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The Honorable ELECTED OFFICIAL
ADDRESS
CITY, STATE, ZIP

Re: ISSUE NAME

Dear ELECTED OFFICIAL:

I am writing to urge your support for a fully functional immunization registry for California's children. This is the single most effective way to ensure that California will reach and sustain 90% immunization rates. Registries help track immunization records as children move or change doctors, an increasing challenge given California's size and mobile population. California currently has nine regional immunization registries. By implementing the Statewide Immunization Information System (SIIS) registry, California will have a central data base accessible to current and prospective local registries.

Our agency is very familiar with immunization issues. Our WIC nutrition program, the second largest in the state with about 100,000 participants and 10 WIC sites in South L.A., including three in your district, has been assessing immunization status and referring children to providers for over 10 years. Many of these children's families face challenges to obtaining immunizations on a timely basis, such as lack of access to a regular provider of care and frequent household moves. Registries can assure that these children receive recommended immunizations on-time. In addition, we manage the Immunize LA Kids Coalition, which was formed with CDC funding, to implement and support strategies to improve immunization up-to-date rates among Latino and African American children in Central and South L.A.

In L.A. County, nearly one million children under the age of six and over 5,000 immunization providers will benefit from the registry. Unfortunately, the demand for the registry by medical providers, schools and other agencies exceeds existing resources. A fully functional statewide registry could save California as much as \$32.5 million per year in current costs for manual record pulls, duplicative shots, reduced illness and parents' time lost from work. The 2004 California Performance Review report HHS-16 states that "California has an opportunity to prevent disease in children while saving money for taxpayers and the private sector by providing a web-based centralized statewide immunization registry for children."

If we can be of any assistance to you in addressing these issues, please feel free to contact Julia Heinzerling at 323-757-7244, extension 228 or jheinzerling@slahp.org.

Sincerely,

Steve Baranov
Principal Investigator, Immunize LA Kids Coalition
Vice-President- Community Health
Los Angeles Biomedical Research Institute at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center

Note: The above position was approved by consensus of the leadership of the Coalition. It does not necessarily represent the opinion of any individual member of the Coalition or its Steering Committee.

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LA BioMed WIC Program • South Los Angeles Immunization Project • Black Infant Health Project • Hospital-Based Breastfeeding Support • IZ LA Kids
Community Services of Los Angeles Biomedical Research Institute at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center