

For Immediate Release:

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## **Governor Brown Signs Historic Health Care Bill For Undocumented Californians and DACA Recipients**

***California To Become First State To Request Federal Waiver For All Californians To Purchase Health plans in State Exchange***

June 10, 2016 - Today the Governor signed legislation that would remove an exclusion to Covered California that prevents undocumented immigrants and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals recipients from purchasing health coverage on the state's insurance marketplace. SB 10 (Lara), directs the state to apply for a federal 1332 waiver under the Affordable Care Act so that all Californians have access to Covered California. This innovative approach would make California the first state to apply to the federal government to allow undocumented immigrants and DACA recipients to buy health plan through our marketplace. If the waiver is approved by the federal government, undocumented and DACA recipients will be able review and purchase an unsubsidized health plan through our state marketplace, Covered California.

This means that mixed-status families, could access, review, and purchase health plans together, though cost subsidies would not apply for undocumented and DACA recipients.

Today's historic news follows the implementation SB 75 (budget trailer bill), known as "Health For All Kids", which launched on May 16th and expands full-scope comprehensive Medi-Cal for low-income undocumented children under age 19. As a state with a unique population of mixed-status households, ensuring all members of a family can review and purchase health plans together is a high priority for both health and immigrant rights advocates.

Members of the Health4All Coalition, who have led statewide efforts to expand access to all Californians, applaud the Governor for taking another step towards improving access to coverage regardless of immigration status. Coalition members also vow to continue the efforts to provide all Californians with access to quality and affordable health care and bring a true health for all in our state. Low-income undocumented immigrant adults remain excluded from accessing full-scope comprehensive Medi-Cal, which provides preventive and specialty care to address health needs before they escalate to costly, and potentially life-threatening conditions. California is stronger when everyone has access to health care. There is no benefit in letting people suffer or die from a treatable condition, no matter where they were born.

Says **Cynthia Buiza, Executive Director of the California Immigrant Policy Center**, "Today is a watershed moment for California's immigrants and for the nation. By removing the unjust exclusion of undocumented immigrants and DACA recipients from Covered CA, we have set another powerful precedent for other states to take action and ensure that everyone has the opportunity to purchase health coverage through their state's insurance marketplace. We will

continue to fight for adults and family members who would otherwise qualify for full-scope Medi-Cal. Health conditions do not discriminate based on immigration status or income, and having access to health care is a right, not a privilege."

"With this signature, Governor Brown recognizes our health system is stronger when everyone is included, and has access to primary and preventive care along with the financial security that comes with coverage," said **Anthony Wright, Executive Director of Health Access California**. "We hope that once our waiver request is submitted, the federal government acts quickly to allow California to remove this counterproductive exclusion to buying coverage, and give families the ability to choose a health plan together, regardless of immigration status. This proposal conforms Covered California to the state's policy of immigrant inclusion while costing no federal or state money, meeting all the requirements of federal law, and maintaining the President's commitments and the goals of health reform."

"California's prosperity depends on the health and well-being of everyone. We applaud Governor Brown for signing SB 10 to allow families to stay together in plans, and to help remove access barriers. This is a needed step to bring our state closer to ensuring health for all people," said **Pete Manzo, President and CEO of United Ways of California**.

"We applaud the efforts of Governor Brown and Senator Lara in passing SB10. California is leading the way to insure the uninsured. Our patients and community at large are the prime beneficiaries of this legislation, making health access attainable," said **Sandra Rossato, Executive Director of Clinica Romero** in Los Angeles.

"With SB 10 California has made history and today we have taken another step toward a state where no one is excluded from the health care that is a basic human right," said **SEIU California President Laphonza Butler**. "SEIU members are proud to have joined a broad and diverse community of health advocates to fight for the dignity and care that is now woven in the fabric of the California Dream. Because of these energetic and collaborative efforts, California stands out for our inclusion and opportunity in an election year scarred nationally by divisiveness and the rhetoric of exclusion."

"California continues to raise the bar in its commitment to the immigrant community by giving undocumented immigrant families access to Covered California. With coverage, families are more financially secure and have more peace of mind to know they and their loved ones are protected. When parents are covered, children are more likely to have coverage and access the services they need to be healthy. We thank Governor Jerry Brown and the legislature for their ongoing support of all who call California home, no matter where they were born," said **Mayra E. Alvarez, President of The Children's Partnership**.

"The passage of SB10 corrects a longstanding injustice in our health care system by giving thousands of hardworking young people and young families in California the ability to purchase quality coverage," said **Gustavo Herrera, Western Regional Director for Young Invincibles**. "Mixed status families fare better when they are able to shop around and purchase health insurance together. And thanks to the efforts of young activists, supporters, and leaders like

Governor Brown and Senator Lara, we've made that possible. Today we move closer to achieving health care for all people, regardless of their immigration status.”

“California continues to show its leadership and innovation in the implementation of health care reform in our state. With the signing of Senate Bill 10, the Governor has again signaled that the health of all Californians is important and marks another step forward in achieving health for all in our state,” said **Carmela Castellano-Garcia, President and CEO, CaliforniaHealth+ Advocates.**

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*About the Health4All Coalition:*

*The Health4All Coalition is comprised of over 80 health and immigrant rights organizations across California, advocating for the expansion of health care to all Californians regardless of immigration status.*