

Reparations for Forced Sterilizations at LAC+USC

Beginning in 1909, California instituted a horrific forced sterilization program which victimized over 20,000 people before the law was repealed in 1979. Proponents of this appalling eugenics movement viewed coerced sterilization as a means of preventing women and men with mental illness, disabilities, or even sexually promiscuous from passing on their genes. This movement also targeted “undesirable” populations including immigrants, people of color, and poor people, and unsurprisingly a disproportionate number of those targeted were Latinx, who were 59% more likely to be sterilized than non Latinx residents.

Despite the repeal of the law in 1979, sterilizations have been identified in California prisons dating as recently as 1999, and an investigative audit found that 144 women were sterilized between 2005 and 2013, with the patients inadequate or nonexistent counseling or alternative options. Even County institutions here are not insulated from these terrible actions. Regretfully, between 1968 and 1974, more than 240 women were sterilized at the Los Angeles County+USC (LAC+USC) Medical

MOTION

MITCHELL	_____
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BARGER	_____
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Center.

Any intentional efforts to address systemic racism and build more equitable approaches into County services moving forward must confront the most egregious sins of the past. The County Board of Supervisors took the first step in correcting this action in 2018, when it passed a motion to issue an official apology to the women who delivered babies at the LAC+USC Medical Center and were coerced into receiving postpartum tubal ligations between 1968 and 1974 and has commissioned a large scale work of art and plaque on the campus to express the County's sincere apologies to the women and families who were harmed by the coercive sterilization project. However, more must be done to provide corrective responses to these women.

Thanks to the dedicated advocacy and legislative action by leaders like Assembly Member Wendy Carrillo, the California State Fiscal Year 2021-2022 budget proposes to provide some reparations to women harmed by the State law. The State has budgeted \$7.5 million for the reparations program, with those harmed at State facilities by this practice being issued \$25,000 in payments to these victims. However, the State budget does not include funding for survivors from facilities operated by local governments, and as Assembly Member Carrillo rightly identifies in Assembly Bill 1007, there are victims such as the over 240 survivors at the LAC+USC Medical Center that deserve recompense. It is the County's moral obligation to ensure these survivors are not left out of corrective actions, and that all steps necessary are taken to make them whole.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the Sacramento Advocates to send a letter to the Governor, the California Senate President, and the

Speaker of the California State Assembly advocating for reparations for the survivors at LAC+USC in the FY22-23 budget.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Board of Supervisors instruct the Chief Executive Officer, in collaboration with the Department of Health Services to:

1. Determine the feasibility of DHS' ability to identify the patients impacted by the coerced sterilization at LAC+USC Medical Center between the years of 1968 and 1974 and validate said individuals;
2. Explore the feasibility of utilizing existing DHS funding sources to provide appropriate reparations to the survivors of the coerced sterilization at LAC+USC Medical Center between the years of 1968 and 1974 in the event the State does not provide the additional compensation through legislation or via the FY22-23 budget;
3. Engage with community regarding appropriate reparations and methods of validation; and
4. Report back to the Board within 90 days with the findings.

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HLS:ac