



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

April 27, 2010

**Contact:** James Bolden 213-200-5314  
Aurelio Rojas 213-974-2222

## **SUPERVISOR RIDLEY-THOMAS MOVES TO STRENGTHEN CHILD PROTECTIVE INFORMATION SYSTEM**

**LOS ANGELES** – Emphasizing the urgent need to provide every available tool to track the health and welfare of children under the protection of the County’s Department of Children and Family Services, Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas today urged the Board to explore information sharing initiatives to strengthen the County’s child protective information system.

In response to Supervisor Ridley-Thomas’ August 18, 2009 motion to explore new technology to improve how various County agencies share potentially life-saving information, the County’s Chief Executive Officer issued a report titled: “Family and Children’s Index Replacement System (FCI) Analysis and Recommendations,” an analysis of the current System.

The report included several recommendations to the Board of Supervisors and emphasized that legislative changes are the first step to effective protection of children through accessible data. Some of those changes are included in AB 2322, a bill co-authored by State Assemblyman Mike Feuer and Speaker Emeritus Karen Bass.

“Social workers and others responsible for the well-being of children should have every piece of available information to get our children out of dangerous situations before it’s too late,” Supervisor Ridley-Thomas said.

“The CEO’s recommendations serve as an important step towards providing immediate case information to an investigator, first responder, or others employed or engaged by the County of Los Angeles.”

Connie Watson, Director of People Who Care Youth Center spoke on behalf of the Supervisor's motion, expressing concern about the timeliness in which information is made available while a child remains at great risk.

"There is no general oversight on accountability as to who the system is used or when it gets used. The passing of the motion will indicate how you value children in L.A. County," Watson said.

The CEO's report also made reference to 11 other systems utilized in other jurisdictions across the nation – from Alameda County to Allegheny County and from Nevada and Nebraska to New York – that addressed a number of approaches that have been effective in the collection of data relative to children's safety and well-being.

The Los Angeles County Commission on Children and Families' ongoing work on the Child Health and Education Electronic Record provides another example on how legal and other challenges can be addressed, while still forcefully pursuing information systems reform.

By approving the Supervisor's motion, the Board instructed the CEO, in consultation with the Chief Information Officer, County Counsel and other County departments currently exploring information sharing initiatives, to examine other inter-agency information sharing systems nationwide, and determine what, if any, best practices could legally be integrated into the FCI system, including costs.

The Board instructed the CEO to return in 60 days with a progress report, to include a timeline of key milestones.

**# # # #**