



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

July 20, 2010

**Contact:** Ed Maddox 213-361-6980  
James Bolden 213-200-5314

### **SUPERVISOR RIDLEY-THOMAS LEADS BOARD IN PROCLAIMING 'BEBE MOORE CAMPBELL NATIONAL MINORITY MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH' IN THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES**

**LOS ANGELES** – Recognizing the late Bebe Moore Campbell's legacy as an advocate for mental health awareness and a fighter to erase the stigma that many with the illness face, Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas today joined the Board in proclaiming July 2010 as "Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month" in Los Angeles County.

The Supervisor was joined by the late advocate's husband, Ellis Gordon, Jr., Treasurer of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Urban L.A., Dr. Marvin Southard, Director, L.A. County Department of Mental Health, and a number of NAMI Board members, in making the presentation.

Mr. Gordon described the special relationship between the Supervisor and Mrs. Campbell and the support that the Supervisor gave to his wife, describing him as an "Ambassador for Mental Health."

"Bebe Moore Campbell was a leader in the mental health community. Her dedication and commitment to mental wellness through effective treatment options, open access to mental health services and improved community outreach remains unmatched," Supervisor Ridley-Thomas said.

Mental illnesses affects several facets of life for citizens who suffer from them, including physical health, behavioral health, and social health and can often lead to other illnesses such as diabetes, heart disease, HIV/AIDS and cancer

The illness affects one of four families, and two-thirds of people with mental illness do not seek medical treatment due to stigma, lack of community-based resources and inadequate or no diagnosis.

Reports cite that Caucasians are more likely to receive treatment than African Americans and that African Americans are misdiagnosed at a higher rate.

The effect of mental illness on families can translate to an increased need for services from the Department of Children and Family Services. Additionally, mental illness can cause individuals to engage in disruptive behavior that leads to corrective services, and an increased population in Probation Department facilities.

The Supervisor said Ms. Moore Campbell co-founded the local chapter of NAMI to bring resources and support to those living in urban areas of Los Angeles suffering from mental illness.

"I am pleased to recognize the late Bebe Moore Campbell's legacy as an advocate for mental health awareness through various media. We proclaim July 2010 as "Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month".

**# # # #**