



NEWS

Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas L.A. County Board of Supervisors, 2nd District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BOARD UNANIMOUSLY SUPPORTS PLAN TO BUILD A NEW MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. HOSPITAL

*Overflow audience of supporters express appreciation
to Supervisor Ridley-Thomas and the Board of Supervisors*

LOS ANGELES – Acting on a motion by Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, the Board of Supervisors today unanimously approved a plan to build a new Martin Luther King, Jr. Hospital and authorized county officials to proceed with negotiations with the University of California to provide clinical services.

The Board also approved a capital program for construction of the new medical facilities, contingent on the UC Board of Regents' vote at its meeting next month to enter into a service agreement with the county.

"Time is of the essence," Supervisor Ridley-Thomas said. "This board will be resolute in its message to the UC Regents. The ball is in the university's court. Let's do the right thing."

An overflow crowd of 700-plus residents and stakeholders filled the Supervisors' hearing room to thank the board for moving forward the hospital project.

Supervisor Ridley-Thomas, who has made the project his top priority since taking office last December, lauded his colleagues for their support and said all that stands between the opening of a new hospital is the UC Regent's approval of the deal and the supervisors' vote on financing for the hospital.

"Because of the board's direction and the County Chief Executive Office's steady execution, we have now moved beyond the closure of the MLK Medical Center two years ago, to the point where we are now on track to open a new hospital in 2012," Supervisor Ridley-Thomas said.

Upon taking office last December, Supervisor Ridley-Thomas visited the hospital site to publically announce his initiative to "jump start" the process of restoring a full service hospital with emergency room services to the area.

On the his hundredth day in office, the Board announced the County had reached agreement with the University of California and State of California on a framework to open a private, non-profit medical facility under an independent board of director, equally controlled by the county and the UC.

"The new, 120-bed hospital devoted to quality patient care in state-of-the-art facilities will provide much needed services to a region with the least access to health care in the county," Supervisor Ridley-Thomas said.

Other support for a new MLK hospital was delivered in the form of letters of support from US Congresswoman Diane Watson, Assembly Speaker Karen Bass, Congresswoman Jane Harman, Senators Curren Price and Rod Wright, and Assembly members Isadore Hall and Mike Davis.

Elected officials from the cities of Carson, Compton and Culver City also attended the hearing in support of the hospital plan.

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