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@ASTHO

January 12, 2018

Jennifer Leeman, DrPH, MDIV
Associate Professor
School of Nursing
5004 Carrington Hall, CB #7460
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-7460

Stephanie B. Wheeler, PhD
Associate Professor
Department of Health Policy and Management
Gillings School of Global Public Health
1103C McGavran-Greenberg, CB #7411
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-7411

Re: RFA-CA-17-039: Accelerating Colorectal Cancer Screening and Follow-up through Implementation Science (ACCSIS): Coordinating Center (U24)

Dear Dr. Leeman and Dr. Wheeler:

On behalf of the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO), I am delighted to provide this letter of support for your application to the National Cancer Institute (NCI) for the UNC ACCSIS Coordinating Center. As the national nonprofit organization representing public health agencies in the United States, the U.S. Territories, and the District of Columbia, our role is to formulate and influence sound public health policy and ensure excellence in state-based public health practice. Colorectal cancer screening has been prominently featured in our Reintegration of Public Health and Healthcare initiative, and we have funded model programs in Alabama, California, and Florida.

We can attest to Dr. Wheeler's capabilities as a leader in the field of cancer research. She and our Chief Medical Officer, Marcuc Plescia, have worked together in multiple capacities, during his previous leadership roles at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which funded her research focused on the behavioral economics of colorectal cancer screening in underserved populations, and at the Mecklenberg County Health Department, where she and colleagues partnered with the health department to conduct a pragmatic outreach trial mailing FIT kits to unscreened low-income Medicaid beneficiaries. In addition, Dr. Wheeler currently leads as PI the CDC-funded Cancer Prevention and Control Research Network (CPCRN), and continues to be, a flagship research network focused on accelerating the implementation of evidence-based cancer prevention and control strategies in underserved communities. Based upon our observations over the years, Dr. Wheeler is fully committed to promoting CRC screening in underserved populations and possesses the leadership abilities to coordinate efforts across multiple centers in this regard. Her Co-Principal Investigator, Dr. Leeman, brings complementary expertise in implementation science, and I have no doubt they will successfully execute the functions of the Coordinating Center.

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ASTHO leadership would be happy to appoint a representative to the Healthcare System and Community Partnership Work Group and provide guidance as a national stakeholder. We sincerely hope you are awarded the grant and look forward to future collaborations. If you are in need of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M Fraser", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Michael R. Fraser, PhD MS CAE FCPP
Executive Director, Association of State and Territorial Health Officials