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**TO:** Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide/Health Exchange Board  
**FROM:** The California Endowment, WE Connect  
**DATE:** Friday, May 25, 2012  
**RE:** WE Connect Proposal Regarding California Health Benefits Marketplace Marketing & Outreach Program

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Please consider making WE Connect a strategic partner to reach lower income, uninsured Californians.

Since 2005, WE Connect has been linking lower-income families to important programs and resources that may allow them to live healthier, more financially secure lives. Founded by former California First Lady Maria Shriver and now run by The California Endowment, WE Connect has expanded its “no wrong door” approach to serving Latino and lower-income families by growing its partnerships and deepening its efforts in the Building Healthy Communities sites. The program and program team has built its outreach and enrollment expertise for this hard-to-reach population. Our approach and strategy are built upon years of experience and is fine-tuned for each community we work within.

WE Connect is an established trusted messenger within network of partnerships and the experience to execute a comprehensive community-driven outreach strategy to compliment your outreach and marketing proposal. Over the last year, WE Connect served as a critical part of The Endowment’s Affordable Care Act outreach strategy and a hub for information about what the new health law means for families today and in the future. This effort also included a comprehensive enrollment effort for existing public health coverage programs.

We believe WE Connect's reputation and relationship networks are important assets to your proposed plan for connecting eligible families to the new health benefit exchange in California.

## OVERVIEW

Partnering with WE Connect on outreach and engagement is not only opportune; it is a pathway to success. For the past seven years, WE Connect has successfully reached millions of lower-income families through a number of trusted channels that are of value to your work. WE Connect is a trusted brand amongst community organizations, government organizations, non-government organizations, policymakers and the media.

WE Connect is driven by a team that is experienced in navigating community organizations, complicated webs of organizations and government interests. The development of these relationships has been a “high touch” effort, built over years of successful encounters with the program and program team. Trust is the key to those relationships and we believe that the trusted relationships WE Connect has developed would be a true benefit to your endeavor.

**Strategic Partnerships:** WE Connect has built strong relationships across the state, partnering with traditional and non-traditional organizations, such as community clinics, soccer leagues, barber shops, churches, food banks, libraries, professional sports figures, celebrities and hundreds of community-based organizations. All of whom are important partners when it comes to educating, empowering, engaging, and reaching Californians, for example:

**Faith-Based Outreach Campaign:** Working with California’s diverse faith-based population has been a hallmark of the program. Faith leaders have tremendous influence at the pulpit, in the homes of the congregants and in their communities. With this in mind, WE Connect has held WE Connect Sunday events over the past four years to harness the power of the faith leaders in our effort to connect families to programs that can help them. On a single day, we focus church activities around the message of connecting. We distribute our materials, write newsletter articles for church bulletins, provide sample language for the sermons and engage all faith-based publications in the effort. The trust built with these faith-based organizations has been built one church at a time—and we believe it would be helpful in the aggressive effort to enroll families in the new health programs in California.

**WE Connect Neighborhood Centers:** In our effort to reach into hard to reach corners of the communities, WE Connect created three WE Connect Neighborhood Centers in partnership with trusted non-profits in low-income communities. The strategy has proven very successful and is a reflection of our “no wrong door” approach to connecting families. People may come in with a question about the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), but they leave with a full connection to resources. We go one step further with our events and actually enroll families in programs as well.

There are literally hundreds of examples of these types of partnerships and we believe that linking trusted messengers with a core set of messages and a clear goal will be a key to effectively reaching and enrolling families in health programs. It has been a winning recipe for the WE Connect program.

**Media Partnerships** with specific focus on ethnic media organizations has helped us reach our target populations and develop culturally relevant content designed specifically for hard to reach populations. We have developed a strong connection with Latinos in California which has successfully helped established WE Connect as a



trusted brand in their households and among organizations serving Latino communities. Over the past 5 years—more than 38 million Latinos have been reached through this trusted partnership.

