



Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations

510 S. Vermont Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90020

info@hrc.lacounty.gov

(213) 738-2788

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

of the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations

October 27, 2026 | 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

[Via Microsoft Teams](#)

or Call In at +1 (213) 204-2512

Phone Conference ID: 831 349 137#

Committee Chair: Commissioner Gay Yuen | **Vice Chair:** Ilan Davidson

Committee Members: Helen Chin, Jeanette Ellis-Royston, Serena Oberstein,
Fredrick Sykes

Staff: Robin Toma, Robert Sowell, Pierre Arreola, Joshua Parr, Paul Smith

AGENDA

- 1. Call to Order & Land Acknowledgement (2:00)**
- 2. Review & Approval of Minutes (September 29, 2026) (2:02)**
- 3. Discussion & Action: Human Rights Award Nominations (2:05)**
 - a. Action to Consider:** Committee recommendation(s) to General Commission regarding the recipient of the 2026-2027 Human Rights Award.
- 4. Discussion & Action: Human Rights Cities & Territories Campaign (2:35)**
 - a. Action to Consider:** Draft Commission letter to the Board of Supervisors regarding enlistment of LA County government in Human Rights Cities & Territories Campaign to be transmitted to General Commission for approval.
- 5. Discussion: Human Rights Monitoring & Advocacy Team Update (3:05)**
- 6. Public Comment (3:20)**
- 7. Commissioner & Staff Announcements (3:25)**
- 8. Adjournment (3:30)**

Next Meeting Date – November 24, 2026 at 2:00 PM

Note: The following Commissioners will be participating by virtual conference communication from the following locations: Gay Yuen (517 S. Orange Ave., Apt. E, Monterey Park, 91755); Helen Chin (5844 Bowcroft St., Unit #4, Los Angeles CA 90016); Ilan Davidson (1435 W. 7th St., San Pedro, CA 90732); Jeanette Ellis-Royston (1460 E. Holt Ave., Rm. 6, Pomona, CA 91767); Serena Oberstein (17509 Romar St., Northridge, CA 91325); Fredrick Sykes (3537 Samantha Ave., West Covina, CA 91792). An asterisk () denotes that this agenda packet includes written material regarding this agenda item. Meetings are held in English and accessible to persons with disabilities. If interpretation in other languages or accommodations for persons with disabilities are needed, please contact the Commission on Human Relations at (213) 738-7288 or info@hrc.lacounty.gov at least 3 business days before the meeting.*



Los Angeles County

Commission on Human Relations

510 S. Vermont Avenue, 15th Floor
Los Angeles, California 90020
www.hrc.lacounty.gov
213.738.2788

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE **MEETING MINUTES**

September 29, 2026 | 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM
via Microsoft Teams Video & Audio Conference

PRESENT: Gay Yuen
Helen Chin
Jeanette Ellis-Royston

Fredrick Sykes
Serena Zeise-Oberstein

ABSENT: Ilan Davidson

STAFF: Robin Toma
Robert Sowell
Pierre Arreola

Paul Smith
Joshua Parr

I. Call to Order & Land Acknowledgment

Chair Gay Yuen called the meeting to order at 2:07 PM with a quorum in attendance. Staff Pierre Arreola then read the County of Los Angeles land acknowledgment.

II. Approval of Minutes

Chair Gay Yuen moved to approve the minutes of the Human Rights Committee meeting on September 29, 2026, as presented by staff. Commissioner Fredrick Sykes seconded the motion, and the vote proceeded as follows:

Moved: Yuen

Seconded: Sykes

Ayes: Yuen, Sykes, Zeise-Oberstein, Ellis-Royston, Chin

Nays: None

Abstentions: None

Vote: 5 – 0 – 0

The motion was adopted unanimously.

III. Human Rights Award Nominations

Staff Pierre Arreola presented three names to consider as nominees. Commissioner Helen Chin observed that all three nominees presented by staff appeared to meet the four award criteria outlined by Staff Pierre Arreola. She asked whether political considerations or other strategic factors beyond the stated criteria should inform the Committee's deliberations. Staff Pierre Arreola explained that honoring individuals who could help counter antagonistic elements in the community or bring resources to advance the work could add long-term strategic value.

Chair Gay Yuen commended staff for developing the criteria, identifying appropriate nominees, and presenting detailed information. She described her longstanding familiarity with the three nominees. Chair Gay Yuen proposed considering recognition of all three nominees because of the strength of their contributions.

Assistant Executive Director Robert Sowell also commended the nomination work. He raised an option for consideration if the Human Rights Award were presented at a combined Human Relations Awards event: one or more nominees could receive the Human Rights Award, while others might be considered for countywide Human Relations Awards.

Staff Pierre Arreola proposed continuing the award item to October and distributing PDF materials for the Committee to review beforehand. Chair Gay Yuen agreed. Staff Pierre Arreola asked the Committee to consider whether to advocate for one nominee or support recognizing all three. If multiple nominees were selected, the Committee was also asked to consider whether all should receive the same Human Rights Award designation or whether differentiated titles would be appropriate.

Chair Gay Yuen asked whether the Committee wished to allow additional nominations. Staff Pierre Arreola explained that nominations remained open unless the Chair closed them and stated that the Human Rights Team had no further nominees to offer.

Commissioner Serena Oberstein proposed a posthumous nomination for Umar Hakim-Dey. She described his advocacy for people experiencing homelessness, upward mobility in the Black community, engagement in the Muslim community, and interfaith and intercultural work. She said he had died suddenly the previous September and considered this a timely opportunity to recognize his contributions.

Chair Gay Yuen asked that the proposed nominee be added as a fourth name for consideration and confirmed that staff would distribute nominee information before the next meeting. Commissioner Serena Zeise-Oberstein requested the nomination form and will complete it before the next meeting for review.

IV. Human Rights Cities and Territories Campaign

The committee entered a discussion regarding enlistment of Los Angeles County government in United Cities and Local Governments' Human Rights Cities and Territories Campaign.

