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PROJECT

ADVANCING SMARTER POLICIES FOR HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES  
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# Federal Level HIAs: Lessons Learned

# The Value of HIAs within Federal Policy Context



- Brings a new frame of health to contentious policy debates
- Provides new data to help inform the policy conversation
- HIA process helps develop relationships:
  - Agency staff, policymakers, and legislative staff
  - Stakeholder and advocacy organizations

# Lessons Learned: Adapting to Federal Policy Timeline and Context



- HIA on legislation has an unpredictable timeline
- Full, written policy to be assessed may not be available, necessitating changes in typical screening criteria
- Need to use communications and reporting strategies that may be atypical for HIA practice
- Understanding the politics and policy context is critical:
  - Use of policy analysis
  - Use of experts
  - Selection of project scope

# Lessons Learned: Organizational Structure and Context of HIA Approach



- **Alignment of HIA goals and organizational goals**
- **Need to be aware upfront of policies and procedures regarding interacting with policymakers**
- **HIA practice may look different depending on the approach (e.g., relationship and leverage with decision-makers and/or advocates)**

# Lessons Learned: Stakeholder Engagement



- **Importance of national and diverse Advisory Committee**
- **Key to engage policymakers on both sides of the debate**
- **Critical to engage with those potentially affected by the policy decision at a local level, even though the decision may be occurring at the federal level**

# Implications for HIA Practice



- **Flexibility and modification of HIA steps, especially reporting**
- **Use of innovative assessment and communication methods**
- **Careful selection of policy target and serious consideration of feasibility of doing HIA on actively debated, contentious federal legislation**

Thank you!

