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Center for Asian Americans United for Self Empowerment

June 7, 2018

Commissioner Dave Jones
California Department of Insurance
300 Capitol Mall, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: We SUPPORT the CVS Health Acquisition of Aetna

Commissioner Jones:

I write today to strongly support CVS Health's proposed acquisition of Aetna in advance of the Department of Managed Health Care's hearings to consider this transaction.

The Center for Asian Americans United for Self-Empowerment mission is to advance the political and civic empowerment of the Asian Pacific American (APA) community through nonpartisan voter outreach, training, and education as well as leadership development. We understand how important it is to address the complex health care challenges facing our state as we see it played out in the APA community every day. CVS Health's acquisition of Aetna will bring together doctors, pharmacists, insurers, and other health care professionals under one umbrella to promote a more comprehensive and integrated approach to patient care. By reducing overall costs, improving coordination between health care providers, and increasing the number of patient interactions, the merger of CVS Health and Aetna will help more Californians access quality, affordable health care services and improve patient outcomes.

CVS Health has long been a leader in promoting public health and putting the needs of patients first. In California, CVS Health currently provides an accessible, supportive and personalized health care experience through its 1,110 stores, 58 MinuteClinics, 129 nurse practitioners and over 26,900 employees.

If this merger is approved, CVS Pharmacy locations will include a space for wellness, an area for clinical and pharmacy services, vision, hearing, nutrition, beauty, and medical equipment. An entirely new health services offering available in many locations will function as a health hub dedicated to connecting the pathways needed to improve health and answer patients' questions about their health conditions as well as prescription drugs and health coverage. This will give patients new options to access a variety of healthcare and wellness services.

Combining CVS Health with Aetna will allow CVS to build on its leadership of prioritizing the health of patients. In the fall of 2014, CVS Health stopped selling all tobacco products in their stores nationwide, resulting in 95 million fewer packs of cigarettes being purchased by consumers in the eight months that followed. Additionally, CVS Health also recently expanded its efforts to combat the opioid epidemic through enhanced opioid utilization management practices based on the Centers for Disease Control guidelines, as well as an expanded drug disposal collection program.

This pending merger will make it easier for Californians to access a broad range of affordable health care services, resulting in better patient outcomes and an improved quality of life. On behalf of the many diverse communities that we represent across the state of California, we urge you to approve the CVS Health-Aetna transaction.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kim Yamasaki". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kim" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Yamasaki".

Kim Yamasaki, Executive Director
Center for Asian Americans United for Self-Empowerment

CC: Marta Green, Chief Deputy Director
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