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Study Examines Effect of Fast Food Restaurant Density Policy on South LA Health

*Community Health Councils' Health Impact Assessment reaches conclusion
on public policies to address health indicators*

Friday, June 30th • Community Health Councils • 3731 Stocker Street, Suite 201 • Los Angeles 90008

LOS ANGELES, CA — Community Health Councils (CHC) along with a cross-sector steering committee of community-based organizations, residents, university faculty and public health advocates led a health impact assessment (HIA) project to study the impact of proposed changes to South LA's existing free standing fast food restaurant density policies on health-related indicators as community plan updates are underway.

Fast Food Restaurant Policy in a Food Desert: A Health Impact Assessment released today by CHC lists among key conclusions that:

- (1) the potential health outcomes of the proposed new community plans are consistent with the existing land use policy goals of protecting health and welfare of residents;
- (2) Reducing unhealthy fast food restaurant proliferation in South LA must be a component of a broader strategy to promote healthy eating and reduce disparities in obesity and nutrition-related chronic diseases;
- (3) Requires longitudinal study to conclusively measure health outcomes.

The area has a relatively homogenous food environment: 76% of its restaurants are designated "fast food" compared to 47% in Los Angeles County as a whole.ⁱ Health indicators for 2010-11 show that South LA also has one of the two highest rates of nutrition-related chronic disease in LA County including adult obesity (33%), childhood obesity (29%), adults diagnosed with hypertension (28%)ⁱⁱ, as well as the lowest life expectancy (75-79 years) in the City of Los Angeles.ⁱⁱⁱ

“Placed-based interventions including public policy must be part of a comprehensive strategy for addressing preventable chronic disease”, according to Veronica Flores of Community Health Councils. “There is no single strategy to improve population health.” The report is available online at [CHC’s website](#).

Community Health Councils (CHC) is a non-profit, community-based health education and policy organization. Established in 1992, our mission is to promote social justice and achieve health equity in community and environmental resources to improve the health and well-being of under-resourced populations.

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ⁱ Misako Azuma A, Gilliland S, Vallianatos M, Gottlieb R. Food Access, Availability and Affordability in 3 Los Angeles Communities, Project CAFÉ, 2004-2006. Preventing Chronic Disease. 2010; 7. Available at http://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2010/mar/08_0232.htm. Accessed August 9, 2011.

ⁱⁱ Office of Health Assessment and Epidemiology, Department of Public Health, Los Angeles County (2013). Key Indicators of health by Service Planning Area (http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/ha/docs/KIR_2013_FinalS.pdf).

ⁱⁱⁱ Office of Health Assessment and Epidemiology, Department of Public Health, Los Angeles County (2010). Life Expectancy in Los Angeles County: How long do we live and why?, table 1 (http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/epi/docs/Life%20Expectancy%20Final_web.pdf).