



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The 23rd Annual Empowerment Congress Summit

The 23rd annual Empowerment Congress Summit will take place Saturday, January 17, at the University of Southern California. The summit, which begins at 9 a.m., will celebrate the 50th anniversary of key events in the civil rights movement including the Selma to Montgomery Marches and the passage of the Voting Rights Act.

Professor Cornel West, the prominent author and academic, will serve as keynote speaker at the summit's plenary session at Bovard Auditorium. Special guests include Los Angeles County Supervisors Sheila Kuehl and Hilda Solis and Los Angeles County Sheriff Jim McDonnell. The critically acclaimed spoken word performers, Get Lit, will also participate. Both West and Los Angeles County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, who founded the Empowerment Congress, will hold a media availability immediately afterwards.

Workshops led by distinguished experts will begin at 11 a.m. on topics ranging from sex trafficking, child welfare, violence as a public health issue and others. A resource fair will be held in the afternoon, with more than 30 booths providing information about county and community services.

The Empowerment Congress was born in the aftermath of the Los Angeles civil unrest of 1992. Then City Councilman Ridley-Thomas founded the Empowerment Congress to serve as a model of civic engagement based on the principles of participatory democracy, reciprocal accountability and intentional civility. Now widely regarded as the

forerunner to the neighborhood council movement, its motto is to Educate, Engage, Empower.

The Empowerment Congress Summit is a free event, but attendees are required to register: <http://empowermentcongress.org/ecsummit23/>

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