We have worked with *La Opinión* to develop a range of education and engagement tools—including a 24-page bilingual, printed supplement—distributed through a network of publications and through our network of community-based organizations. We have set up partnerships with ethnic focused media outlets such as Univision, Telemundo, New America Media and several radio and television stations. These partnerships have resulted in dozens of ethnic reporter media briefings, hundreds of articles in local papers, TV and radio in languages that include Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Hmong, Russian, Tagalog among others. We have also developed a strong texting and mobile campaign to reach families on the go and connect them to important information.

**The WE Connect Network** is at the epicenter of our work in California. We have an extensive and growing database of partners, volunteers and families which is diverse and comprehensive. Over 5,000 contacts are included in our WE Connect Network database that we regularly engage via e-blasts, mailings, social media engagement with information about important programs and services or opportunities to attend events. From places of worship to barbershops, WE Connect reaches a strong statewide audience and enjoys a high response rate as well. The WE Connect Network could be used to fast track the efforts of health enrollment in California. The team has already laid the groundwork through our work to educate families on the ACA—this would be a natural extension of that process.

**WE Connect ACA Outreach and Community Enrollment Events:** As a part of the Endowment's Affordable Care Act outreach strategy, WE Connect has hosted Health Care Enrollment and Resource Fairs in counties throughout California where we educate families about the benefits of the new health law and help those eligible enroll into existing health coverage programs. Since November, WE Connect has hosted 7 stand alone events and will be hosting 3 more by the end of July and created WE Connect pavilions inside other events such as CareNOW LA and Telemundo's health fair. Over 2,000-5,000 people have come through the door or visited our pavilion at each of our events. We provide people with the opportunity to meet with a Certified Application Assistor or eligibility worker to enroll in various health care programs such as MediCal, Healthy Families, the low-income health program as well as other programs such as CalFresh and CalWorks.

In addition, we encourage families to use our online screening tool to discover their eligibility for Healthy Families, CaliforniaKids and the Kaiser Child Health Plan as well as other programs including tax credits & discounted utilities. These programs are represented within our resource fair along with other local community organizations. These events also provide the opportunity for free basic, medical screenings (dental & vision) as well as various vaccinations depending on our local partners. Each family leaves with a free bag of healthy, fresh groceries including vegetables and shelf stable



items. These events provide us an opportunity to build our community partnerships as well as interact one-on-one with community members to educate them about various programs they may not know about.

***Collateral Materials:*** WE Connect has developed bilingual collateral materials and resources that can be leveraged, rather than starting from scratch. We have developed materials that have been tested in the most difficult setting of all—communities. Leveraging what we have already developed would give you a strong starting place in your outreach.

Materials include:

- 10 Tips and Tip Sheets
- Health Insurance Starter Kit
- *La Opinión* resource supplement
- County Resource Lists
- County Health Insurance Cheat Sheets
- Fact sheets

***Website and Online Tools:*** The WE Connect website is a bilingual online hub for money-saving programs and resources. The “Health” pages within the website inform people about the ACA including new benefits and what is coming. The website can also direct people that are eligible to existing portals within their county for direct enrollment and communicate with those that are not eligible immediately, when they might become eligible. The website is also a portal through which organizations contact WE Connect to become a community partner.

***WEb Connector:*** The website also houses our bilingual screening tool, the WEb Connector, developed by the Intuit Financial Freedom Foundation that can be updated to screen for additional existing health insurance programs while waiting for state portal to launch.

***Resource Map:*** The WE Connect Resource Map is a searchable database of health clinics, free tax preparation sites, employment resources, job fairs and more. This resource can be expanded to include MediCal application offices, community-based organizations within your outreach efforts, and more.

***Champions:*** WE Connect has developed an arsenal of champions since its inception. Figures such as former California First Lady Maria Shriver, Lt. Governor Gavin Newsom, Dra. Aliza, Dra Isabel, Suzi Orman, and Dr. Oz have stood beside the WE Connect campaign sharing its message in communities throughout California.

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