

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR KATHRYN BARGER

October 14, 2025

**OCTOBER 2025 AS LOS ANGELES COUNTY FAITH LEADER APPRECIATION MONTH**

In 1992, National Clergy Appreciation Month was established and observed in October to celebrate and recognize the contributions made by clergy of Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) and Houses of Worship (HOW), who have given their time, support, and resources to selflessly serve vulnerable populations. For the past two years, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors has declared October as Faith Leader Appreciation Month in Los Angeles County. These months encouraged County Departments to create ways to recognize their partnerships with faith leaders and celebrate their contributions. Each year, while the month of October is celebrated as National Clergy Appreciation Month, the Faith Leader Appreciation Month Proclamations have connected LA County Departments to a national movement that recognizes the value in integrating faith-based partnerships when servicing populations in need.

The Los Angeles County Faith Leader Appreciation Month encourages staff in County Departments to recognize and express gratitude to faith leaders, often referred to as clergy, pastors, rabbis, imams, ministers, lay leaders, and ministry support staff to name a few. The month also celebrates faith-based collaboratives between County Departments and FBOs, as well as HOWs. Over the years, the critical involvement of faith partners in providing crisis-oriented resources, life-enhancing community-based resources, and safe spaces for children, youth and families, often at no cost, continues to reinforce the positive influence the faith community has on child and family well-being.

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**MOTION**

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As the largest child protection services agency in the country, the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) understands the importance of collaboration with FBOs and HOWs from diverse religious affiliations to improve outcomes for LA County youth and families with complex needs. FBOs and HOWs have historically gone above and beyond to meet and often exceed the needs of populations in crisis. During the January wildfires, FBOs and HOWs provided emergent support to systems involved children and families, and fire victims, without hesitation. They often work with vulnerable families, disenfranchised groups, and fragile communities lacking adequate resources. Because of this, FBOs and HOWs are able to refer children, TAY, biological parents, caregivers, and families to a wide range of support services and resources. Families that are connected and supported have a greater chance of thriving and becoming a healthy family system.

Together, partnerships between LA County and faith communities positively impact outcomes. Together, partnerships between LA County and faith communities provide solutions to complex situations. Together, partnerships between LA County and faith communities create safe spaces, hope, and healing within reach for those vulnerable populations that are disenfranchised. In LA County, faith leaders are essential to community engagement and also invaluable partners when working to strengthen families.

As the County continues to prioritize building stronger collaboration with faith leaders, FBOs, and HOWs, proclaiming October as Faith Leader Appreciation Month provides County Departments the opportunity to celebrate, honor, and affirm the faith communities' commitment and dedication to children, youth, and families from different cultural backgrounds they tirelessly serve. During Faith Leader Appreciation Month, faith leaders, FBOs, and HOWs are appreciated countywide for their outstanding service and acknowledged for their role as vital County partners.

**I, THEREFORE, MOVE,** that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Proclaim the month of October as Faith Leader Appreciation Month in Los Angeles County;
2. Encourage all County Departments to establish ways to recognize partnerships with Faith Leaders and celebrate their contributions to improve the health and well-being of vulnerable youth, adults, and families in need of support; and
3. Encourage relevant County Departments to strengthen existing faith-based initiatives, as well as streamline and enhance communication with the faith community for better engagement.

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