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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RICHARD SANCHEZ BECOMES PERMANENT CALOPTIMA CEO

ORANGE, Calif. (November 10, 2020) — The CalOptima Board of Directors appointed Richard Sanchez, REHS, MPH, as the permanent Chief Executive Officer of the public agency. He has served in an interim capacity since April. For the past seven months, Sanchez has guided CalOptima through the challenges of responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, budgeting in a changing state economy and ensuring ongoing access to quality care in an environment shifting to telehealth.

Sanchez came to the interim role after serving on the CalOptima Board of Directors since March 2017. He is the immediate past Director of the Orange County Health Care Agency (HCA). Sanchez replaced former CEO Michael Schrader who had been at CalOptima for more than seven years.

“Working in partnership with providers and stakeholders, I am proud to lead the agency in supporting the health and wellness of Orange County’s vulnerable residents,” Sanchez said. “Together, we are capably addressing the needs of the community during the pandemic, upholding our 25-year legacy of providing access to quality health care. In fact, CalOptima was honored in October with an award from our state regulator for being the only Medi-Cal plan in California to have met new quality benchmarks for services delivered this past year. We look forward to continuing our outstanding performance as a top Medi-Cal plan in the years to come.”

“The CalOptima Board is excited to appoint Richard Sanchez as the permanent CEO,” said Supervisor Andrew Do, Chair of the CalOptima Board of Directors and Vice Chairman of the Orange County Board of Supervisors. “Richard’s 36 years of experience in health care, together with his strong leadership at HCA and as interim CEO for CalOptima through the difficult challenges of COVID the past seven months, will allow him to be a strong leader in delivering a member-focused health care system centered on quality, increased access and equity.”

Sanchez was HCA Director for three years, after having served as Assistant Director and Director of Environmental Health. Before his tenure in Orange County, he worked in leadership roles for the San Bernardino Environmental Health Department. Sanchez holds a bachelor’s degree in biological sciences from UC Irvine and a Master of Public Health degree from Loma Linda University. He is also credentialed as a Registered Environmental Health Specialist (REHS).

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About CalOptima

A county organized health system, CalOptima provides publicly funded health care coverage for low-income children, adults, seniors and people with disabilities in Orange County, California. CalOptima’s mission is to provide members with access to quality health care services delivered in a cost-effective and compassionate manner. In total, CalOptima serves nearly 788,000 members with a network of 9,000 primary care doctors and specialists as well as 40 acute and rehab hospitals.