

# California Conference of Local Health Officers

## Survey on Recommendations from Little Hoover Commission Report

### TALLEY

#### Question #1

**Little Hoover Commission (LHC) Finding:** The State's public health leadership and organizational structure is ill-prepared to fulfill the primary obligation of reducing injury and death from threats that individuals cannot control, such as environmental hazards, bioterrorism and emerging infectious diseases.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly Disagree  Don't Know

#### Comments:

- **The day-to-day emergency medical response system is challenged as well; the additional threats of terrorism acts only highlight the need to improve response systems. Prudent fiscal support of the basic EMS response system and public preparedness efforts are essential for routine and special emergencies alike.**

*Key Recommendation:* A State Department of Public Health, separate from Medi-Cal and other health insurance programs, should be created.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly Disagree  Don't Know  Won't make a difference

#### Comments:

*Key Recommendation:* The Department should be administered by a Surgeon General.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly Disagree  Don't Know

#### Comments:

- **Strong physician leadership, experience and competence matter most, but our group did not have a consensus opinion.**

*Key Recommendation:* The following entities should be included in the new Department:

EMSA Yes  No

OSHPD Yes  No

#### Comments:

- **EMSA and OPSHPED are effective organizations that are meeting the needs of the system stakeholders, it is best to leave them as separate organizations rather than have them get lost in a larger agency. If the only solution were to condense these organizations EMSAAC would support locating them within a newly developed, Public Health Department rather than getting lost within the current DHS structure.**

*Key Recommendation:* California should have a part-time, volunteer and scientific public health Board of Health.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly Disagree  Don't Know

#### Comments:

- **It is important to have physician leadership at the State, but it is not clear what authority this board would have. Our group did not have a consensus opinion on this issue.**

\*\*\*\*\*

Question #2

As an alternative, a Cabinet level Health Agency, with separate Departments of Public Health and Medical Care Services should be created.

Strongly Agree  Agree Disagree  Strongly Disagree  Don't Know **1**

If you agree, should other departments be included in the Health Agency?

EMSA Yes No

OSHPD Yes No

MRMIB Yes No

Drug and Alcohol Yes No

Mental Health Yes No

Comments:

\*\*\*\*\*

Question #3

As an alternative to a Surgeon General, the State Department of Health Services should create a position for a senior level physician to advise, help set policy and serve as a spokesperson for DHS on medical matters.

Strongly Agree  Agree Disagree  Strongly Disagree  Don't Know **2**

Comments:

\*\*\*\*\*

Question #4

**LHC Finding: The coordination and communication among state, local and federal public health agencies and their strategic partners is inadequate to protect Californians.**

Strongly Agree  Agree  Disagree Strongly Disagree  Don't Know

Comments:

*Key Recommendation:* The state should set minimum standards for local health departments regarding communications, capacities and preparedness.

Strongly Agree Strongly Disagree  Don't Know

Comments:

- **Standardization is desirable, providing it is flexible and addresses rural and urban differences, and the leaves final authority to the local county boards of supervisors.**

*Key Recommendation:* The State should help local agencies to regionalize laboratories and other assets.

Strongly Agree    Agree **X**    Disagree    Strongly Disagree     Don't Know

Comments:

\*\*\*\*\*

**Question #5**

**LHC Finding: Expert, technical and physical capacities and assets must be rebuilt and re-tooled to counter current and emerging threats.**

Strongly Agree    Agree **X**    Disagree    Strongly Disagree     Don't Know

Comments:

- **Basic preparedness and day-to-day operations should be the first priority, with the ability and training to expand to meet larger needs.**

*Key Recommendation:* The State should commit to long-term investment in intellectual capital through training and retraining excellent public health professionals.

Strongly Agree     Agree **X**    Disagree    Strongly Disagree     Don't Know

Comments:

*Key Recommendation:* The state should create a state pool of deputized local health officers, public health nurses and laboratory directors who are certified as meeting standards for training, knowledge and skills.

Strongly Agree     Agree    Disagree     Strongly Disagree    Don't Know **X**

Comments:

*Key Recommendation:* The state should make public health a uniformed service, like the U.S. Public Health Service.

Strongly Agree     Agree    Disagree **X**    Strongly Disagree **1**    Don't Know

Comments:

*Key Recommendation:* The State should adopt the CDC's policy of hiring senior staff with scientific qualifications.

Strongly Agree     Agree **X**    Disagree     Strongly Disagree     Don't Know **1**

Comments:

\*\*\*\*\*

**Question #6**

**LHC Finding: Public safety functions of public health have not been given priority and public health resources are not adequately managed and tracked.**

Strongly Agree    Agree **X**    Disagree    Strongly Disagree     Don't Know

Comments:

*Key Recommendation:* Public Health resource allocations should be linked to meeting standards for core public health competencies

Strongly Agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly Disagree  Don't Know

Comments:

*Key Recommendation:* Core public health activities such as communicable disease control and surveillance and laboratory analysis should receive priority in allocation of public health funds.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly Disagree  Don't Know

Comments:

- **Emergency Medical Service (EMS) response to emergencies is also a very important public health issue.**

*Key Recommendation:* The State should require counties to maintain clear, separate and standardized budget line items to allow tracking and reporting of public health expenditures.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly Disagree  Don't Know

Comments:

**Please complete and return to [ceastman@dhs.ca.gov](mailto:ceastman@dhs.ca.gov) by August 28, 2003.**

**Thank you**