



## **PHI Statement on “Vision California: Charting Our Future”**

OAKLAND, CA (June 25, 2010)--The Public Health Institute (PHI), one of the nation’s leading public health organizations, welcomes the release of Governor Schwarzenegger’s Vision California report, “Vision California: Charting Our Future.” The report emphasizes the need for significant land use changes and renewed investment in public transit options.

Vision California, a joint effort by two California agencies – the California High Speed Rail Authority and the Strategic Growth Council – has taken on the groundbreaking task of examining the crucial role that land use and transportation decisions play in California’s future. PHI president & CEO Mary Pittman emphasized how important these decisions are to public health: “Our physical environment and how we get from place to place not only determine our carbon footprint, but are fundamental to how healthy we are as a society. The walkability of a neighborhood and the availability of public transit are essential elements in helping to create healthier California communities.”

Through land use scenario modeling, Vision California will be linking real numbers to the health impacts associated with each land use-transportation investment scenario, thereby enabling policymakers to make decisions that will most benefit California from both the public health and the environmental perspective. This modeling is needed to achieve the greatest public health co-benefits from recent land use legislation enacted in California, SB 375, that mandates the setting of regional greenhouse gas emissions targets through land use and transportation decisions.

The Vision California report also underscores the importance of California’s landmark air pollution and clean energy law, AB 32, which is being challenged on the November ballot. “California suffers from some of the worst air pollution in the country and Californians suffer from asthma and other respiratory illnesses as a result,” says Alexandra Destler, director of PHI’s Center for Public Health & Climate Change. “We need to preserve our current clean air and energy standards and continue our efforts toward creating a healthy California with cleaner air and cleaner energy. The Vision California project will be instrumental in helping to make the inseparable connection between our health, our environment, and a strong economy clear to policymakers and to the public.”

PHI is an independent, nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting health, social justice, well-being and quality of life for people throughout California. PHI has developed the Center for Public Health and Climate Change as part of a comprehensive strategy to address the enormous potential health consequences of climate change. For more information on the center, please contact [adestler@phi.org](mailto:adestler@phi.org).

For more information on Vision California, and to view the report, visit Vision California's website: [www.visioncalifornia.org](http://www.visioncalifornia.org).

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