

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS HILDA L. SOLIS AND  
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**Ensuring Collection of Full Racial and Ethnic Data of COVID-19 Patients  
throughout Los Angeles County**

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (DPH) has taken extraordinary and necessary steps to slow the spread of the novel (new) coronavirus (COVID-19) in order to save lives. Without a vaccine or treatment, the most effective tools we have are social distancing measures and efforts to isolate cases and quarantining of close personal contacts. These efforts protect our hospital system from being overwhelmed, our health care workforce, and the public. However, COVID-19 continues to spread across the country and in the County while these measures are taking effect and helping to “flatten the curve” of new cases.

While cases are occurring in all age groups and harming even those without underlying conditions, older adults and those with underlying health problems are experiencing higher burdens of severe cases and fatalities. Recent preliminary data also indicates that African Americans have a higher rate of death from COVID-19 than other races and ethnicities.

MOTION

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Low-income communities of color have struggled with inequitable access to health care services and unfair burden of disease and premature death related to social and environmental conditions for decades. Many live below the poverty line and have few resources to draw upon during an emergency. Economic factors, such as unemployment, food insecurity, and substandard housing are exacerbated during a public health emergency such as the COVID-19 epidemic. Moreover, public health experts continue to emphasize that individuals who have underlying health conditions or compromised immune systems are at higher risk of negative health outcomes and death from the virus. Communities of color hear this warning loud and clear. According to the federal Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health, diabetes takes a disproportionate toll on Latinos, African Americans, and American Indians/Alaska Natives. African-Americans are 60% more likely to be diagnosed with diabetes and twice as likely as non-white Latinos to die from it. Comorbidities, such as, diabetes, heart disease, asthma, and hypertension place individuals in the highest-risk category.

On March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020, United States Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) and Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley (D-Mass.), along with Senators Kamala D. Harris (D-Calif.) and Cory Booker (D-N.J.) and Congresswoman Robin Kelly (D-Ill.), chair of the Congressional Black Caucus Health Braintrust, sent a letter urging the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to collect racial and ethnic demographic data on testing and treatment for COVID-19. This data is critical in order to identify and address racial disparities.

Very few states are releasing COVID-19 demographic data. Public health experts

and policymakers need this data to ensure resources are distributed equitably to high-need areas. Los Angeles County should continue identifying and addressing ongoing disparities and health inequities in order to better serve the communities who access our healthcare services.

**WE, THEREFORE MOVE,** that the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors instruct the Department of Public Health to report back to the Board in writing within 30 days on the following:

1. An analysis of available racial and ethnic demographic data on COVID-19 cases, including a breakdown by age groups and socioeconomic status.
2. An analysis on COVID-19 testing data to include information on those who have tested positive by race and ethnicity when available and socioeconomic status, and an analysis of fatalities by race and ethnicity.

**WE, FURTHER MOVE,** that the Department of Public Health work in collaboration with the Department of Health Services, to include the following in the report back to the Board in writing within 30 days:

1. Hospitalization data from County-operated hospitals, including average length of stay by racial group and age group, when available.

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