

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HILDA L. SOLIS

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Targeting Older Adults and Caregivers in East Los Angeles

The population of Los Angeles County (County) is aging rapidly. In 2000, older adults, (individuals age 60 and over), comprised about 9.7 percent of the County’s population; by 2030, this population is expected to nearly double to 18.2 percent. One of the County’s key strategies to prepare for this major demographic shift is Purposeful Aging Los Angeles (PALA), a multi-year, regional effort to build age-friendly communities throughout the County. On August 7, 2018, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board) approved the 2018-2021 Age-Friendly Action Plan for the Los Angeles Region (Action Plan) developed through PALA. Los Angeles County and our partners are working to implement the Action Plan to enhance age-friendliness across eight livability domains, including transportation, housing, civic participation, employment, community support, and health services, emergency preparedness and resilience, outdoor spaces buildings, social participation.

In addition, on February 5, 2019, the Board directed the Chief Executive Office

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(CEO) to examine the feasibility of creating a standalone County department dedicated to serve the rapidly growing older adult population. This study is underway and will be released to the Board next year.

As the County moves forward with these long-term efforts to align services and enhance the region's age-friendliness, there is a need for more focused, immediate steps to target underserved areas of the County with outreach and services for older adults and their caregivers.

Many of the more than 12,600 older adults who reside in East Los Angeles (Census 2017 5-year estimate) need some support to live independently. A third of those aged 65 and older in East Los Angeles live alone, and more than a third have a physical or cognitive disability. Many seniors in East Los Angeles also face tremendous economic challenges – more than 5,000 are living below 150% of the federal poverty level. For many throughout the County, and especially in East Los Angeles, high rents absorb a large portion of monthly income, leaving less money for food, medicine, and other necessities. Language and cultural barriers may also further complicate efforts to learn about and access services. Almost 90 percent of the older adult population in East Los Angeles speak a language other than English at home, and 71 percent speak English less than “very well.” Immigration status is also a barrier to services, amid widespread concern within LA County's immigrant communities that accessing public services could result in being deemed a “public charge” and/or could result in possible deportation.

More than 96% of the population in East Los Angeles is Latino. According to a 2016 report by the National Hispanic Council on Aging, Latinos have disproportionately high rates of Alzheimer's disease, dementia, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and many

other chronic conditions. Latino older adults, their families, and caregivers also tend to fall through the cracks of mainstream outreach, education, and service providers because of linguistic and cultural differences. They may be cared for by informal family caregivers, who often juggle their jobs and families in order to meet the needs of their older relatives.

The County provides a wide-range of community-based services targeting older adults and their caregivers. The Los Angeles County Department of Workforce Development, Aging, and Community Services (WDACS) offers congregate and home-delivered meals, nutrition education, family and caregiver support, transportation services, legal assistance, insurance counseling, and many other services intended to help older adults maintain their independence and age in place gracefully in their homes and communities. WDACS also operates Community and Senior Centers, the Adult Protective Services, and leads the L.A. FOUND Initiative, which includes a system of trackable bracelets for individuals with Alzheimer's, dementia, autism, and other cognitive impairments to safely return them if they wander from their homes or caregivers.

Demonstrating the multifaceted needs of LA County seniors, other County Departments are also involved in providing services to older adults and caregivers. For example, the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) provides In-Home Supportive Services; the Los Angeles County Development Authority (LACDA) builds and operates senior housing; the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA) sponsors Smarter Senior Forums; the Department of Mental Health (DMH) provides the Older Adult Systems of Care, including Public Guardian; and the Department of Public Health (DPH) provides Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention Services.

As the County moves forward with regional systems-change through PALA and

examines the possible creation of a County Department focused solely on serving older adults, there is an opportunity to integrate outreach to and services for older adults in a targeted way that maximizes the County's impact on specific communities. Such approaches should be integrated with and inform PALA and the possible creation of new administrative structures to align aging services. Because of the multifaceted needs of East Los Angeles seniors, East Los Angeles provides a unique opportunity for LA County to learn, shape linguistically and culturally appropriate outreach, and provide services to the vulnerable senior population.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Direct Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services and the CEO, in collaboration with the Department of Public Social Services, the Los Angeles County Development Authority, the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs, the Office of Immigrant Affairs, the Department of Public Health, the Department of Mental Health, and the County Homeless Initiative to report back in 90 days with an outreach and service delivery plan to increase awareness and enrollment in County programs and services among older adults and caregivers in East Los Angeles, that:
 - a. Incorporates the wide-range of County programs and services targeting older adults and caregivers, including, but not limited to: Area Agency on Aging programs, Adult Protective Services, LA FOUND, the New Freedom Transportation Program, In-Home Supportive Services, CalFresh, the Older Adult Systems of Care, Senior Housing programs, and Chronic Disease and

Injury Prevention services;

- b. Includes culturally-competent, linguistically-appropriate, and age-appropriate outreach strategies;
 - c. Considers the wide range of barriers that may prevent accessing services, including lack of access to transportation and concerns related to immigration status;
 - d. Identifies strategies to engage relevant community partners;
 - e. Outlines targets for increasing enrollment in County programs and services for older adults and caregivers, to the extent that funding and capacity will allow;
 - f. Prioritizes and targets the closing of health-related disparities among Hispanic older adults, their families, and caregivers, including access to mental health care and substance abuse treatment;
 - g. Incorporates ongoing and regular workshops and outreach on issues such as financial literacy, elder abuse, estate planning, and other topics of interest to the community;
 - h. Identifies all County facilities in or within five miles of East Los Angeles and outlines their roles in expanding outreach and services to older adults and caregivers in East Los Angeles; and
 - i. Links this targeted effort to PALA and the possible creation of new administrative structures to align aging services.
2. Authorize the CEO, in coordination with WDACS, to enter into agreements with one or more consultants as needed to assist with development and/or

implementation of the targeted outreach and service plan for East Los Angeles.

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