Executive Director Robin Toma presented briefly the history and mission of the campaign. He affirmed that the campaign is in direct alignment with the December 9, 2025 Board motion on “Affirming LA County’s Commitment to Human Rights” as it advances coordination with other local and regional governments and contributes to international human rights reporting. He also mentioned recent contacts with other local and regional governments interested in advancing human rights locally including Chicago, New York, Minneapolis, Dallas, Long Beach, and the City of Los Angeles.

Chair Gay Yuen invited a motion. Commissioner Serena Zeise-Oberstein moved to recommend to the General Commission to recommend to the Board of Supervisors to enlist the LA County government in the “Human Rights Cities & Territories” campaign led by the United Cities & Local Governments. Commissioner Fredrick Sykes seconded the motion, and the vote proceeded as follows:

Moved: Zeise-Oberstein

Seconded: Sykes

Ayes: Yuen, Sykes, Zeise-Oberstein, Ellis-Royston, Chin

Nays: None

Abstentions: None

Vote: 5 – 0 – 0

The motion was adopted unanimously.

V. Human Rights Monitoring & Advocacy Team Update

Staff Pierre Arreola provided an update on the team’s current assignments including the Election Disruption Prevention & Response Project, the AV Unhoused Narrative Collection Project, and the legacy report for the FIFA 2026 World Cup Human Rights Framework. He also shared the team update concerning assistance related to immigration enforcement at polling locations. He stated that the people being detained would be provided access to a network of legal-defense resources, including resources promoted by the Office of Immigrant Affairs. He distinguished that assistance from the support available to Election Resource Liaisons and County employees working at the polls provided by County Counsel.

Commissioner Fredrick Sykes raised concern about a perceived tension between the nation’s human rights commitments and federal conduct. He referred to allegations of war crimes in Iran, a retreat from engagement with United Nations human rights structures, and an expert report he said had been announced at the United Nations. He asked whether leadership had thoughts on the implications for the Commission.

Assistant Executive Director Robert Sowell responded that the concern could be discussed, but he did not see a conflict for the Commission because its underlying commitments remained consistent. He observed that the Commission’s positions had differed from federal actions or policies before and could do so again. Assistant Executive Director Robert Sowell explained that Executive Director Robin Toma’s approach generally emphasized local impacts and local issues.

VI. Public Comment

There was no public comment at this meeting.

VII. Commissioner & Staff Announcements

Staff Pierre Arreola raised the October meeting schedule and said he would coordinate with Chair Gay Yuen. He asked whether commissioners would be working the election and explained that election-related assignments could affect staff availability. He noted that staff capacity would remain for a Tuesday committee meeting, although support would be more limited than at the present meeting.

Chair Gay Yuen asked that quorum be confirmed in advance and expressed a preference to hold the meeting if a quorum could be secured. She emphasized the timing of the Human Rights Award selection and the need to choose the awardee or awardees.

VIII. Adjournment

Chair Gay Yuen invited a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Serena Zeise-Oberstein moved to adjourn. Commissioner Fredrick Sykes seconded the motion, and the vote proceeded as follows:

Moved: Chin

Seconded: Sykes

Ayes: Yuen, Sykes, Zeise-Oberstein, Ellis-Royston, Chin

Nays: None

Abstentions: None

Vote: 5 – 0 – 0

The motion was adopted unanimously. Seeing no further business coming before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned.

Next Meeting Date: October 27, 2026, at 2:00 PM

**County of Los Angeles
Commission on Human Relations**



Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors

- Hilda L. Solis – First District ·
- Holly J. Mitchell – Second District ·
- Lindsey P. Horvath – Third District ·
- Janice Hahn – Fourth District ·
- Kathryn Barger – Fifth District ·



**HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD
NOMINATION FORM**

The Human Rights Award honors an individual, group of individuals, agency, or program for outstanding achievement in advancing international human rights treaties, principles, standards, and norms. Honorees' actions are crucial to LA County's continued national and global leadership in bringing international human rights home. Governmental and non-governmental nominees are eligible. Priority consideration is given to LA County government-led efforts that actively engage and collaborate with community stakeholders.

SECTION 1: NOMINEE INFORMATION

Name of Nominee (individual, group, agency, program, or initiative): Umar Hakim-Dey (posthumously)

Lead Organization, Department, or Agency (if applicable):

Primary Contact (if the nominee is a group, agency, or program):

Address:

Umar was born and raised in Compton.

Phone Number:

Email Address:

Website / Social Media:

Nominee Type:

Individual X

Sector:

- ☐ LA County Government ☐ Other Government (city, state, federal, tribal)
- ☒ Non-Governmental (nonprofit, community-based, academic, faith-based, or private)
- ☐ Government–Community Partnership

SECTION 2: PRIORITY CONSIDERATION

Is this an LA County government–led effort?

☐ Yes

☒ No

If yes, name the lead County department(s), agency, commission, or office: NA

Name any community stakeholders, organizations, or coalitions that partner or collaborate on this effort:

LA Voice

ILM Foundation

Muslim Public Affairs Council

New Ground: A Muslim Jewish Partnership

SECTION 3: HUMAN RIGHTS STANDARDS ADVANCED

Mark all international human rights instruments, principles, or norms this work advances. The United States does not need to have ratified an instrument for it to be listed.

☐ Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

☐ Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

☒ International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)

☐ Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

☒ International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)

☐ Convention against Torture (CAT)

☒ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)

☒ UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)

☒ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

☒ UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights

☒ Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families

☐ Other: _____

SECTION 4: NOMINATION NARRATIVE

Suggested limit: 300 words per question. Please include specific examples.

- A. Human Rights Achievement:** Describe the nominee's work and how it advances the fulfillment of the human rights standards marked above. Include specific roles, actions, and accomplishments, the rights addressed, and the communities served.

