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A member of the
Breathe America™
Alliance

*Since the beginning of the 1900s,
Breathe California has fought for
clean air, healthy lungs
and the elimination of lung disease
in California.*



June 14, 2018

Insurance Commissioner
C/O Bruce Hinze, Attorney IV
California Department of Insurance
45 Fremont Street, 23rd Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105

Subject: CVS Health's Public Health Commitments

Dear Insurance Commissioner:

I am writing today to offer public comments in advance of the hearing that the Department will hold on CVS Health's proposed acquisition of Aetna. I want to highlight the positive benefits that CVS Health has brought to communities in California and communities across America.

In California, CVS Health provides an accessible, supportive and personalized health care experience through its over 1,110 stores, 58 MinuteClinics, 129 nurse practitioners and over 26,900 employees. These stores and MinuteClinics provide access to affordable care and health advice for patients.

As a statewide network of organizations dedicated to protecting lung health, BREATHE California was thrilled when we learned that CVS Health made the decision to stop selling tobacco products in its stores. We have worked for many years to prevent teens and pre-teens from starting to use tobacco products, and to help smokers quit. We provide services to many adults suffering from emphysema and COPD, so removing tobacco products from its stores is extremely significant. As a result, BREATHE California of Los Angeles County even honored CVS Health with the 2017 Breath of Life Award®.

Beyond its pharmacies and clinics, CVS Health has long been a leader in putting patients' health first and improving public health here in California. Key CVS Health initiatives include:

- **Removing tobacco from their stores:** As a result of CVS Health's 2014 decision to stop selling all tobacco products at their stores nationwide, 95 million fewer packs of cigarettes were sold just eight months after the end of tobacco sales. And through its five-year, \$50 million Be The First initiative, CVS Health is working to support youth smoking prevention and deliver the first tobacco-free generation. In March 2018, CVS Health announced \$10 million in new grants and investments to support this endeavor, including a \$500,000 grant to the Stanford University School of Medicine.
- **Helping fight against the opioid epidemic:** More recently, CVS Health has demonstrated its commitment to public health by expanding their multi-front fight against the opioid epidemic through enhanced opioid utilization management practices that follow the Centers for Disease Control Guidelines, as well as an expanded drug disposal collection program.
- **Free health screenings:** Every year through its Project Health campaign, CVS Health offers free biometric screenings for California families to help identify chronic conditions before they become life-threatening illnesses.

As a network of organizations that strive every day to advance the health of all Californians, BREATHE California strongly supports these important initiatives and CVS Health's ongoing commitment to our communities and our state. BREATHE California is proud to call CVS Health a partner.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tanya Stevenson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tanya Stevenson, EdD, MPH
President & CEO, Breathe California Golden Gate