

Communication from Public

Name: South Los Angeles Alliance of Neighborhood Councils
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Comments for Public Posting: At an October 12, 2022 emergency meeting of delegates of the South Los Angeles of Neighborhood Councils, we met and discussed the recent revelations involving certain civic leaders. We submit the attached statement for the record. With Purpose~ Ms. Thryeris Mason Chair, South Los Angeles Alliance of Neighborhood Councils LAAAWPPI Class of 2021

Thryeris Mason
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Central Alameda Neighborhood Council
Community & Neighbors for 9th District Unity
Neighborhood Council
EC Central Area Neighborhood Council
EC North Area Neighborhood Council
EC Southeast Area Neighborhood Council
EC Southwest Area Neighborhood Council
EC West Area Neighborhood Council
Mid-City Neighborhood Council
Park Mesa Heights Community Council
South Central Neighborhood Council
United Neighborhoods
Voices Neighborhood Council
Watts Neighborhood Council
West Adams Neighborhood Council
Zapata King Neighborhood Council

October 12, 2022

The Honorable Mayor Eric Garcetti
Los Angeles City Council
Los Angeles City Hall
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Resign Martinez, Resign Cedillo, Resign De León - A Call for Immediate Action and Reform

Dear Mayor Garcetti and Members of City Council,

The South Los Angeles Alliance of Neighborhood Councils (SLAANC) is comprised of the 15 Neighborhood Councils serving racially, culturally and economically diverse South Los Angeles communities from Watts to Mid-City, to Central-Alameda to Baldwin Vista, and representing approximately 770,000 households. At an October 12, 2022 emergency meeting of delegates of the South Los Angeles of Neighborhood Councils, we met and discussed the recent revelations involving certain civic leaders and we submit the following for the record.

Integrity. It is not what you do when you are in public, it is how you behave when no one is watching. The President of the County Federation of Labor Ron Herrera. Council President Nury Martinez. Councilmembers Gil Cedillo and Kevin De León. Each only had one job, to lead this city with impartial integrity. We have witnessed the exact opposite. We have witnessed a level of racist comfort that is abhorrent. We have witnessed arrogance at its highest. We have witnessed an assumption of impunity. The abuse of public trust has cast an unwanted global spotlight on how politicians behave, or misbehave, in the City of Angels.

This past weekend we learned that the “leaders” named cast integrity to the wind with an appalling flourish in October 2021. We witnessed four individuals who were extremely comfortable engaging in a conversation that could have occurred at any backyard family gathering. We learned that our city was being disingenuously led by elected officials who sat comfortably scheming about disenfranchisement, oppression and political musical chairs while casually and tossing about racial and sexual slurs, implying that black boys should be raised

based on their race and not their humanity, and ridiculing and attempting to diminish the impact of black protest in this city by equating it to a fairy tale wizard from Oz. Their colleagues were not exempt from the racist diatribe. Oaxacans were not. Koreans were not. The LGBTQ + community was not. The Jewish and Armenian communities were not. A South Los Angeles community-based organization was not.

We state, loudly and unapologetically, that there is no place in Los Angeles politics for this level of disrespectful, hurtful and divisive misconduct from elected officials. Add to this the harrowing reality that policies have been shaped, possibly guided by racist and homophobic beliefs and selfish gains – the damage is immeasurable.

The South Los Angeles Alliance of Neighborhood Councils condemns the conduct of the President of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, Ron Herrera and Councilmembers Nury Martinez, Gil Cedillo and Kevin De León, and any other unnamed elected or appointed public official who engage in such vitriolic and reprehensible conduct in private but have yet to be exposed. Their conduct has compromised decades of collaboration amongst Angelenos and the progress realized from multi-racial unity. We stand in solidarity with the many outraged voices who have called for:

1. The immediate resignation or removal from City Council of Councilmembers Martinez, Cedillo and De León. A censure, or demotion from committee leadership, will not suffice. A leave of absence, paid or unpaid, is unacceptable.
2. An immediate and transparent independent investigation at both, the local and federal level, of the redistricting process and the ultimate outcome resulting in the disenfranchisement of certain communities of color. We submit that there should serious consideration for awarding compensatory damages.
3. The immediate revision of the section of the city charter governing the process for the replacement of elected city officials, specifically City Councilmembers, whose seats are vacated mid-term for whatever reason(s). The language therein must mirror a completely democratic and clearly defined replacement process for the selection of the succeeding Councilmember and it must afford said Councilmember complete voting power. The concept of a “caretaker” must cease to exist as Angelenos deserve empowered and continuous representation. Going forward there must be a distancing from the selection of replacement officials without allowing the entire community they will represent to have a say. We are a city of inclusion and our processes and policies must reflect that.

This is a moment with tremendous growth and healing potential if the vision and will are there. But the growth, and the healing, cannot and will not take place if Councilmembers Martinez, Cedillo and De León are allowed to remain seated another second. Their presence turns the horseshoe toxic and the corridors of City Hall hostile as was the case at the Tuesday, October 11, 2022 City Council meeting. They are not worthy of leadership, or a salary and benefits funded by our tax dollars, another day. The horseshoe is a place for unbiased and equitable policy creation for the benefit of all Angelenos. It is a coalition which should be united for the elevation of all Angelenos. Those who cannot rise to that standard of conduct must vacate their seats or be removed. It really is that simple.

If we do not stand for zero tolerance, then we will continue to see the ugly face of bigotry appear repeatedly in our political midst. It will infect our policy decisions. It will disenfranchise the very people our officials are elected to serve. It will tamper with our unity as a city. It will challenge our national and international influence. As a world class city poised to host the Olympics in 2028, we must do better!

We call upon you to remove, investigate, and reform, and to do so with transparency and through the lens of equity. We impress upon you that you have an ethical, moral and social obligation to address this call to action expeditiously so that our city may return to its normal business. As said by the legendary servant John Lewis, "If you see something that is not right, not fair, not just, you have a moral obligation to do something about it." Let us now move forward with healing the soul of this great city. The members of SLAANC are willing to participate in this process wherever we are most needed.

With Purpose,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Thryeris Mason", with a horizontal line extending to the left.

Ms. Thryeris Mason
Chair, South Los Angeles of Neighborhood Councils

cc: SLAANC Delegates