Umar was the board chair of LA Voice, a multi-racial, multi-faith community organization that awakens people to their own power, training them to speak, act, and work together to transform our County into one that reflects the dignity of all people. He was formerly the director of the ILM Foundation, a nonprofit that works to empower individuals with essential life skills to cultivate resilience, reduce social disparities, and uplift entire communities. Umar was also a leader in the Muslim community and longtime advocate for the homeless.

Umar dedicated his life to grassroots community building, interfaith bridge-building, police reform, and advocacy for unhoused residents.

- B. Implementation and Community Engagement:** Describe how the work was carried out and how community stakeholders, especially the communities most directly affected, took part in its design, decision-making, implementation, and accountability. Include links to relevant websites and/or media stories.

Umar was a born organizer. He created space at tables and welcomed people to them. He reached out and across even when opinions may differ. He saw the best in people and in turn, he helped people see the best in themselves and in humanity. Whether a person was in a positional power or the most marginalized, Umar treated everyone the same with the dignity of someone created in the image of the divine. He worked with ILM to create Humanitarian Day, a day to lift up and preserve human dignity.

- C. Impact and Outcomes:** Describe the impact of the work, such as changes in policy, practice, access to services, or conditions for affected communities. Include data, evaluations, or links to relevant websites and/or media stories where available.

As the board chair of LA Voice, Umar helped steer the organization during tumultuous times, including the first and second Trump administrations and crackdowns on immigrant rights in this country. Additionally, he was a part of Faith Votes, building a just society and encouraging people to come together in

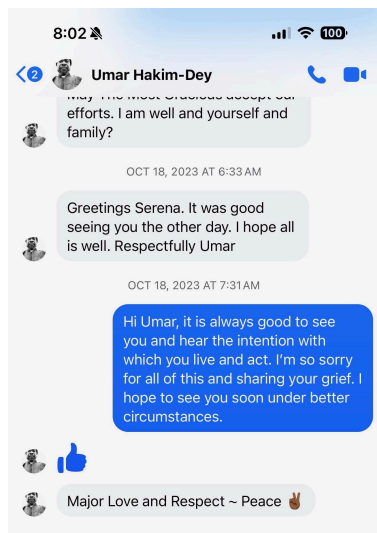
community and to exercise their power to build a more just LA. In 2024, more than 14,000 conversations were had, close to 50 faith based congregations were engaged, 3000 voters pledged to vote and 290 leaders were trained on ballot priorities and civic engagement tools.

D. Bringing Human Rights Home: Describe how this work strengthens LA County's national and global leadership in applying international human rights locally, including its potential to be replicated or adapted by other jurisdictions and organizations.

Hakim-Dey was the founder of Inkerij, a community organization helping local leaders and grassroots organizations in matters of diversity and community building. He was out on the streets in some of the most impoverished areas of LA County, bringing resources, dignity and opportunities for upward mobility to the unhoused.

Umar lived these values in times of calm, but also in times of difficulty. In the days following October 7th, when tensions were high between communities, Umar cleaved to relationships and leaned in. This is a brief but meaningful interaction I had with him following the introduction of a policy that he and I had differing viewpoints about. He treated everyone with the same respect.

In a broken world, Umar sought to understand its brokenness so that he in turn could tangibly contribute to repairing it, one relationship at a time.



SECTION 5: SUPPORTING MATERIALS (OPTIONAL)

Attach or link up to three supporting materials, such as letters of support, reports, evaluations, or media coverage:

1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nUNRXJqUvfc>
2. <https://religionnews.com/2025/10/06/la-activist-umar-hakim-dey-embodied-muslim-teaching-to-give-back-selflessly/>
3. <https://voyagela.com/interview/exploring-life-business-with-umar-hakim-dey-of-inkerij-foundation/>

SECTION 6: NOMINATOR INFORMATION

Name of Nominator:

Serena Oberstein

Title and Organization / Department: LA County Human Relations Commissioner

Phone Number: 8186742836

Email Address: serena.oberstein@gmail.com

Relationship to Nominee: colleague, ally, coalition partner

Has the nominee been informed of this nomination?

☐ Yes

☒ No

SELECTION PROCESS

- **Recommendation:** Commission staff solicit and compile nominations, including outreach to County departments and agencies.
- **Review:** The Human Rights Committee reviews nominations and may consult a panel of human rights experts as needed.
- **Commission Vote:** The Human Rights Committee recommends one or more nominees to the full Commission, which votes to select the award recipient(s).
- **Award Presentation:** The Commission on Human Relations, in collaboration with the Board of Supervisors, presents the award at the Board meeting on or near December 10, International Human Rights Day.

Please Return To:
Pierre Ivan Arreola, HSA I

Manager, Human Rights Monitoring & Advocacy Team
PArreola@hrc.lacounty.gov
213-304-5480

**County of Los Angeles
Commission on Human Relations**



Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors

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SECTION 1: NOMINEE INFORMATION

Name of Nominee (individual, group, agency, program, or initiative):

The Honorable Hilda L. Solis

Lead Organization, Department, or Agency (if applicable):

Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, First District

Primary Contact (if the nominee is a group, agency, or program): Self

Address: Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, 500 W. Temple Street, Room 856, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Phone Number: 213-974-4111

Email Address: firstdistrict@bos.lacounty.gov

Website / Social Media: <https://hildalsolis.org/>

Nominee Type:

☒ Individual ☐ Group of Individuals ☐ Agency ☐ Program or Initiative

Sector:

☒ LA County Government ☐ Other Government (city, state, federal, tribal)
☐ Non-Governmental (nonprofit, community-based, academic, faith-based, or private)

☐ Government–Community Partnership

SECTION 2: PRIORITY CONSIDERATION

Is this an LA County government–led effort? ☒ Yes ☐ No

If yes, name the lead County department(s), agency, commission, or office:

Board of Supervisors, First District

Name any community stakeholders, organizations, or coalitions that partner or collaborate on this effort:

Promotoras and community health workers; immigrant rights and legal services organizations; Public Counsel; JusticeLA and Dignity & Power Now; Thai Community Development Center; El Monte Cares; the Cities of Montebello and Baldwin Park; labor and worker organizations.

