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# FAX TRANSMISSION

TIBURCIO VASQUEZ HEALTH CENTER, INC.  
Hayward Site: 22331 Mission Blvd. Hayward, CA 94541

DATE: 5/8/12

TIME: 2:15 pm

TO: NAME: The Honorable Mayor & City Councilmembers

COMPANY: City of Hayward

FAX NUMBER: 510 583-3601

FROM: NAME: Lori Baptista, Director of Policy

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INCLUDING THIS COVER SHEET, WE HAVE TRANSMITTED 15 PAGES TOTAL.

COMMENTS: For your Review:

Resolution re: Alameda County Safe Medication Disposal Ordinance (support)

Thank You -

Lori

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## Tiburcio Vasquez Health Center, Inc.

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The Honorable Michael Sweeney  
Mayor, City of Hayward  
777 B Street  
Hayward, CA 94541

May 8, 2012

**Re: Resolution of Support by the City of Hayward for Extended Producer Responsibility and the Alameda County Safe Medication Disposal Ordinance (SUPPORT)**

Dear Mayor Sweeney,

On behalf of the patients, clients, staff, and Board of Tiburcio Vasquez Health Center, Inc., (TVHC), I am writing to express our support of the Safe Medication and Drug Disposal Ordinance Resolution which will be heard in Chambers this evening.

As you know, TVHC is a not-for-profit health center that provided quality healthcare and enabling wellness services to almost 20,000 people in 2011. And although we are not the producers of medications, we feel it is imperative to advocate for our youth, our community, and our environment.

We have long been aware of the serious ramifications of unsafe drug disposal, both in the pollution of our larger community environment, and especially in the critically dangerous effects on our residents, particularly, our youth.

Because of a lack of inadequate means of medication disposal options, medications are being stockpiled in our homes, our parent's homes and our grandparent's homes. Too often, they are falling into the hands of unintended users –most notably, our youth. The stark reality is that we are providing young people with easy access to a variety of medications clinically prescribed for others.

- Unintentional poisoning deaths are on the rise in the United States; from 1999 – 2007 we saw a national increase of 145%
- In 2009, unintentional poisonings caused over 708,000 emergency department visits, further taxing our already strained healthcare system
- An estimated 71,000 children are seen in emergency rooms each year because of medication poisonings. Over 80% of these visits were because an unsupervised child found and consumed medications intended for another user
- And according to the Oxford University Press, in 2005, poisonings led to \$33.4 billion in medical and productivity costs

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FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES • SCHOOL BASED/SCHOOL LINKED HEALTH SERVICES • 29800 Mission Blvd., Hayward, CA 94544

Furthermore, the Obama Administration issued a statement on the Whitehouse website that reads; prescription drug abuse is the nation's fastest growing drug problem and has been classified by the CDC as an epidemic.

With \$773 billion worth of drugs sold worldwide by the drug industry in 2008, it has become apparent that we have developed a global appetite for medications—and similar to an inherent adverse reaction, we now have both monumental social problems as well as critical environmental concerns to address.

Unsafe and ineffective drug disposal policies result in the inappropriate drugging of our bodies, and the inevitable pollution of our environment. It is imperative that we find an effective way to properly dispose of our unused and expired medications.

And while Tiburcio Vasquez Health Center is playing a lead role in spearheading community education about this issue, and continues to look for new ways to combat this problem, the serious matters of limited staff capacity and devastating cuts in funding preclude us from being even more proactive.

It is time that the profitable pharmaceutical industries play a lead role in the planning of this important legislation, and more critically, to ultimately share in the responsibility for provide and pay for a medication take-back program.

Therefore, we welcome and encourage the adoption of the Resolution of Support by the City of Hayward for extended producer responsibility and the Alameda County Safe Medication Disposal Ordinance.

Sincerely,



José Joel García  
Chief Executive Officer  
Tiburcio Vasquez Health Center, Inc

cc: Members, Hayward City Council  
Yolanda Triana, President, Tiburcio Vasquez Health Center Board of Directors  
Lori Baptista, Director of Policy, Tiburcio Vasquez Health Center