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Jennifer Tsui, PhD, MPH
Professor of Population and Public Health Sciences
Department of Population and Public Health Sciences
Keck School of Medicine
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Dear Drs. Llanos and Tsui,

It is my pleasure to write this letter of support for your proposed modification to the California Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS) IRB protocol as part of the ACHIEVE Study. I am writing to support your request to implement a waiver of documentation of consent.

The Cedars-Sinai Cancer's Community Advisory Board is a group of community partners who work with Cedars-Sinai Cancer leadership to jointly set priorities for research, policy, and outreach initiatives. A central priority of our work is to ensure that all individuals, particularly those from historically underrepresented and marginalized communities, have equitable opportunities to participate in research.

Requiring written consent can create unintended barriers to participation for individuals who may be hesitant to sign formal documents, face literacy or language challenges, or experience mistrust of institutional processes. These concerns may be particularly salient for transgender and gender-diverse individuals, including transmasculine people who may be eligible for cervical cancer research but do not identify with traditional gendered framing of the disease. The stigma associated with cervical cancer, combined with the requirement to provide a name and signature, may raise concerns about privacy and the potential for being unintentionally "outed." Allowing participants to remain anonymous through a waiver of documentation of consent can help reduce these concerns and create a more inclusive and affirming environment for sharing their experiences.

We understand that participation rates differ between the New Jersey State Cancer Registry (NJSCR), which allows for a waiver of documentation of consent, and the Los

Angeles Cancer Surveillance Program (LACSP), which requires written consent. These differences show how consent processes impact who is able and willing to participate.

Your proposed modification aligns closely with our Community Advisory Board's priorities, including those of the Transgender and Non-Binary Research Advisory Committee (T-RAC), which emphasizes inclusive research practices and reducing structural barriers to participation. We believe that implementing a waiver of documentation of consent is an appropriate and important step toward increasing accessibility while maintaining ethical standards for informed consent.

We strongly support this request and look forward to continuing our partnership with you to advance equitable and inclusive cervical cancer research.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alex Caro", with a stylized, cursive script.

Alexandra Caro
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Community Outreach and Engagement (COE) & Cancer
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