SECTION 3: HUMAN RIGHTS STANDARDS ADVANCED

Mark all international human rights instruments, principles, or norms this work advances. The United States does not need to have ratified an instrument for it to be listed.

- ☒ Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)
- ☒ Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- ☒ International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)
- ☐ Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
- ☒ International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)
- ☐ Convention against Torture (CAT)
- ☒ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)
- ☐ UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)
- ☒ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
- ☐ UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights
- ☒ Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families
- ☐ Other: _____

SECTION 4: NOMINATION NARRATIVE

Suggested limit: 300 words per question. Please include specific examples.

A. Human Rights Achievement: *Describe the nominee’s work and how it advances the fulfillment of the human rights standards marked above. Include specific roles, actions, and accomplishments, the rights addressed, and the communities served.*

Across four decades and every level of government, Hilda Solis has turned human rights principles into enforceable law and public investment. Her work has focused on workers, immigrants, women, and communities burdened by pollution and incarceration.

A former federal employee, she worked in the Carter White House Office of Hispanic Affairs and later in the Office of Management and Budget's Civil Rights Division. In 1994 she became the first Latina elected to the California State Senate. As chair of the Senate Industrial Relations Committee, she led the fight to raise the state minimum wage from \$4.25 to \$5.75 an hour in 1996. She also authored a record seventeen state laws to combat domestic violence. Her 1999 environmental justice law was the first of its kind in the nation to become law. It earned her the 2000 John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award, the first ever given to a woman.

In Congress, she was appointed to the Helsinki Commission in 2007. She was elected Vice Chair of the General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions, the only U.S. elected official on that committee. As U.S. Secretary of Labor from 2009 to 2013, she was the first Latina to serve in the Cabinet. She focused on workplace safety and stronger compliance with wage and hour laws.

As First District Supervisor since December 2014 and County Chair since December 2025, she has advanced "Care First, Jails Last". She has also defended immigrant residents' dignity and due process.

Supervisor Solis created the County's anti-hate infrastructure and then secured the funding to sustain it. On July 17, 2018, the Board passed her motion, co-authored with Supervisor Sheila Kuehl, to protect vulnerable communities from hate crime. The motion directed the Commission on Human Relations to create a multi-year anti-hate campaign, which became LA vs Hate. In 2019, her motion with Supervisor Janice Hahn launched the County's first anti-hate initiative to strengthen support for victims of hate crimes. In 2022, she and Supervisor Kuehl moved to identify at least \$2.6 million in ongoing funding for LA vs Hate. She later helped secure Measure B funding for the program as trauma and injury prevention, now \$1.05 million a year. This work puts into practice the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the first core UN human rights treaty adopted in 1965, and later ratified by the United States in 1994.

B. Implementation and Community Engagement: *Describe how the work was carried out and how community stakeholders, especially the communities most directly affected, took part in its design, decision-making, implementation, and accountability. Include links to relevant websites and/or media stories.*

Supervisor Solis builds policy with and through trusted community messengers. Her first-in-the-nation law grew out of a documented pattern: polluting projects were disproportionately located near minority and low-income neighborhoods. She built support for the bill over strong opposition from a former governor and the California business community.

Her decarceration work responded to sustained grassroots organizing. Community pressure led the County to form the Alternatives to Incarceration and Men's Central Jail Closure workgroups. The MCJ Closure Workgroup then worked with impacted community members, data experts, and service providers on its closure report.

Following the 2025 immigration raids, her motions have centered promotoras and community health workers. Many of them come from immigrant communities themselves and help residents overcome fear to seek support. She directed County departments to partner with community organizations. She also directed \$200,000 to Montebello, Baldwin Park, and El Monte Cares to address food insecurity among families afraid to leave home during the raids.

C. Impact and Outcomes: *Describe the impact of the work, such as changes in policy, practice, access to services, or conditions for affected communities. Include data, evaluations, or links to relevant websites and/or media stories where available.*

Since the federal immigration raids began in June 2025, Supervisor Solis has led 14 motions to protect County residents. They include directing County Counsel to join or file legal action against unlawful arrests and seizures, and against the termination of Temporary Protected Status for residents facing deportation. Her July 2025 motion, co-authored with Supervisor Horvath, directed County Counsel to pursue legal remedies against stops, detentions, or arrests made without reasonable suspicion or probable cause. Other motions addressed the economic harm to detained immigrants' families. These include recovering tools and equipment left behind, and helping people claim wages owed to them after deportation. She also moved to support legislation that bars immigration agents from detaining students or their families on or near school property without judicial warrants.

In June 2020, Supervisors Solis and Kuehl proposed a motion, unanimously approved, directing County departments and the ATI Workgroup to plan the closure of Men's Central Jail. The Care First, Jails Last motion shifted County planning toward diversion, reentry, and community-based care. That shift has shaped the County's decarceration agenda since, including Restorative Care Villages and the Rapid Diversion Program.

Her environmental justice law and the Profile in Courage Award brought national recognition to the principle that environmental burdens must not fall disproportionately on communities of color.

D. Bringing Human Rights Home: *Describe how this work strengthens LA County's national and global leadership in applying international human rights locally, including its potential to be replicated or adapted by other jurisdictions and organizations.*

Supervisor Solis is one of few local leaders who has worked on human rights both internationally and locally. She brought her Helsinki Commission experience, where she

helped oversee democracy and human rights commitments across the OSCE region, to Los Angeles.

Her immigrant protection motions offer a replicable model for counties across the country. They combine litigation, direct economic relief, and trusted messengers. Her work has also expanded the idea of which rights local governments must protect, from clean air to fair wages to dignified detention conditions.

In December 2025, with Supervisor Solis as Chair, the Board of Supervisors directed a five-signature letter to the UN Human Rights Council and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The letter affirmed the County's commitment to a human rights framework and called on the Council to hold the United States accountable through the Universal Periodic Review.

