THE GREENLINING INSTITUTE
1918 UNIVERSITY AVENUE, 2ND FLOOR
BERKELEY, CA 94704
GREENLINING.ORG

November 9, 2012

Mr. Peter V. Lee, Executive Director
Covered California
560 J Street, Suite 290
Sacramento, CA 95814

Comments on the Level II Grant Application, Blueprint Application and Revised Marketing Plan

Dear Mr. Lee:

The Greenlining Institute respectfully submits our comments on the Level II Grant Application, Blueprint Application and revised marketing plan. We have also signed onto a joint letter as part of our participation in the California Consumer Advocates Navigator Workgroup but are including a few other comments on the draft applications and plans separately.

We are happy to see the intention to which Covered California is establishing a work plan that should aid in meeting the specified enrollment targets. We, however, still have a few concerns that the current marketing, outreach and education, and navigator plans may not truly reach all Californians, specifically communities of color. Our concerns include:

1. In the Level I Establishment Grant, the Exchange stated that it would dedicate a full time Exchange staff person to ensuring that Exchange programs and services, across the board, top-to-bottom, are culturally and linguistically appropriate for California's ethnically, linguistically and socially diverse populations and the demographic profile of individuals likely to enroll in coverage through the Exchange, as well accessible for people with disabilities. We have yet to see a person hired and are concerned that the position is not included in the Level II Grant Application. While we understand that Covered California is dedicated to ensuring cultural and linguistic competency and appropriateness throughout the development of all elements of the Exchange, we strongly feel that this position is important and necessary for Covered California's success in reaching California's diverse communities in both the individual and SHOP Exchange.

Greenlining Coalition:
Allen Temple Baptist Church
American GI Forum
AnewAmerica
Asian Business Assn.
Asian Inc
Black Business Assn.
Brightline Defense Project
California Black Chamber
California Hispanic Chambers
California Journal for FilAm
California Rural Legal Assistance
Chicana/Latina Foundation
Chicano Federation, San Diego
Community Child Care Council
Community Resource Project
Council of Asian American Business Assn.
El Concilio of San Mateo County
Ella Baker Center
FAME Renaissance
Greater Phoenix Area Urban League
Hispanic American Growers Assn.
Hmong American Political Assn.
KHEIR Center
La Maestra Family Clinic
Mexican American Grocers Assn.
Mexican American Political Assn.
Mission Language & Vocational School
Mission Housing Development Corporation
National Federation of Filipino American Assn.
Oakland Citizens Committee for Urban Renewal
Our Weekly
Precinct Reporter Group
Sacramento Observer
San Francisco African American Chamber
San Francisco Housing Development
Search to Involve Pilipino-Americans
Southeast Asian Community Center
TELACU
Ward Economic Development
West Angeles Community Development

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2. We strongly support the inclusion of developing a retention strategy to reduce churn and increase customer loyalty. While we agree that health plans will play a role in this retention strategy, we strongly encourage Covered California to include other stakeholder organizations, such as consumer advocates, navigators, and in-person assisters, in the development of such a plan. These stakeholders provide a plethora of knowledge regarding the needs of consumers and can help in developing a strategy that includes community mobilizing and education on the importance of retention.

3. We have heard verbally that the outreach and education plan includes potential SHOP participants but have not seen a draft plan for reaching this population. We strongly support providing outreach and education grants to small business associations, chambers, and community based organizations that have established and proven trusted relationships with the small business community. We would, therefore, like to see some clarification on the allocation of funding for outreach and education to potential SHOP participants.

Thank you for your continued commitment to stakeholder engagement in this process. We look forward to working with you on the continued development to ensure a successful Covered California.

Best,

Carla Saporta
Health Policy Director
Bridges to Health

CC: Covered California Board Members