

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS HILDA L. SOLIS  
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March 9, 2021

**Support for the UCLA Rev. James Lawson Jr. Worker Justice Center**

The UCLA Labor Center was established in 1964 and for close to 60 years has existed as an important resource for research, teaching, and public service in support of workers and labor in California. The UCLA Downtown Labor Center has been located at 675 S. Park View St. in Los Angeles for 19 years, and the building was recently purchased by UCLA. However, extensive renovations are needed such as seismic upgrades, a new HVAC system, a new elevator, ADA compliance and other necessary upgrades.

The UCLA Labor Center has made historic contributions to working class communities, immigrants, and communities of color, who have faced the most severe consequences and mortality rates from the COVID pandemic. They pivoted to address the urgent needs of workers and their families in Los Angeles by providing invaluable research for LA County on issues affecting essential workers. The Labor Center has produced research reports on worker health councils, the impact of COVID-19 on the Black community, the crisis facing garment workers, the need for immediate economic relief for undocumented immigrants, and innovative research on the impact of COVID-19 on college

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students who are also workers. In partnership with UCLA LOSH (Labor Occupational Safety & Health), they are educating labor, business and workers on Cal/OSHA's new Emergency Temporary Standards, CA Workers Compensation rules and County Health Orders, while working to strengthen worker protections.

Through the years, the nation's first Black Worker Center, the nation's first Dream Resource Center, and many other innovative worker justice projects have been developed and launched at the Downtown Labor Center. They have also built the first Labor Studies major within the UC system, while connecting hundreds of UCLA students to careers with labor and non-profit allies. Rev. James Lawson, Jr. has taught Nonviolence and Social Movements in Labor Studies for now 19 years inspiring thousands of students along the way.

Rev. Lawson has dedicated his life to worker, racial, and economic justice. He was a close friend and colleague of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Congressman John Lewis, and countless other civil rights and labor leaders. In 2018 Rev. Lawson received the UCLA Medal, the university's highest honor, and in 2019 was inducted into the California Hall of Fame based on Governor Gavin Newsom's nomination.

The County and the country have and will continue to greatly benefit from the work of the UCLA Labor Center and efforts should be supported to keep this valuable partner in the heart of the Pico Union area. Moreover, the building should be named in honor of Rev. James Lawson, Jr. in recognition of his contributions to improving the lives of so many.

**WE, THEREFORE, MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors direct the Chief Executive Office's Legislative Affairs Intergovernmental Relations and our Sacramento advocates to support:

1. The request by California State Senator Maria Elena Durazo, and Assemblymembers Reggie Jones-Sawyer and Miguel Santiago for a \$15 million California State Legislature one-time allocation to support the renovation of a permanent home for the UCLA Labor Center; and
2. The building to be named the UCLA Reverend James Lawson Jr. Worker Justice Center.

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