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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Little Hoover Commission Recognizes Unique Nature of Special Districts

Concludes Health Care Districts Provide Important, Locally Responsive Services

BURLINGAME, CA, October 10, 2017: The Little Hoover Commission, an independent state oversight agency, recognized the unique nature of special districts in a comprehensive report on California’s 2,071 independent special districts released in August. The Commission determined that health care districts, in particular, play an important role in assessing local needs and filling a void in preventative healthcare services. The Peninsula Health Care District (PHCD), a special district serving the communities of San Bruno, Millbrae, Burlingame, Hillsborough, San Mateo and Foster City, focuses its efforts on prevention and community-based wellness programs to target specific identified needs.

In testimony before the Commission, PHCD Board Member Dennis Zell said that PHCD ensures its services do not duplicate those of San Mateo County, and that taxpayer funds are put to optimal use. “The Peninsula Health Care District performs a health needs assessment to determine where the needs are and what services exist, and then determines how our District can fill those gaps,” he said. For example, Zell noted the dramatic increase in teen suicide rates on the Peninsula, and PHCD’s bias for action. “We contacted local schools to assess the problem and provided funding for education and teen and family outreach. And we got the program up and running in seven months. We find a problem, find a solution, and get it going,” he added, noting that PHCD seeks to be an “engine of innovation” within the communities it serves.

The Commission found that health care districts can be more flexible than counties in defining priorities and are pioneering a new era of preventative care for children, adults and the elderly under the umbrella of “wellness.” The Commission also noted that healthcare districts can reduce long-term healthcare costs by investing in healthier lifestyles.

The Commission concluded that local institutions are best served by local decision-making. California Assembly Member and Committee Chair Pedro Nava (D-Santa Barbara) stated, “The districts are as diverse as the geographic locations they serve and the millions of Californians who support them through taxes and fees.”

Commissioner Nava encouraged special districts to engage with their constituents, and operate under full transparency. The Peninsula Health Care District uses its website, social media platforms, FlashVote survey tool, and newsletters to provide information to the public and to solicit input and involvement from constituents. The District is also active in the community, working to create as many touch points as possible to keep its finger on the pulse of residents’ needs and interests. The District has received the Transparency Certificate of Excellence

from the California Special Districts Association for its efforts at making its work visible and accessible to the public.

“Third-party validation of the importance of health care districts is an important statement about our work and impact,” said Cheryl Fama, CEO of PHCD. “We will continue to work with our communities and our stakeholders to fulfill our role of bringing access to health and healthy lifestyles to all residents of our District.”

About Little Hoover Commission

The Little Hoover Commission, formally known as the Milton Marks “Little Hoover” Commission on California State Government Organization and Economy, is an independent state oversight agency. By statute, the Commission is a bipartisan board composed of five public members appointed by the Governor, four public members appointed by the Legislature, two Senators and two Assembly members. Its conclusions are submitted to the Governor and the Legislature for their consideration. To learn more about the Little Hoover Commission and to read the full report online, visit <http://www.lhc.ca.gov/report/special-districts-improving-oversight-transparency>

About Peninsula Health Care District

Founded in 1947, the Peninsula Health Care District serves the communities of San Bruno, Millbrae, Burlingame, Hillsborough, San Mateo and Foster City by supporting the unique health and wellness priorities of our vibrant Peninsula communities, and safeguarding access to health care services, today and in the future. The Peninsula Health Care District fulfills its commitment to the community through oversight of District assets and infrastructure, planning for future health care needs, and investing taxpayer dollars in local health-focused organizations and programs. To learn more, visit <http://www.peninsulahealthcaredistrict.org>

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