

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS HILDA L. SOLIS

JULY 13, 2021

AND JANICE HAHN

Acknowledge and Apologize for the Historic Mistreatment of California Native Americans by Los Angeles County

In recent years, the County of Los Angeles (County) has been active in addressing false historic narratives about the land upon which the County sits. The County has been a leader through actions such as renaming Columbus Day as Indigenous Peoples Day; removing the Christopher Columbus statue in Grand Park; adopting the Countywide Cultural Policy, which includes a directive to develop a land acknowledgement policy; and creating the Anti-racism, Diversity, and Inclusion Initiative (ARDI) and the Cultural Equity and Inclusion Initiative (CEII). While these actions are laudable, we must go further. As the County prioritizes inclusivity and centers historically excluded voices, it also needs to now, more than ever, ground this work in truth. It is critical that truth-telling begins with the First Peoples of what is now known as the County of Los Angeles, and that the histories and the people who have been intentionally erased are acknowledged and receive official apologies.

MOTION

MITCHELL _____

KUEHL _____

HAHN _____

BARGER _____

SOLIS _____

Policies that discriminated against Native Americans and denied the existence of tribal government powers persisted well into the 20th century. Their shameful legacy remains even today, underlying erasure and invisibility, landlessness, and disproportionate health and economic burdens. Despite these historical injustices, the Gabrieleno Tongva, Fernandeño Tataviam, Ventureño Chumash, and other local tribes resisted, persisted, survived, and carried on cultural and linguistic traditions.

However, these local tribes and the County have never jointly formally examined or documented their relationship for the express purpose of acknowledging and accounting for historical injustices committed by the County. Furthermore, the County has never formally apologized for historical injustices that were tolerated, encouraged, subsidized, and committed by County actors against the California Native Americans.

These historical injustices have caused much trauma and have been compounded by other traumas, impacting generations of Gabrieleno Tongva, Fernandeño Tataviam, Ventureño Chumash, and other First Peoples. The erasure of the truth and an inaccurate historical record prevents a healing process from taking place.

There already exists a mechanism within the State of California for governments to address historical injustices through the California Truth & Healing Council (Executive Order N-15-19). The Truth & Healing Council's mandate is to witness, document, and investigate California Native American stories about the historical relationship between California and California Native Americans in order to provide policy recommendations and advisement to the State of California in addressing inequities in tribal communities. The Council, chaired by the Governor's tribal advisors, includes representatives of California's Native American tribes, relevant state and local agencies, and other relevant

non-governmental stakeholders. While the effort to document and raise awareness of historical inequities is crucial and fundamental, the commitment from the State and county governments must require the advancement of racial healing and transformation through critical investments in American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) education, workforce development, economic development, health care, housing, and other crucial community investments.

The County must join the State in exploring the historical relationship between the County and California Native Americans in the spirit of truth, healing, and transformation. We must ensure that histories that have been hidden for far too long are learned, known, and shared. Without this understanding, the County cannot properly account and apologize for the historical injustices committed by the County government and the subsequent traumas these actions have caused. Furthermore, without this acknowledgement and apology, we cannot begin the work to undo this harm. An acknowledgement and apology, followed by concrete acts of contrition and equity restoration, are vital first steps in addressing generational trauma and transforming the relationship between the County and local tribal communities.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Apologizes on behalf of the County of Los Angeles to local tribal governments and communities for the many instances of violence, maltreatment and neglect the County has inflicted on the Gabrieleno Tongva, Fernandefño Tataviam, Ventureño Chumash, and other local tribes.

WE FURTHER MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the Executive Director of Native American Indian Commission, the Executive Director of Racial Equity, and other relevant County departments to continue the work unanimously adopted by the Board in the LANAIC 45th Anniversary Board motion (June 22nd, 2021) authored by Supervisors Hahn and Solis and to:

1. Work in collaboration with local tribes to explore and examine the historical record and relationship between the County and California Native Americans, including the County's policies, procedures, and practices that may have harmed California Native Americans.
2. Develop a public statement that acknowledges, corrects, and disseminates the true historical record of the County and its respective departments including:
 - A. Testimony from local tribal governments and impacted communities;
 - B. With respectful collaboration and consultation with California Native tribes;
 - C. Coordination with the City of Los Angeles to ensure the work aligns and creates cohesion for the region; and
3. Provide a status update on this work in the report back requested from the LANAIC 45th Anniversary Board motion (June 22nd, 2021).

WE FURTHER MOVE that Board direct the Executive Director of Racial Equity, and relevant departments to develop recommendations to align the ARDI initiative in order to reduce health, economic, educational and environmental disparities amongst American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) communities, through the workgroup first identified in the LANAIC 45th Anniversary Board motion (June 22nd, 2021).