

**MOTION BY SUPERVISORS HOLLY J. MITCHELL
AND KATHRYN BARGER**

July 13, 2021

Recovering Better Than Before: Ensuring Equitable Implementation of the American Rescue Plan

The COVID-19 pandemic has devastated the lives of many Los Angeles County (County) residents. To date, roughly 1.2 million County residents contracted COVID-19 and over 24,000 have died. COVID-19 also devastated the County’s economy and the quality of life for millions of our residents. This impact was felt most profoundly in our County’s low-income communities and communities of color, which experienced the highest rates of infection and death. On-the-ground reporting during the height of the pandemic included stories of funeral homes in East Los Angeles that were unable to keep up with the high number of deaths and of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Hospital in South Los Angeles being pushed to capacity by the staggering number of low-income Angelenos of color, many of them immigrants, who had to be hospitalized.

The pandemic also caused disproportionate economic dislocation among low-income communities and communities of color. Job losses disproportionately affected minorities, women, immigrant communities, younger workers, and workers with lower educational attainment or income. According to an analysis of the U.S. Census Current Population Survey ¹, as of November 2020, Black and Latinx workers faced 1.6

¹ <https://www.racecounts.org/covid/covid-statewide/>

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to 2.0 times the unemployment rates of their white counterparts. Households with less than \$30,000 in annual income faced double the unemployment rates of higher-income households. Women accounted for nearly 56 percent of workforce exits since the start of the pandemic, despite comprising only 48 percent of the workforce.

The disproportionate health and economic impacts of COVID-19 underscored the vulnerability of our County residents who are people of color, women, younger workers, and workers overall. There is an imperative opportunity to transform the lives of millions of County residents by centering equity, harm reduction, and providing proportional resources to address the needs of our residents and communities. Earlier this year, President Biden announced the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to provide local communities with much-needed resources to address the great harm caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The County will benefit significantly from the \$1.9 billion in ARPA funds it is estimated to receive, as well as other ARPA allocations in program-specific areas such as emergency response funding. This is an opportunity to make strides to reduce the negative burdens disproportionately borne by people of color, women, younger adults and working class Angelenos.

The Board of Supervisors (Board), Chief Executive Officer (CEO), and County departments have shown tremendous leadership in prioritizing equity in their pandemic response and support for the County's most vulnerable residents. On this [motion](#) the Board adopted a bold initiative articulating an anti-racist agenda to guide, govern and increase the County's ongoing commitment to fighting racism in all its facets, in particular, systemic racism and its impact to Black residents. Since that anti-racism motion was approved, the Board has approved additional motions to take concrete actions which implement the spirit of the anti-racism initiative, particularly through the allocation of resources. For example, on April 20, 2021 ([motion](#)), the Board approved the use of an equity-based lens for the disbursement of economic recovery services.

With this historic influx of new one-time funds, the CEO has led an intensive process with County departments to develop promising projects and programs that would best leverage these ARPA funds to lift the County's hardest hit communities and businesses. In preparation for this new funding, on March 10, 2021([motion](#)), the CEO

reported to the Board on lessons learned from the County's implementation of the CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund, including the need to focus on high-impact, high-need core programs with proven impact and efficacy. The forthcoming recommended ARPA expenditures will fund a broad range of programs that include outreach to at-risk communities, relief for small businesses, housing assistance, violence prevention, employment development, therapeutic art, nutrition, and programming to address the digital divide. Some programs will be directly administered by County departments; others will be implemented through trusted contracted community and strategic partners. It is critical that the County continue to identify and prioritize those communities at greatest risk due to the pandemic and in greatest need of recovery support.

In May of 2020, and updated in March of 2021, the Advancement Project California and partner organizations (called the "Coalition for Equitable ARPA Implementation") released a [report](#) "How Race, Class, and Place Fuel a Pandemic."¹ The report recommended the County consider three factors as it determines how ARPA funds will be allocated throughout the County:

- **Risk:** Percent essential workers; Percent population under 200% of federal poverty level; Percent residing in overcrowded housing units.
- **Severity:** Percent population under 200% of federal poverty level; Percent population age 75+ in poverty; Percent uninsured population; Heart attack hospitalization rate; and Diabetes hospitalization rate.
- **Recovery Need:** Percent essential workers; Percent population under 200% of federal poverty level; Unemployment rate; and Percent uninsured population.

According to the Coalition for Equitable ARPA Implementation's analysis, concentrations of the highest-need communities are in historically Black neighborhoods, including South Los Angeles and Inglewood. Other regions of the County with concentrations of highest and high-need communities include the Harbor region, East Los Angeles, San Gabriel Valley, Pomona, northeastern San Fernando Valley, and the Antelope Valley.

¹ <https://www.racecounts.org/covid/covid-statewide/>

It is critical that the County continue to measurably demonstrate that it has carefully and strategically used these historic federal funds to the maximum benefit of its hardest hit residents. All County residents must have equitable access to opportunity and protections so that the positive impact of these actions may be not only catalytic but lasting. To that end, we must spearhead a community and data-driven initiative supporting strategic investments in the hardest hit communities.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

1. Direct the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to report back in writing within twenty-one (21) days, with equity principles and a proposed formula that all departments must apply that ensures all American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds are expended, to the greatest extent possible, on residents and areas of Los Angeles County (County) most impacted by COVID-19 and most affected by poverty. In developing the equity principles and proposed formula, the CEO must leverage its Anti-Racism & Diversity Initiative, the Office of Immigrant Affairs, the Native American Indian Commission, and collaborate with relevant stakeholders.

2. Direct the CEO, in collaboration with the Internal Services Department (ISD), as needed, to establish a public-facing website with a dashboard that reports on the County's ARPA expenditures and outcomes by program and department and be consistent with United State Department of Treasury guidance. The CEO shall launch the dashboard concurrent with ARPA program implementation. The dashboard will be updated monthly and shall include and not limited to, by department, of the following:

- i. The amount allocated to the department, for what purpose, the projected outcomes and numbers of residents to be served, and number of actual residents served;
- ii. Program metrics, including, as applicable, the actual number of residents, families and/or businesses served, jobs created, grants provided, and other measurable outputs and outcomes achieved, broken down by Supervisorial District and service planning area or zip code to capture hot spots within areas;

- iii. Equity metrics, based on data from departments and partner agencies/organizations to deploy services based on the recommended equity models described in the first directive, above.

3. Further direct the CEO to work with ISD to ensure that the public-facing dashboard identifies ARPA contracting opportunities, including planned requests for proposals or competitive bids, as well as:

- i. Dollars expended;
- ii. The jobs created through each ARPA-funded program;
- iii. A schedule of planned requests for proposals or competitive bids and;
- iv. Metrics and quality measures to monitor progress of each program as well as projected outcomes.

4. Direct all Departments Heads receiving ARPA funds to work with the CEO to identify appropriate data and information needed to create the aforementioned public-facing dashboard and provide such data and information to the CEO at regular intervals as directed by the CEO, with an emphasis on automating data submissions. Further direct the CEO to, within 30 days, create an implementation plan to accurately capture data for non-geographically concentrated communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 including, but not limited to: American Indian, Pacific Islander, and immigrant communities.

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(IG/YV/CT/KD)