



LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION



Chairperson
CHERI THOMAS
Quinault/Yurok

July 19, 2022

Vice Chairperson
CHRISSIE CASTRO
Navajo

Dear County of Los Angeles Prevention Task Force,

Treasurer
SHAWN IMITATES-DOG
Lakota

My name is Cheri Thomas, and I am the Chair of the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission (LANAIC). I am writing on behalf of the LANAIC to uplift our concerns with how data is collected across County systems and how it is not representative of the American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) community. Through our nearly 50 years of work on the LANAIC we have long been convinced that AIAN data does not reflect what we observe on the ground and within our Native-serving agencies. Twenty years ago, a Board motion was passed addressing this very issue among our AIAN community and naming several County departments. Four years ago, similar data issues were uplifted in a Board motion addressing AIAN homelessness and again naming several County departments.

Secretary
KIMBERLY MORALES
JOHNSON
Gabrieleno Tongva

ANDREA N. GARCIA, M.D.
Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara

We know our community has long struggled with being left out of the numbers, the narrative, and subsequent resources. We are happy to hear about the goals of this task force. We are also concerned that unless the County correctly defines and tracks AIAN data, we won't truly know the severity of certain issues, and whether there is progress within the AIAN community. Please consider using [best practices](#) that are already out there, please listen to AIAN data experts, and please recommend making the appropriate changes throughout all county data systems. Our community wellness depends on it.

ALLISON HICKS
*Prairie Band Potawatomi
Nation/Choctaw*

DAWN JACKSON
Saginaw Chippewa

ROBERT JUDKINS
Apache

RANDALL MURPHY
Choctaw/Lakota

RUDY ORTEGA JR.
Fernandeno Tataviam

Sincerely,

JOSEPH A. QUINTANA
Kewa Pueblo

Cheri L. Thomas

TED TENORIO
Tiguan Nation

Cheri Thomas
Chairperson

RICH TOYON
Acjachemen

MARK VILLANSENOR
Fernandeno Tataviam

RENE WILLIAMS
Colville Tribes

Executive Director
ALEXANDRA VALDES