



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Advocacy groups will convene to educate community on Trump Administration's proposed budget cuts

Several LA-based nonprofits and advocacy groups are coming together next week to help educate local constituents on potential impacts from the White House's proposed budget cuts to education, immigration and health care policies.

LOS ANGELES, CA (March 27, 2017) – Four California advocacy and nonprofit organizations are coming together on April 7 to educate Los Angeles residents about the impact Trump's proposed budget cuts could have on them and their communities. Special Needs Network, Brotherhood Crusade, Community Coalition, and St. John's Well Child and Family Center will be at the California African American Museum in Exposition Park at 9 a.m. to present to the public and answer questions. The forum is part of Special Needs Network's 11th Annual Legislative Breakfast and Advocate Summit. The event is free and open to the public.

With almost daily pronouncements of new policies from the White House, these community-based organizations feel the importance to come together to create a unique town hall-like event – mirroring similar town halls happening all over the country. Several state and local officials are scheduled to appear. They include Congresswoman Karen Bass, LA County Supervisor and Chairman Mark Ridley-Thomas, State Senator Holly Mitchell, and Assembly members Sebastian Ridley-Thomas and Jimmy Gomez.

Mitchell, Ridley-Thomas and members of the California Legislature will vote on several bills this session including a proposal to make California a "sanctuary state," – a law proposed by Senate Pro Tem Kevin DeLeon that would bar state and local policing agencies from using resources for immigration enforcement.

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“It is critically important that our constituents have a thorough understanding of what will potentially come out of D.C.,” says Areva Martin, president and founder of Special Needs Network, whose organization began sponsoring the legislative breakfast over a decade ago in order to give residents of South Los Angeles and surrounding communities an opportunity to interact with elected officials.

“These are alarming times and every day we learn of new circumstances that impact not only families with special needs children and adults, but all residents of California,” says Martin.

Community Coalition, a grassroots nonprofit that focuses on crime prevention strategies in South LA neighborhoods, will join Martin and others next week.

“This event is an excellent opportunity for our community to come together and to participate in a critical conversation about essential services that make our communities stronger,” says Alberto Retana, president of Community Coalition. “We have been on the frontline making sure that South LA residents get a chance to have their voices heard at all levels of government.”

With the recent passage of Measure H, a sales tax-based incentive to combat homelessness in LA, LA County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas will address the audience on how this and other local measures will ameliorate the County’s growing homelessness crisis and how the proposal to spend H dollars may be impacted by Trump’s proposed cuts to the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s budget.

Charisse Bremond Weaver, president of LA’s Brotherhood Crusade says, “This year’s convening is more important than ever given the range of issues facing the thousands of young people we serve.”

Brotherhood Crusade is a community-based nonprofit focused on improving the quality of life for low-income, underserved, under-represented and disenfranchised individuals.

“We are eager to provide them with an opportunity to learn about the proposed changes,” says Weaver. “These cuts will impact education and health care policies, making it imperative that we afford our community an opportunity to engage in this important civic activity.”

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Following the town hall-type presentations, Eric Bauman and Kimberly Ellis – who are facing off in an election on May 20 for chair of the California Democratic Party – will participate in a forum on issues of social justice and equity. The GOP Party chair declined an invitation to participate.

“Given the current makeup of the state legislature, whoever is elected to lead the Democratic party will be involved in advancing health care and immigration policies that will impact the thousands of patients that we see annually at St. John’s,” says Jim Mangia, CEO of St. John’s Well Child and Family Center. “Those patients deserve an opportunity to learn the policy positions of each candidate and how they may impact them.”

A free breakfast will be served beginning at 7:30 a.m. and the afternoon Advocates’ Summit will begin at 12:30 p.m. Health care, immigration and education experts will lead smaller group discussions and provide nonprofit leaders, social service professionals and parent advocates with grassroots organizing strategies. Last year’s breakfast and Advocates’ Summit drew more than 600 participants.

The day ends with a networking wine reception. Registration is free and open to the public and is on a first-come, first-serve basis. Early registration is encouraged as the event expects to reach capacity. Community partners and sponsors include American Water and St. Joseph’s Center.

For more information and registration visit www.specialneedsnetwork.org

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ABOUT SPECIAL NEEDS NETWORK

Special Needs Network is based in Los Angeles and is California's leading grassroots autism advocacy organization. SNN was established to help individuals and families faced with autism and other developmental disabilities. The organization focuses on raising public awareness, impacting public policy, increasing education and access to resources for families, children and adults. Since its inception, SNN has served more than 35,000 individuals and families impacted by autism. To learn more, visit <http://www.specialneedsnetwork.org>.

ABOUT BROTHERHOOD CRUSADE

Brotherhood Crusade is a 48-year old grassroots organization with a vision of improving quality of life and meeting the unmet needs of low-income, underserved, under-represented and disenfranchised individuals. Brotherhood Crusade believes South Los Angeles can be a safe, thriving, culturally relevant and inclusive community that provides all residents equitable access to human & social services and continually improves their quality of life. To learn more, visit <http://www.brotherhoodcrusade.org>.

ABOUT COMMUNITY COALITION

U.S Congresswoman Karen Bass founded Community Coalition in 1990 in response to the crack cocaine epidemic. For more than 24 years, "CoCo," as is it affectionately has worked with tens of thousands of African American and Latino residents to build a prosperous and healthy South Los Angeles. The organization believes that people are the engines for social change. Through smart and effective community organizing, CoCo builds strong community leaders who wage bold action campaigns to create safe neighborhoods, transform our schools, end the school-to-prison pipeline, and strengthen our families and the social safety net. To learn more, visit <http://www.communitycoalition.org>.

ABOUT ST. JOHN'S WELL CHILD AND FAMILY CENTER

St. John's Well Child and Family Center is nonprofit community health center serving patients of all ages through a network of 14 health centers and school-based clinics in Central and South Los Angeles and Compton. St. John's was founded in 1964 as a small, volunteer pediatric clinic and has since expanded to become one of the most significant and comprehensive safety net providers in Los Angeles County. St. John's mission is to eliminate health disparities and foster community well being by providing and promoting the highest quality care in South Los Angeles. Learn more at <http://www.wellchild.org>.