SECTION 5: SUPPORTING MATERIALS (OPTIONAL)

Attach or link up to three supporting materials, such as letters of support, reports, evaluations, or media coverage:

1. JFK Library, 2000 Profile in Courage Award: <https://www.jfklibrary.org/events-and-awards/profile-in-courage-award/award-recipients/hilda-solis-2000>
2. Men's Central Jail closure motion coverage: <https://witnessla.com/la-county-supes-order-plan-for-closing-mens-central-jail-in-a-year/>
3. Motion, "Protecting the Constitutional Rights of Los Angeles County Residents" (July 1, 2025): <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/204719.pdf>

SECTION 6: NOMINATOR INFORMATION

Name of Nominator:

Human Rights Monitoring & Advocacy Team

Title and Organization / Department:

LA County Human Relations Commission

Phone Number:

213-304-5480

Email Address:

PArreola@hrc.lacounty.gov

Relationship to Nominee:

N/A

Has the nominee been informed of this nomination?

☐ Yes

☒ No

SELECTION PROCESS

- **Recommendation:** Commission staff solicit and compile nominations, including outreach to County departments and agencies.
- **Review:** The Human Rights Committee reviews nominations and may consult a panel of human rights experts as needed.
- **Commission Vote:** The Human Rights Committee recommends one or more nominees to the full Commission, which votes to select the award recipient(s).
- **Award Presentation:** The Commission on Human Relations, in collaboration with the Board of Supervisors, presents the award at the Board meeting on or near December 10, International Human Rights Day.

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SECTION 1: NOMINEE INFORMATION

Name of Nominee (individual, group, agency, program, or initiative):

Ronald Kaoru "Ron" Wakabayashi

Lead Organization, Department, or Agency (if applicable):

Divided Community Project, The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law (Advisory Council; Mediator, Bridge Initiative). Retired Western Regional Director, U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service.

Primary Contact (if the nominee is a group, agency, or program): Self

Address: TBD

Phone Number: 310-427-1541

Email Address: ronwaka@aol.com

Website / Social Media: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/ron-wakabayashi-7723385>

Nominee Type:

☒ Individual ☐ Group of Individuals ☐ Agency ☐ Program or Initiative

Sector:

☒ LA County Government ☒ Other Government (city, state, federal, tribal)

- ☒ Non-Governmental (nonprofit, community-based, academic, faith-based, or private)
☐ Government–Community Partnership

SECTION 2: PRIORITY CONSIDERATION

Is this an LA County government–led effort? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, name the lead County department(s), agency, commission, or office: N/A

This nomination recognizes a lifetime of service, not a single County-led effort. It does include Mr. Wakabayashi's leadership of the LA County Commission on Human Relations itself.

Name any community stakeholders, organizations, or coalitions that partner or collaborate on this effort:

Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) and its chapters; the Japanese American redress movement, including the National Coalition for Redress/Reparations; Asian American Drug Abuse Program; Manzanar Committee; United Way of Greater Los Angeles; Sikh, Muslim, Arab, South Asian, and other faith communities; law enforcement agencies and community coalitions across the Western Region; the Divided Community Project and its campus and community partners; California Civil Rights Department.

SECTION 3: HUMAN RIGHTS STANDARDS ADVANCED

Mark all international human rights instruments, principles, or norms this work advances. The United States does not need to have ratified an instrument for it to be listed.

- ☒ Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)
☒ Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
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☒ International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)
☒ Convention against Torture (CAT)
☒ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)
☒ UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)
☒ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
☒ UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights
☒ Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families
☐ Other: _____

SECTION 4: NOMINATION NARRATIVE

Suggested limit: 300 words per question. Please include specific examples.

A. Human Rights Achievement: *Describe the nominee's work and how it advances the fulfillment of the human rights standards marked above. Include specific roles, actions, and accomplishments, the rights addressed, and the communities served.*

For more than five decades, Ron Wakabayashi has worked to secure equal dignity, freedom from discrimination, and effective remedies for communities harmed by racism and by government action.

Ron was born November 13, 1944, in Reno, Nevada, where his parents had resettled after leaving the concentration camps in Topaz, Utah, and Rohwer, Arkansas. He was one of the pioneers who participated in the first organized Manzanar Pilgrimage in 1969. He served as National Youth Director for the JACL in the late 1960s and was a founder and director of the Asian American Drug Abuse Program (AADAP).

As JACL National Director, Ron helped lead the redress campaign that produced the Civil Liberties Act of 1988. The Act was a formal federal apology and reparations for the mass incarceration of Japanese Americans without charge or trial. That campaign vindicated core human rights norms: freedom from arbitrary detention (UDHR Art. 9; ICCPR Art. 9), equal protection regardless of race or national origin (ICCPR Art. 26; ICERD Art. 5), and the right to an effective remedy and reparation (ICCPR Art. 2(3); ICERD Art. 6). Ron's JACL also documented and responded to rising anti-Asian violence in the 1980s. After the Vincent Chin killing, he and the JACL national president were invited by Japan's Foreign Ministry to meet media and officials about trade friction and its backlash on Japanese Americans.

Ron directed the LA City Human Relations Commission from 1990 to 1995 and the LA County Commission on Human Relations from 1995 to 1999. That period spanned the 1992 civil unrest and its aftermath. His work addressed hate violence and intergroup conflict.

As Western Regional Director of the U.S. DOJ Community Relations Service from 1999–2020, Ron led CRS work in a region serving Arizona, California, Hawaii and Nevada and U.S. Pacific jurisdictions. He helped communities, agencies, and law enforcement resolve racial conflict and civil unrest through mediation. This work protected peaceful assembly and non-discrimination.

Ron continues this work with the Divided Community Project. There he addresses campus and community tensions related to the Hamas-Israel conflict, Black reparations, election protection, and other community conflict issues.

B. Implementation and Community Engagement: *Describe how the work was carried out and how community stakeholders, especially the communities most directly affected, took part in its design, decision-making, implementation, and accountability. Include links to relevant websites and/or media stories.*

Ron's method has always been to connect grassroots communities to the institutions that shape their lives. He paired national legislative strategy with community organizing.

