

San Bernardino County (SBC) African American Health Issues

Board of Supervisor's (BOS) Meeting – August 26, 2008 (Long version)

Dr. V. Diane Woods, Assistant Research Psychologist, UCR; and Founding CEO/President AAHI-SBC

Good Morning Mr. Biane & BOS, thank you for allowing me to speak.

For the record, on August 12, 2008, I delivered to you in close session 5 envelopes with information from the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) about public health core competencies for practice, Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) 10 Essential Public Health Services **and** expressed concerns about the Department of Public Health (DOH) along with key community leaders from Inland Empire Concerned African American Churches (IECAAC), Westside Action Group (WAG), Nubian HIV/AIDS Coalition & CA Congress on Racial Equality. The concerns were: **(1)** discriminatory hiring practices related to the Director for the DOH, and the Assistant Director not meeting minimum requirements for those positions according to standards of public health practices; and the confirmation of a Medical Officer, who has no training and/or experience in public health; **(2)** Mismanagement of state and federal funds regarding mandated public health services. **To date (10 business days later), I have not received a response from the BOS.**

For the record, the DOH is mandated by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the CDC to promote health and to keep the population healthy based on target specific local population data. **Heart disease, cancer & stroke are the #1, #2, & #3 causes of death in SBC.**

Slide #1 shows heart disease deaths in SBC residents. Note the significant differences in death among Black residents and all others. This is the definition of a health disparity according to Public Law 106-525, The Minority Health & Health Disparity Research & Education Act of 2000. This data is from our County DOH data files dated back to 1990. For the past 20 years this trend remains the same.

Slide #2 shows stroke deaths. Note again the disparity between Black residents and others.

These rates are at epidemic proportions. The County receives federal and state funds to correct these problems. An investigation is needed to identify what has happened to the funds, and if the funds were used for the intended purpose of reducing this epidemic.

For the record: Mr. Biane, on August 12, 2008 at the BOS public meeting, you identified that SBC has an African American 5-A-Day Campaign. My research identifies that this initiative has been in SBC for 6 years, but this program is not a County funded program. This is a state funded program. The **FACT** is there is only ONE African American 5-A-Day community program location in the County, at the Temple Outreach Center on Baseline Street in the City of San Bernardino. Reports from the State DOH indicate that state funds support 80% of this program and 20% comes from the Black church. Mr. Biane, **0 funds come from the County.** This is not a County funded program. By the way, the program has changed its name to *Champions for Change*, over a year ago. My research also indicates that our DOH's *Champions for Change* Program is also 100% funded by the state.

Our County has an epidemic of heart disease, cancer & stroke. **There is no public County funded effort** to correct this epidemic. An investigation is needed to identify why the BOS have not responded to request to invest money in the #1, #2, & #3 causes of death, and to determine if there is gross neglect, abuse, and abandonment of the African American population leaving them to suffer and die prematurely.

The Inland Empire Black Nurses Association (IEBNA), American Health Association (AHA), AAHI-SBC, and other outside funders have a target specific program called *Heart of Faith* delivered in Black churches by Black health professionals. We invite the **BOS to invest significant money** in this community collaborative, and the DOH Champions for Change Initiative to bring this epidemic under control in the African American population.

Sir, this is what the DOH is mandated to do. This is one area where the County is out of compliance.

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