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MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HILDA L. SOLIS APRIL 7, 2026

A Decade of Cultural Equity and Inclusion in Los Angeles County

The arts inspire creativity, foster connection, and enrich the social, cultural, and economic life of Los Angeles County. Music, theater, dance, visual arts, literature, and other forms of artistic expression celebrate the diverse experiences, identities, and stories of Angelenos, strengthening the shared sense of belonging and reflecting the vibrancy of the region. The arts nurture imagination, critical thinking, and empathy while promoting innovation, education, and civic engagement, making creativity essential to the health and vitality of society.

At the federal level, the arts and humanities have faced sustained and escalating attacks under Donald Trump. During his first presidency, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) were repeatedly threatened with elimination and deep budget cuts. Longstanding advisory bodies such as the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities were dissolved, and federal grant priorities were shifted in ways that reduced support for community-based and inclusive cultural programs. Under the current Trump administration, these assaults have intensified. The NEA and NEH face renewed elimination proposals, federal arts grants have been cut, staff reductions imposed, and policies have undermined support

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for diversity, equity, and inclusion. At the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the nation's official performing arts center, Trump's hand-picked board voted to rename the institution to include his own name, the first time a sitting president has done so, and he has assumed the chairmanship of its board, politicizing this national cultural landmark and prompting artists and organizations to withdraw performances in protest. These federal actions threaten the independence of national cultural institutions and the foundations that support a vibrant, accessible, and inclusive cultural landscape.

In contrast, Los Angeles County has taken proactive steps to advance cultural equity and inclusion. As her first major arts and culture policy action, First District Supervisor Hilda L. Solis directed the County's Chief Executive Officer to identify funding during the Fiscal Year (FY) 2015–16 Budget Deliberations to launch a three-year pilot of the Community Impact Arts Grants program, strengthening support for community-based and social justice–focused organizations and municipalities.

However, among her most significant contributions is the creation of the Cultural Equity and Inclusion Initiative (CEII). Established through a motion on November 10, 2015, CEII directed the Los Angeles County Arts Commission, now the Department of Arts and Culture, to lead a countywide conversation on improving diversity in cultural organizations for all residents. The 18-month public process, which began in 2016, produced thirteen recommendations to the Board of Supervisors aimed at expanding access to arts and culture and advancing inclusion across the County's arts ecosystem. Focused on five areas—staff, boards, audiences, programming, and artists — CEII set

a framework to ensure residents benefit from increased resilience, stronger educational outcomes, and expanded opportunities within the creative economy.

In April 2017, the CEII report was released, and in June 2017, the Board unanimously adopted a motion authored by Supervisor Solis funding 5 of the 13 recommendations included in the report. These initiatives included expanding the Arts Internship Program to provide additional positions for students, including those from community colleges; creating the Creative Strategist Program, which embeds artists in County departments to develop artist-driven solutions to complex civic challenges; and establishing a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Requirement, which requires County grantees to submit board-adopted statements, policies, or plans demonstrating their commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and access as part of their applications. The CEII also supported increased funding for the Organizational Grant Program and creating a new work-based learning program for high school students that prepares them for careers in the arts and creative industries.

Additionally, through a previous motion in March 2017, the Board voted to implement a private developer requirement for civic art in unincorporated areas, which was another CEII recommendation. This led to the creation of the Public Art in Private Development Ordinance, which extends civic art requirements to private developers and incentivizes the creation of cultural assets, spearheaded by Supervisor Solis.

In October 2017, the Board passed a motion authored by Supervisor Solis directing County Counsel to create an ordinance removing all references to Columbus

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Day as an official County holiday and recognizing Indigenous Peoples Day instead. In May 2018, the Board formally adopted the ordinance. Indigenous Peoples Day is now an official County holiday observed on the second Monday of October, honoring and celebrating the rich history and significant contributions of diverse Native and Indigenous communities.

