

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS

OCTOBER 29, 2019

**Dedicating the Adult Sickle Cell Clinic at the Martin Luther King Jr. Outpatient Center in Honor of Mr. Jeffrey Smith**

Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) is a rare inherited blood disorder that affects approximately 70,000-80,000 Americans and is especially prevalent among African Americans and Latinos. In Los Angeles County, approximately 1,200 adults and 500 children in Los Angeles County are currently living with SCD.

Since 2016, the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services has partnered with the Sickle Cell Disease Foundation to offer clinical services specifically tailored to meet the needs of adults with SCD at the Martin Luther King Jr. Outpatient Center (the Clinic). In addition to specialty hematology services, the Clinic also provides primary care, mental health services, comprehensive pain management, and peer navigators for their patients. With a national average life expectancy under 40 years of age for those diagnosed with SCD, the Clinic provides a critical resource and state-of-the-art care for hundreds of individuals living with SCD.

The Clinic is an appropriate place to commemorate the brave individuals who have succumbed to the disease, including Jeffrey Smith (Jeffrey). Jeffrey's father, Gilbert D. Smith, was a founder, former Mayor, and City Manager of the City of Carson. He also led the effort to build California State University at Dominguez Hills.

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**MOTION**

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Jeffrey was diagnosed with SCD at 6 months of age. Throughout his life, he battled, and was admitted to the hospital for extended periods of time to address a wide array of SCD-related ailments, including bone marrow deterioration, gallbladder removal, repeated cases of pneumonia, and frequent pain crises. Although Jeffrey passed away in 1990, at the age of 23, his father remains a strong advocate and voice for the sickle cell community, raising funds and awareness regarding SCD.

Assemblyman Mike Gipson has shared that Jeffrey's story was an impetus for his successful effort to pass AB 1105, which led to the appropriation of \$15,000,000 to create a network of adult SCD specialty centers in Los Angeles, as well as Madera, Alameda, San Bernardino, and San Diego counties. AB 1105 specifically supports the development and enhancement of specialty SCD centers that will provide care in disease-burdened areas including at the MLK Outpatient Center in South Los Angeles and in the High Desert.

Jeffrey reminds us of the many unsung heroes who spent their lives courageously battling SCD. Given how instrumental Jeffrey's story was in the efforts to secure additional statewide funding to improve clinical and supportive services for those living with SCD, it is fitting that the Clinic be named in his honor.

**I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**

Instruct the Director of the Department of Health Services to dedicate the Adult Sickle Cell Clinic at the Martin Luther King Jr. Medical Campus in honor of Mr. Jeffrey Smith, who courageously battled sickle cell disease his entire life, until he passed away in 1990, at the age of 23.

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