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CONSUMER ADVOCATES CHEER ACTIONS TO BLOCK ANTHEM-CIGNA AND AETNA-HUMANA MERGERS

- *US Department of Justice, Joined by CA & Other Attorneys General, File Anti-Trust Lawsuits Against Health Plan Mega-Mergers*
- *CA Consumer Groups Raised Major Concerns About the Track Records of These Insurers, and Mergers Allowing Them to Get Bigger*
- *Health Access MergerWatch Argued: Bigger is Not Better: <http://www.health-access.org/consumer-protection/merger-watch.html>*
- *Blocking Mergers Will Prevent Negative Consumer Impacts, Send Signal to Consolidating Industry*
- *Scrutiny Needed on >\$1 Billion Payouts In Case Merger*

SACRAMENTO, CA – Consumer advocates cheered the decision by the U.S. Department of Justice and several state Attorneys General from California and elsewhere to block Anthem Blue Cross' proposed takeover of Cigna, and Aetna's proposed acquisition of Humana, the two biggest of a series of health insurance mega-mergers in the last year. U.S. Department of Justice cited anti-trust concerns that the merger would lead to reduced competition, increased prices, and reduced quality.

In hearings earlier this year, consumer and patient groups including Health Access California, the statewide healthcare consumer advocacy coalition, raised similar questions about the proposed merger and its potential impact on California's patients and health system, in particular detailing the track record of these health insurers and the impact of allowing them to get bigger.

"The Department of Justice and our Attorney General are right to block these mergers, which will likely lead to reduced competition, increased prices, and more market power for insurers with a troublesome track record. Bigger is not better, and the case was clear that consumers would be negatively impacted. These mergers would give more power to Aetna and Anthem, which already has low quality rating and imposes unjustified rate increases." said Anthony Wright, executive director of Health Access California. "Health care premiums are high enough, without major insurers merging and reducing choice and competition further. We hope this action starts a new wave of both federal and state

scutiny regarding consolidation in the health care industry at both the insurer and provider level."

"The impacted insurers should refocus on competing with better prices and services, rather than resisting anti-trust officials and seeking to buy their competitors." said Wright. "DOJ and regulators should also make sure that consumers don't ever pay the over \$1 billion payouts in case the mergers don't go through. If they go through or not, patients shouldn't have to pay for these mergers in their premiums."

Here are the letters detailing the California case against these mergers:

<http://www.health-access.org/consumer-protection/merger-watch.html>

- * [Health Access letter to CDI on Anthem-Cigna Merger \(March 25, 2016\)](#)
- * [Health Access letter to DMHC on Anthem-Cigna Merger \(March 11, 2016\)](#)
- * [Health Access letter to CDI on Aetna-Humana Merger \(March 2, 2016\)](#)
- * [Health Access letter to DMHC on Aetna-Humana Merger \(January 11, 2016\)](#)

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About Health Access California

Health Access California is the statewide health care consumer advocacy coalition, advocating for the goal of quality, affordable health care for all Californians. Health Access Foundation undertakes community organizing and education, applied research, and policy analysis, and advocates for reform to benefit health care consumers, both insured and uninsured. We represent consumers in the legislature, at administrative and regulatory agencies, in the media, and at public forums. For more information, please visit www.health-access.org.