Panelists recalled that JACL staff did extensive research and preparation ahead of a key White House meeting on redress.

Ron built staff capacity in the LA City and LA County human relations commission by bringing community advocates into government. Current LACCHR Executive Director Robin Toma, then an ACLU attorney, recalls that Ron persuaded him that he could pursue human rights and organize diverse communities to work together from the government side.

After the 2001 murder of Balbir Singh Sodhi in Mesa, Arizona, within Ron's region, CRS met with Sikh community members, including Mr. Sodhi's brother, members of other faiths, and local law enforcement to establish a Sikh advisory board for law enforcement.

Ron's current work follows the same model. DCP brings together community leaders, activists, law enforcement, and academics to develop practice guidance, and offers mediation, facilitation, and conciliation to communities at no cost through its Bridge Initiative.

C. Impact and Outcomes: *Describe the impact of the work, such as changes in policy, practice, access to services, or conditions for affected communities. Include data, evaluations, or links to relevant websites and/or media stories where available.*

The Civil Liberties Act of 1988 signed on August 10, 1988, delivered a formal presidential apology and \$20,000 in compensation to each surviving incarcerated. More than 80,000 people received redress. It remains one of the most significant examples of a government acknowledging and repairing a mass violation of civil and human rights. Its lessons now inform reparations discussions nationally.

Over two decades as Western Regional Director of the CRS, Ron oversaw conflict resolution in some of the nation's most diverse jurisdictions. He described the agency's role this way: "We would find and stop brush fires, before they became forest fires". During his tenure, CRS's mandate grew. The hate crimes framework expanded to gender, sex, religion, and other protected classes. After 9/11, CRS worked to reduce backlash directed at Sikh Americans and Muslims. It produced training films for law enforcement and airport personnel.

Ron's post-retirement work extends his reach nationally. DCP guides have been co-published with DOJ's Community Relations Service and COPS Office, including guidance on law enforcement–community dialogue and responding to use of deadly force. The project's team has trained leaders from more than a dozen campuses, dozens of communities, and five state attorney general offices.

D. Bringing Human Rights Home: *Describe how this work strengthens LA County's national and global leadership in applying international human rights locally, including its potential to be replicated or adapted by other jurisdictions and organizations.*

Ron's career traces the path this award exists to honor: the evolution of human relations work into an explicit commitment to human rights. Ron's approach can be adopted by human relations and human rights agencies nationwide. It combines confidential mediation, advance planning before polarizing events, and structured dialogue between law enforcement and communities.

The Japanese American redress campaign shows how affected communities can secure acknowledgment, reparation, and guarantees of non-repetition, the elements set out in the UN Basic Principles on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation. Ron carries those lessons into current reparations work.

Ron is part of this Commission's institutional history. He led both the City and County human relations commissions during the years the United States ratified the ICCPR (1992) and ICERD (1994). He also brought in the next generation of leadership. Robin Toma, whom Ron recruited, went on to lead LACCHR and to affirm that protecting everyone's human rights should be a top priority for government.

Accepting his 2024 Historymaker award, Ron warned that racism increases during national election years, a caution backed by FBI and DOJ data. Meanwhile, the federal CRS itself has faced closure under consideration by Justice Department appointees. As LA County enters the 2026 general election and prepares for LA28, local agencies must carry more of this peacemaking capacity. Ron's experience is an essential guide.

SECTION 5: SUPPORTING MATERIALS (OPTIONAL)

Attach or link up to three supporting materials, such as letters of support, reports, evaluations, or media coverage:

1. Manzanar Committee, 2024 Legacy Award:
<https://manzanarcommittee.org/2024/04/19/wakabayashi-pr/>
2. Rafu Shimpo, Ron Wakabayashi named 2024 Sue Kunitomi Embrey Legacy Award recipient: <https://rafu.com/2024/04/ron-wakabayashi-to-receive-sue-kunitomi-embrey-legacy-award-at-55th-annual-manzanar-pilgrimage/>
3. Rafu Shimpo, "JACL and the Campaign for Redress" (panel featuring Ron Wakabayashi):
<https://rafu.com/2019/07/jacl-and-the-campaign-for-redress/>

SECTION 6: NOMINATOR INFORMATION

Name of Nominator:

Human Rights Monitoring & Advocacy Team

Title and Organization / Department:

LA County Human Relations Commission

Phone Number:

213-304-5480

Email Address:

PArreola@hrc.lacounty.gov

Relationship to Nominee:

N/A

Has the nominee been informed of this nomination? ☐ Yes ☒ No

SELECTION PROCESS

- **Recommendation:** Commission staff solicit and compile nominations, including outreach to County departments and agencies.
- **Review:** The Human Rights Committee reviews nominations and may consult a panel of human rights experts as needed.
- **Commission Vote:** The Human Rights Committee recommends one or more nominees to the full Commission, which votes to select the award recipient(s).
- **Award Presentation:** The Commission on Human Relations, in collaboration with the Board of Supervisors, presents the award at the Board meeting on or near December 10, International Human Rights Day.

Please Return To:

Pierre Ivan Arreola, HSA I

Manager, Human Rights Monitoring & Advocacy Team

PArreola@hrc.lacounty.gov

213-304-5480

**County of Los Angeles
Commission on Human Relations**



Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors

- Hilda L. Solis – First District ·
- Holly J. Mitchell – Second District ·
- Lindsey P. Horvath – Third District ·
- Janice Hahn – Fourth District ·
- Kathryn Barger – Fifth District ·



**HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD
NOMINATION FORM**

The Human Rights Award honors an individual, group of individuals, agency, or program for outstanding achievement in advancing international human rights treaties, principles, standards, and norms. Honorees' actions are crucial to LA County's continued national and global leadership in bringing international human rights home. Governmental and non-governmental nominees are eligible. Priority consideration is given to LA County government-led efforts that actively engage and collaborate with community stakeholders.

