocumented immigrants from participation in state Exchanges and the Medicaid expansion. Existing rules excluded the undocumented from Medi-Cal were maintained. In August of 2012, President Obama's administration established regulations preventing those approved for Deferred Action from access to exchanges under the Affordable Care Act.



Currently there is legislation moving in Sacramento that would make our healthcare system more inclusive. One of the provisions in SB 10 (Lara) would direct the state to apply for a waiver under Section 1332 of the Affordable Care Act, to allow all Californians regardless of immigration status to purchase health care coverage through Covered California with their own money. While this proposal does not include subsidies, it is a significant step forward as it removes an unjust barrier to health coverage and would make California's implementation of the ACA more inclusive.

Covered California can set a powerful model for the nation by being the first statewide exchange open to all residents regardless of immigration status. We urge Covered California to support the above mentioned proposal by seeking the 1332 Waiver. Let's ensure that we fulfill the vision of the Affordable Care Act by expanding opportunities for health coverage to all who call California home. When all Californians have access to coverage, our health system is stronger and more cost-effective for everyone.

Sincerely,



Sandra O. Poole, MPA

Interim President/ CEO

California Black Health Network