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**TESTIMONY TO CALIFORNIA AIR RESOURCES BOARD MEETING ON  
PROPOSED AB32 SCOPING PLAN**

**November 20, 2008**

**Introduction**

Good afternoon. My name is Alexandra Destler. I am leading the development of educational programming at the Public Health Institute focused on climate change health impacts. This includes a multi-sector *National Health & Climate Change Dialog* funded in part by The Hospira Foundation.

I am grateful for the opportunity to represent PHI and provide the California Air Resources Board with our perspective on the AB32 Scoping Plan.

**The Public Health Institute**

In brief, the Public Health Institute is an independent, nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting health, well-being and quality of life for people throughout California, across the nation and around the world. As one of the largest and most comprehensive public health organizations in the nation, PHI promotes and sustains independent, innovative research, training and demonstration programs and serves as a close partner with government to support its role in assessment, policy development and assurance.

### **Scoping Plan**

As an organization that works throughout the United States and across globe, PHI is proud to be based in California where public officials are taking unprecedented steps to address climate change through AB32, SB375 as well as numerous efforts at the local and regional level. We commend the state and CARB on this leadership, which will undoubtedly serve as a model for other states and nations worldwide.

Given this critical juncture in AB32 implementation, I urge CARB to consider the following:

### **Recommendation #1**

We know that climate change will intensify weather conditions that will worsen many public health problems, especially among vulnerable populations such as the elderly, children, and the poor.

We urge you to **ensure protection for already over-impacted communities.** Mitigation strategies, such as cap-and-trade programs or siting of new “green” facilities, must not exacerbate already existing health inequities in low-income communities.

### **Recommendation #2**

We also know that many climate change mitigation measures – particularly around transportation and land use—will not only reduce greenhouse gas emissions but also **prevent illness and injury.**

We urge CARB to create communities that enable people to get out of their cars and walk, bike, or take public transit—improving their own health while improving the health of the planet. CARB can do this by increasing the goal for emissions

reductions due to smart land use planning to 11 – 14 million metric tons—from the current target of 5 million metric tons (MMT).

### **Recommendation #3**

The Scoping Plan limits its public health assessment to asthma and respiratory disease from air pollution.

We urge CARB to conduct a fuller accounting of the potential public health benefits and costs, and ask for a commitment to prioritize measures that simultaneously address greenhouse gas emission reductions *and* the health of our communities. This will require that the public health community be a full partner in the AB32 implementation process.

PHI recognizes that a lack of resources and a siloed approach to policy decisions has resulted in a reactive instead of proactive response to climate change from the public health community. As we move forward with this far-reaching agenda it is essential that we provide the necessary resources, particularly for local health departments, who are the critical front line to address emerging public health problems caused by climate change.

We also recognize the tremendous opportunity today for California's public health leaders to work with you to articulate the relationship between climate change and health, and to better communicate co-benefits of climate change mitigation on health.

We urge you to create a formal role for California's public health experts as key partners as you move forward in reviewing and providing input on regulatory and market-based strategies under development to meet AB32 requirements.

The time to act is now – as our environmental health, economic health, and public health are on the line.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.