SECTION 1: NOMINEE INFORMATION

Name of Nominee (individual, group, agency, program, or initiative):

Capri Maddox, Esq.

Lead Organization, Department, or Agency (if applicable):

City of Los Angeles Civil + Human Rights and Equity Department (LA Civil Rights), General Manager and Executive Director

Primary Contact (if the nominee is a group, agency, or program): Self

Address: Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, 500 W. Temple Street, Room 856, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Phone Number: 213-978-1845

Email Address: capri.maddox@lacity.org

Website / Social Media: <https://civilandhumanrights.lacity.gov/>

Nominee Type:

☒ Individual ☐ Group of Individuals ☐ Agency ☐ Program or Initiative

Sector:

☐ LA County Government ☒ Other Government (city, state, federal, tribal)

- ☐ Non-Governmental (nonprofit, community-based, academic, faith-based, or private)
☐ Government–Community Partnership

SECTION 2: PRIORITY CONSIDERATION

Is this an LA County government–led effort? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, name the lead County department(s), agency, commission, or office: N/A
This is a City of Los Angeles department.

Name any community stakeholders, organizations, or coalitions that partner or collaborate on this effort:

Los Angeles Black Worker Center; IDEPSCA; UCLA Labor Center (#LocalEnforcementNow coalition); Participatory Budgeting Project; Pepperdine Caruso School of Law and Straus Institute for Dispute Resolution; L.A. REPAIR Zone steering and advisory committees; the City's Commission on Civil Rights, Commission on the Status of Women, Reparations Advisory Commission, Human Relations Commission, and Transgender Advisory Council.

SECTION 3: HUMAN RIGHTS STANDARDS ADVANCED

Mark all international human rights instruments, principles, or norms this work advances. The United States does not need to have ratified an instrument for it to be listed.

- ☒ Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)
☐ Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
☒ International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)
☐ Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
☒ International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)
☐ Convention against Torture (CAT)
☒ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)
☐ UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)
☒ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
☐ UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights
☐ Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families
☐ Other: _____

SECTION 4: NOMINATION NARRATIVE

Suggested limit: 300 words per question. Please include specific examples.

A. Human Rights Achievement: *Describe the nominee's work and how it advances the fulfillment of the human rights standards marked above. Include specific roles, actions, and accomplishments, the rights addressed, and the communities served.*

Capri Maddox built Los Angeles' first municipal civil and human rights department from the ground up. She turned a local anti-discrimination law into a working enforcement, equity, and repair agency.

Mayor Garcetti appointed her as the Department's first Executive Director in February 2020, charged with addressing systemic racism and bias in commerce, education, employment, and housing. The department was formally established by the City Council in December 2020.

Under her leadership, LA Civil Rights enforces the City's 2019 Civil and Human Rights Law, which prohibits private-sector discrimination in those four areas. This gives residents a local remedy.

She launched the City's first Discrimination Enforcement Unit, first participatory budgeting program, and first Office of Racial Equity. Through L.A. REPAIR (Reforms for Equity and Public Acknowledgment of Institutional Racism), she led the City's first and California's largest participatory budgeting program. It gives nine historically marginalized areas control over \$8.5 million. She also staffs the City's Reparations Advisory Commission, established in 2021 to design a reparations pilot program to confront structural and institutional racism.

She launched LA for All in 2021, the largest anti-hate PSA campaign in City government, running in 18 languages across more than 4,200 ad spaces.

She previously served as a Deputy City Attorney, as President of the Board of Public Works, and on loan to LAUSD, where she helped secure more than \$43 million in resources for students in need.

B. Implementation and Community Engagement: *Describe how the work was carried out and how community stakeholders, especially the communities most directly affected, took part in its design, decision-making, implementation, and accountability. Include links to relevant websites and/or media stories.*

LA Civil Rights was born from community organizing, and Ms. Maddox has kept affected communities at the center. The #LocalEnforcementNow campaign, led by the Los Angeles Black Worker Center and the Institute of Popular Education of Southern California, spent years mobilizing Angelenos to demand local enforcement against private-sector discrimination. The campaign's result was the 2019 Civil and Human Rights Law, which the department now enforces.

The L.A. REPAIR program is designed to be community-driven at every step: from the committees that shape the process, to the ideas proposed, to the final vote on spending. Residents of REPAIR Zones serve on a Steering Committee that makes key decisions

about the process and design. Advisory Committees serve each Zone. More than 2,400 eligible ballots were cast in the first cohort's vote.

The Civil Rights Department's reparations work also gathers community input directly, including a survey on the Black experience in Los Angeles.

C. Impact and Outcomes: *Describe the impact of the work, such as changes in policy, practice, access to services, or conditions for affected communities. Include data, evaluations, or links to relevant websites and/or media stories where available.*

Under Ms. Maddox, the City levied its first-ever penalties on a private business for violating local anti-discrimination law. Smart & Final was fined \$10,000 and its security vendor \$5,000 over a bag-check policy applied unequally to a Black shopper. Since July 2024, the department has issued Notices of Violation totaling nearly \$230,000 in penalties. It has received and reviewed more than 2,000 discrimination complaints. In 2024 alone, investigations produced voluntary corrective measures in 34 cases, referred 17 cases to no-cost mediation, and issued three Notices of Violation.

In August 2024, the City Council approved the final results of L.A. REPAIR's second cohort, completing the \$8.5 million pilot. Community-chosen projects continue to reach residents, including 2026 funding for El Nido in the Arleta/Pacoima REPAIR Zone.

The award-winning LA for All campaign marked its fifth anniversary in September 2026. Its "Just Say Hello" phase was recognized by the American Advertising Federation of Los Angeles in March 2026.

D. Bringing Human Rights Home: *Describe how this work strengthens LA County's national and global leadership in applying international human rights locally, including its potential to be replicated or adapted by other jurisdictions and organizations.*

Ms. Maddox's department puts two core human rights principles into practice locally. Local enforcement means Angelenos no longer have to wait, sometimes for years, for discrimination cases to be resolved at the state or federal level. This is the right to an effective remedy (ICERD Art. 6), delivered at the local level.

