



News Release

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES DIRECTOR ISSUES STATEMENT ON PASSING OF FORMER STATE HEALTH DIRECTOR

SACRAMENTO – California Department of Health Care Services Director David Maxwell-Jolly today issued the following statement on the passing of former California Department of Health Services (DHS) Director, Dr. Jerome Lackner:

“Dr. Lackner was an inspiration to the many people who benefitted from his compassionate practice of medicine, particularly the underserved, prisoners and those facing addictions. During his tenure as DHS director from 1975 to 1978, Dr. Lackner used his vast knowledge and skills to successfully guide the Medi-Cal program and the millions it serves.”

Dr. Lackner was a world renowned expert in the treatment of alcoholism and drug addiction who dedicated his life to providing free treatment to those battling addiction. He was awarded numerous humanitarian awards and founded the William D. Silkworth Fund for the advanced study and treatment of addictive disorders.

Dr. Lackner provided care and support to those who needed it most. He founded the United Farm Workers Union clinic in Salinas and was involved with several struggles for farmworker rights. He was also the personal physician to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in 1965 during a civil rights march and gave health advice to Cesar Chavez during his hunger strikes.

After serving the people of California as state health director, Dr. Lackner practiced medicine as a physician in Sacramento, where he continued his service to the Medi-Cal program as a health care provider.

Dr. Lackner passed away on July 9, 2010, of congestive heart failure at the age 82. He served as DHS Director under Edmund Brown, Jr., and held a J.D. in law from Santa Clara University. As a student at Santa Clara and U.C. Berkeley, Dr. Lackner studied psychology, sociology, anthropology and social institutions.

A Davis resident for nearly 40 years, Dr. Lackner is survived by his five children, Zelda, Ruth, Johanna, Sara and Joel. He is also survived by his wife, Becky Lackner, and his ex-wife Yetta Lipman.

Contributions may be sent to the American Red Cross at American Red Cross, P.O. Box 4002018, Des Moines, IA 50340, or Mogen David Adom (Israeli Red Cross) at www.afmda.org.

A graveside service was held today at Davis Cemetery.

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