



### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Brian Allison  
AFSCME

Nancy "Nan" Brasmer  
CA Alliance for  
Retired Americans

Kathy Ko Chin  
Asian & Pacific Islander  
American Health Forum

Lori Easterling  
CA Teachers Association

Stewart Ferry  
National MS Society –  
MS CA Action Network

Aaron Fox  
Los Angeles LGBT Center

Roma Guy  
CA Women's Agenda

Betsy Imholz  
Consumers Union

Paul Knepprath  
Planned Parenthood  
Affiliates of CA

Henry "Hank" Lacayo  
Congress of CA Seniors

Ted Lempert  
Children Now

Christina Livingston  
Alliance of Californians for  
Community Empowerment

Joshua Pechthalt  
CA Federation of Teachers

Art Pulaski  
CA Labor Federation

Emily Rusch  
CALPIRG

Thomas Saenz  
Mexican American Legal  
Defense and Education Fund

Cary Sanders  
CA Pan-Ethnic Health Network

Reshma Shamasunder  
CA Immigrant Policy Center

Joan Pirkle Smith  
Americans for  
Democratic Action

Horace Williams  
CA Black Health Network

Sonya Young  
CA Black Women's  
Health Project

Jon Youngdahl  
SEIU State Council

Anthony Wright  
Executive Director

Organizations listed for  
identification purposes

@HealthAccess

[www.health-access.org](http://www.health-access.org)

*For immediate release:*

April 7, 2016

**Contact:** Anthony Wright, executive director Health Access  
[awright@health-access.org](mailto:awright@health-access.org), 916-870-4782 (cell)

### COVERED CALIFORNIA REPORT GIVES GREEN LIGHT TO WAIVER TO ALLOW ACCESS TO UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANT FAMILIES

- #Health4All Advocates Encouraged by Momentum for an Affordable Care Act #Health4All "1332 Waiver"
- Consumer and Immigrant Groups have Fought to Remove Exclusion and Allow Undocumented Californians to Buy Unsubsidized Coverage Through Covered California
- Waiver Requires State Authorizing Legislation, Currently Pending in SB10 (Lara)
- Waiver Would Allow Hundreds of Thousands of Mixed-Status Working Families to Enroll Together

SACRAMENTO, CA--Today, the Covered California staff gave a green light to pursuing a federal waiver that will allow all Californians, regardless of immigration status, to be able to buy coverage with their own money through Covered California. Currently, undocumented immigrants are barred from using the state marketplace under the ACA even when using their own money and instead must go directly to a broker or health plan to purchase health insurance.

The staff recommendation was to consider focused, limited waiver this year, and begin to consider more sweeping changes for future years. The proposal to allow immigrants to enroll in Covered California was identified as a focused proposal that did not violate any of the proposed federal guardrails. Enabling legislation will need to be passed by the Legislature and signed by Governor Brown to submit the 1332 waiver to the federal government. Health Access California and other consumer and immigrant groups have been advocating for allowing undocumented immigrants to buy unsubsidized health plans through Covered California through a 1332 waiver as well as through [SB 10 \(Lara\)](#).

"All Californians, regardless of immigration status, should be allowed to buy quality, affordable health coverage through Covered California. Moving forward with this waiver is not just an important symbolic step toward inclusion but will also provide practical benefit and additional access for thousands of Californians," said Anthony Wright, executive director of Health Access California, the statewide health care consumer advocacy coalition.

“Allowing undocumented immigrants to buy health insurance through Covered California removes a counterproductive exclusion in the federal law. This exclusion discourages a crucial part of our economy and society from taking responsibility for their health and finances by purchasing coverage and sends an unfortunate signal to many more,” said Wright. “Soon, many California families with mixed immigration status will be able to buy coverage together easily, even if some family members are eligible for subsidies and others are not.”

“We look forward to working with Covered California to ensure all Californians are covered. This change will allow undocumented Californians to purchase coverage using their own money, which will benefit not just these families but the health system as a whole. It strengthens the health system on which we all rely when health care coverage is accessible for all Californians, regardless of immigration status,” said Wright.

###