CALIFORNIA HISPANIC CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

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The Honorable Dave Jones
Insurance Commissioner
Department of Insurance
State of California
45 Fremont Street, 22nd Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105

RE: AHB-WCA-16-43: Proposed Merger of Aetna Inc. int0 CVS Health Corporation

Dear Commissioner Jones:

I am writing on behalf of the California Hispanic Chambers of Commerce (CHCC) in strong support of CVS Health's pending acquisition of Aetna.

The CHCC is a network of over 65 Hispanic chambers and business associations, representing the interest of over 800,000 Hispanic business owners in California. The CHCC is the premier and largest regional ethnic business organization in the nation. We focus on the promotion of economic growth and development of Hispanic entrepreneurs in every corner of this great state.

The needs of consumers from the healthcare system, including those of our members, has changed dramatically. For example, 80 percent of all healthcare costs currently stem from chronic conditions, which afflict 50 percent of Americans. Diabetes is 84 percent more prevalent in Hispanics than non-Hispanic whites, and we are 40 percent more likely to die from diabetes than non-Hispanic whites.

Because of this shift, the old way of addressing patient needs by seeing a doctor for all medical issues is no longer working. For example, pharmacists are often more accessible to patients than primary care physicians (PCP). No appointments are needed and in general pharmacists are available for consultation at hours during the day and night when most physician offices are closed.

Together, CVS Health and Aetna will complement a PCP's services by arming consumers with more complete patient information and by increasing the number of patient interactions. The CVS-Aetna merger will provide cost-saving opportunities to improve the healthcare experience for consumers and businesses. The combined assets of CVS Health and Aetna will also allow the company to be better equipped to meet the health needs of a growing number of people. The transaction is expected to improve the healthcare experience for consumers in terms of both affordability and convenience here locally in California.

Additionally, CVS has been and continues to be a leader on efforts to reduce tobacco use and in the fight against opioid abuse. CVS has created educational programs to teach students about the danger of opioid abuse, expanded its program to provide pharmacy medication disposal boxes to a total of 1,550 kiosks nationally, donated over 800 medication disposal units to police departments, expanded access to the lifesaving opioid reversal drug naloxone and has invested an additional $2 million to addiction recover efforts.

Further, CVS was the first to implement programs to limit the dosage of opioids to prevent misuse, and they have supported efforts to cut down on fraudulent prescriptions through e-prescriptions and information sharing across state lines.

We view the merger of CVS and Aetna as a way of creating a healthcare platform that is far more patient friendly and achieving greater cost reductions. We ask you to keep this information in mind and we strongly encourage you to approve the CVS Health-Aetna transaction.

Sincerely,

JULIAN CANETE
PRESIDENT & CEO