



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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State, County and City Leaders Unite to Fight Homelessness

On a lot that has been blighted for decades and also the site of a homeless encampment where two people were set on fire last month, state, county and city leaders united to discuss the latest efforts to combat homelessness and the longstanding problem of blighted and vacant properties throughout Los Angeles which pose a threat to public safety.

“Preventing and eliminating homelessness is a top priority for the County and the City of Los Angeles,” said Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas. “It is solvable if we harness the energy of all sectors of society and we treat this issue like the humanitarian crisis that it is.”

“City, County, and State — our arms are locked together in an extraordinary partnership to take on this homelessness crisis,” said Mayor Eric Garcetti. “Los Angeles has more people living, working, and studying here than ever before — but we cannot be satisfied with this progress when there are more than 21,000 people sleeping on our streets every night. We can and must do better.”

For some time, the undeveloped lot was home to several individuals who built an encampment with wooden structures and tents. However, just 48 hours prior to the news conference, the property owner cleared the site of the encampment and the homeless relocated to a nearby alley. [Footage of the prior encampment can be viewed here.](#)

“If you’ve got a vacant lot, you’ve got to be sure it’s a benefit to the community and not a blight to the community,” said Councilmember Marqueece Harris-Dawson, who also heads the council’s homeless committee.

A day earlier, Supervisor Ridley-Thomas traveled to Sacramento where the state Assembly, acting on a request from the County and the City, passed a resolution urging the governor to declare a statewide emergency due to homelessness.

“There are 115,000 reasons why the governor should make that declaration,” said Supervisor Ridley-Thomas, referring to the state’s homeless population, the largest in the country. Los Angeles County leads the state with 47,000 homeless on any given night.

The County recently launched a [petition drive](#) asking residents to contact the governor and demand that he declare a state of emergency with more than 13,000 people responding so far.

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