Following the CEII recommendations, Supervisor Solis led the development of the Countywide Cultural Policy. This policy provides a guiding framework for the Department of Arts and Culture, fostering a culture that values arts, culture, and creativity, strengthens equity and inclusion, and integrates arts and culture across County programs. Its three core goals are to invest in cultural infrastructure and access, advance arts and culture in every sector of civic life, and promote cultural equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging. On June 23, 2020, Supervisor Solis authored a motion officially adopting the policy and directing the Department to develop a strategic plan to ensure its implementation across County departments.

As part of the Cultural Policy's third goal, which identifies ways to acknowledge Indigenous Peoples as traditional stewards of this land, Supervisor Solis authored the Countywide Land Acknowledgment. On October 5, 2021, she authored a motion directing Arts and Culture to work with the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission (LANAIC) to hire a consultant to facilitate the development of Land Acknowledgment and Land Access policies, protocols, and toolkits for Los Angeles County in accordance with the Countywide Cultural Policy, and to gather input on ways

the County has harmed local tribal nations. The motion also provided funding for honorariums to compensate tribal leaders or their designees for their time and knowledge.

Since the adoption of CEII, Los Angeles County's cultural institutions have continued to move the needle, expanding access and opportunity for all residents. The Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) is preparing to open the David Geffen Galleries on April 19, 2026, creating new spaces for the public to experience art and engage with diverse stories and perspectives. LACMA continues to offer free admission for Los Angeles County residents on weekday afternoons and for all visitors on the second Tuesday of each month, and through the NexGenLA program, Los Angeles County youth ages 17 and under receive free admission plus one free guest year-round. The Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County (NHM) recently unveiled NHM Commons, adding dynamic indoor and outdoor spaces that connect science, nature, and culture while continuing to provide free admission hours that make its collections and programs accessible to Angelenos. The Music Center continues to provide free participatory cultural programming year-round, from Dance DTLA to Spotlight, and serves as a steward of Gloria Molina Grand Park, which hosts community gatherings such as the annual Summer Block Party and NYELA (New Year's Eve Los Angeles) along with other performances and events that bring together artists and participants from across Los Angeles County. The Los Angeles Philharmonic serves as a steward of the Hollywood Bowl and the Ford Theater, offering programs that celebrate creativity

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and build community, including free and $1 tickets to summer concerts at the Hollywood Bowl.

These efforts reflect the broader impact of CEII and the County's commitment to cultural equity. Together, CEII and the work of these County cultural institutions have deepened the understanding of the arts as a powerful tool for public policy, social change, anti-racism, and equitable outcomes.

As Los Angeles County celebrates April 2026 as Arts Month and the 10-year milestone of CEII, it reaffirms its commitment to championing creativity, equity, and cultural engagement, ensuring that the arts continue to inspire, connect, and transform lives for generations to come.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Thank the Los Angeles County Arts Commission for its leadership, vision, and ongoing work in supporting artists, arts organizations, and cultural programs overseen by the Department of Arts and Culture.
2. Express appreciation to the Co-Chairs and former members of the Advisory Committee of the Cultural Equity and Inclusion Initiative (CEII) for their guidance, expertise, and dedication to advancing cultural equity, diversity, inclusion, and access throughout the County's arts and cultural ecosystem.
3. Recognize the Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture staff for their leadership in advancing this important work and their ongoing commitment to enriching the County through arts and culture.

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4. Proclaim April 2026 as Arts Month in Los Angeles County, a time to recognize and honor the contributions of artists, cultural organizations, educators, and community leaders who sustain and advance the arts, and to reaffirm the County's commitment to ensuring that arts and culture are accessible to all Angelenos.
5. Encourage Countywide Communications to promote April 2026 as Arts Month, including highlighting free access to County cultural institutions such as the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County (NHM) and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), and amplifying awareness of the NexGenLA program at LACMA to encourage participation in the NexGenLA Celebration on Sunday, May 3, 2026, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

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HLS:ko