L.A. REPAIR and the Reparations Advisory Commission reflect the Durban framework: governments should acknowledge historic injustice and invest in communities harmed by it.

Local anti-discrimination enforcement, participatory budgeting, and multilingual anti-hate campaigns can all be adopted by cities nationally. The department also serves as a home for commissions and community organizations working to advance civil and human rights in Los Angeles. That structure strengthens the City-County partnership that makes the region a national human rights leader.

SECTION 5: SUPPORTING MATERIALS (OPTIONAL)

Attach or link up to three supporting materials, such as letters of support, reports, evaluations, or media coverage:

1. LA Civil Rights, "Cracks Down on Discrimination in Private Sector" (Sept. 2025):
<https://civilandhumanrights.lacity.gov/press-releases/city-la-civil-rights-department-cracks-down-discrimination-private-sector>
2. About LA Civil Rights: <https://civilandhumanrights.lacity.gov/about/mission>
3. 2024 Annual Report:
[https://civilandhumanrights.lacity.gov/sites/g/files/wph2271/files/2025-01/2024-LA-Civil-Rights-Annual%20Report%20Final%20\(1\)-compressed.pdf](https://civilandhumanrights.lacity.gov/sites/g/files/wph2271/files/2025-01/2024-LA-Civil-Rights-Annual%20Report%20Final%20(1)-compressed.pdf)

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Manager, Human Rights Monitoring & Advocacy Team
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213-304-5480

LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS (LETTERHEAD)

November XX, 2026

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Affirming Los Angeles County's Commitment to Human Rights and Recommending Enlistment in the Global Campaign for Human Rights Cities and Territories

Dear Supervisors,

On behalf of the Commissioners of the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations, we write to commend the Board for affirming the County's commitment to human rights. We also recommend that Los Angeles County formally enlist in the [Global Campaign for Human Rights Cities and Territories](#).

On December 9, 2025, the eve of International Human Rights Day, the Board adopted Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell's motion [Affirming Los Angeles County's Commitment to Human Rights](#). That year, the federal government had withdrawn from the UN Human Rights Council and suspended U.S. participation in the Universal Periodic Review. In response, the Board recognized that the County already applies a human rights framework through initiatives such as ARDI and Care First Community Investment. It also directed continued County participation in international human rights reporting. With federal participation suspended, local leadership on human rights matters more than ever.

The Global Campaign is a natural next step. It was launched by the [United Cities and Local Governments \(UCLG\)](#) Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights, following UCLG's 2021 cooperation agreement with the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The Campaign aims to unite 1,000 local and regional governments by 2030. It connects human rights jurisdictions across regions, raises the profile of local governments in UN human rights mechanisms, and encourages the adoption of local human rights frameworks. It is open to jurisdictions of every size, and joining requires submitting a form to the UCLG secretariat.

Los Angeles County is already well on its way to becoming a Human Rights County:

- **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).** In 2021, the Board [adopted CEDAW's principles](#) and then [codified them in the County Code](#). The County became the largest local government in the nation to do so, even though the United States has never ratified the treaty. The [Gender Impact Assessment Program](#) is the County's tool for putting these principles into practice. Formalized by the Board in 2022, it requires every County department to set and track five-year gender equity goals. In 2026, the program received the [Cities for CEDAW Global Leadership Award](#) and the work was further advanced by a motion authorizing the [establishment of a County Office of Gender Equity](#).
- **LA vs. Hate and the Rapid Response Network.** Led by the Commission with community partners in all five Supervisorial Districts, [LA vs. Hate](#) lets residents report hate confidentially through 211 and connects them to support and healing. Through this work, the County advances the

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. The Convention requires effective protection against racial discrimination and education to combat prejudice.

- **Election Resource Liaison Program.** In collaboration with the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk, the Commission [deploys trained liaisons across the County during elections](#). Their job is to deter intimidation, respond to disruptions, and protect access to the ballot. The program has grown from 25 liaisons in November 2025 to 50 in June 2026, with approximately 70 for the November 2026 General Election. It upholds Article 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: the right of every citizen to vote and take part in public affairs without interference, intimidation, and disruption.

Enlistment would build on the County's existing work by bridging ongoing efforts under one countywide human rights commitment that can be measured and reported. That would make these efforts more durable across leadership changes and budget cycles. It would give the County access to proven practices from peer jurisdictions and ready-made tools. Through the Campaign's partnership with the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, it would provide an established channel for international human rights reporting. Residents would benefit in concrete ways:

- County services designed with attention to who is reached and who is left out.
- Clearer ways to raise concerns and seek remedies.
- A greater voice in shaping County priorities and international discourse.
- A record of their experiences of rights violations and advancements, carried into international reporting.

We respectfully recommend that, at its meeting nearest International Human Rights Day (December 10), the Board:

- Reaffirm the County's commitment to the human rights and dignity of all residents.
- Authorize Los Angeles County's enlistment in the Global Campaign "[10, 100, 1000 Human Rights Cities and Territories by 2030](#)."
- Direct the Commission on Human Relations, in coordination with CEO Legislative Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations and County Counsel, to coordinate the County's participation and report back in writing within 90 days.

December 10 is the anniversary of the UN General Assembly's adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. It was the first global affirmation that every person holds equal and inalienable rights. Acting on or near this date in 2026 would mark the Declaration's 78th anniversary and the first anniversary of the Board's motion. It would also join Los Angeles County with jurisdictions worldwide reaffirming their human rights commitments on the same day.

The Commission's work is to advance human rights in Los Angeles County by cultivating positive human relations. That means building understanding across communities, preventing and responding to hate, and ensuring every resident can live with dignity and take part fully in civic life. The Commission remains committed to moving this work forward. We stand ready to support the County's enlistment.

Respectfully,

Commissioner Ilan Davidson
President, on behalf of the Commissioners

Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations

cc:

Chief Executive Office – Legislative Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations

County Counsel

Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors