



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Statement by Supervisor Ridley-Thomas on Suspending Plans for New Jail

For those suffering from mental illness, the worst possible place to heal is county jail. The jail system in the county of Los Angeles is deplorable. And so we have a mandate to act on improving the conditions of the jails and to do so responsibly and holistically.

The Board of Supervisors' decision to suspend plans to build a new jail until more information is gleaned about alternative options is simply good public policy. We cannot build a new facility until we have more answers about Proposition 47 and other factors that have impacted the inmate population. It is imperative that before we commit billions of dollars on new jails that we feel confident about the projected needs and the review process.

On May 5, I asked that all the departments to present a public report on the status of the jail master plan. And the report we have heard indicates clearly that we must continue to have public conversations about this very important issue. There are a number of questions that remain to be answered before we move forward. While this is an urgent matter, we must get this done correctly.

We need an independent analysis of the actual number of treatment and other beds needed at the new jail, which is being called the Consolidated Correctional Treatment Facility. In addition, we have asked for a broad assessment of all

community based alternative options for treatment including, but not limited to, mental health and substance abuse treatment.

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