



National Association of County & City Health Officials

*The National Connection for Local Public Health*

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **President's Decision to Withdraw U.S. from Paris Accord on Climate Change Is Short-Sighted and Places Public's Health at Risk**

*Statement by Laura Hanen, MPP, Interim Executive Director and Chief Government and Chief of Government Affairs of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO)*

**Washington, D.C., June 2, 2017**— On June 1, President Donald Trump formally announced that the United States is withdrawing from the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, adopted in 2015 by 195 nations. This agreement aims to mitigate negative outcomes resulting from the earth's warming by engaging the global community to limit greenhouse gas emissions. In a public statement, Trump described the agreement as "unfair" to U.S. interests, and said that this exit would help "re-assert America's sovereignty." The National Association of County and City Health Officials, representing nearly 3,000 local health departments, asserts this is a poor decision that endangers our future and could cost lives.

"Science has demonstrated that climate change will have serious and far-reaching health implications for present and future generations, with both direct and indirect impacts on human health," said Laura Hanen, NACCHO's Interim Executive Director and Chief of Government Affairs. "Poor air quality will send more men, women, and children to hospitals with allergy and asthma-related illnesses. More intense and more frequent weather events may result in the most serious health threat from heat waves, floods, storms, fires, and droughts. Importantly, the health risks associated with climate change will not be shared equally among individuals, communities, and populations.

Climate change will disproportionately burden the very young, older adults, people living with mental and physical disabilities, low-income people, and marginalized communities. As public health professionals, our role will always be to achieve better health outcomes, both at home and abroad. Because the state of the environment is so closely tied to public health, protecting our communities from the impacts of climate change is, perhaps now more than ever, a top priority for us, our members, and our partners.”

NACCHO encourages public health departments to promote and participate in climate change mitigation efforts, such as 1) the incorporation of adaptation planning into land use, housing, and transportation design; 2) preparing communities for extreme environmental events; and 3) coordinating with local governments on all-hazards disaster planning. NACCHO also recommends local health departments take action by using “The 10 Essential Public Health Services” as a framework to inform prevention and response activities to address the impacts of climate change in the communities they serve. Key action steps include: establishing science-based and culturally competent education initiatives; supporting relevant research on emerging health impacts and public health best-practice standards; conducting ongoing health monitoring (e.g., vulnerability assessments and environmental health studies); and building partnerships with key local stakeholders to engage them in response activities.

For more information, public health officials, partners, and policymakers at all levels are urged to review the [NACCHO Policy Statement on Climate Change](#) and the NACCHO Report, “[Preparing for the Public Health Challenges of Climate Change](#).”

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### **About NACCHO**

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) represents the nation's nearly 3,000 local governmental health departments. These city, county, metropolitan, district, and tribal departments work every day to protect and promote health and well-being for all people in their communities. For more information about NACCHO, please visit [www.naccho.org](http://www.naccho.org).