

# Sun-Reporter



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BEST BUY IN THE WEST

## MAYOR BREED ANNOUNCES \$53 MILLION FEDERAL GRANT FOR SAN FRANCISCO'S HOMELESS PROGRAMS

San Francisco, CA - Mayor London N. Breed today announced that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has awarded the City a \$53.7 million grant to support efforts to renew and expand critical services and housing for people experiencing homelessness in San Francisco.



HUD's Continuum of Care (CoC) program is designed to support local programs with the goal of ending homelessness for individuals, families, and Transitional Age Youth.

This funding supports the city's ongoing efforts that have helped more than 15,000 people exit homelessness since 2018 through City programs including direct housing placements and relocation assistance. During that time San Francisco has also increased housing slots by 50%. San Francisco has the most permanent supportive housing of any county in the Bay Area, and the second most slots per capita than any city in the country.

UD's Continuum of Care grant will support the City's range of critical services and programs, including permanent supportive housing, rapid re-housing, and improved access to housing for survivors of domestic violence

"In San Francisco, we have worked aggressively to increase housing, shelter, and services for people experiencing homelessness, and we are building on these efforts every day," said Mayor London Breed. "Every day our encampment outreach workers are going out to bring people indoors and our City workers are connecting people to housing and shelter. This support from the federal government is critical and will allow us to serve people in

need and address encampments in our neighborhoods."

The funding towards supporting the renewal projects in San Francisco include financial support for a mix of permanent supportive housing, rapid re-housing, and transitional housing projects. In addition, the CoC award will support Coordinated Entry projects to centralize the City's various efforts to address homelessness. This includes

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## CALIFORNIA'S OLDEST AFRICAN AMERICAN DEM CLUB ENDORSES BARBARA LEE FOR SENATE

AKLAND, CA - Today, the New Frontier Democratic Club (NFDC) announced their proud endorsement of congresswoman and leading progressive candidate Barbara Lee' in her run for U.S. Senate. The West Coast's oldest African-American Democratic club, NFDC's endorsement bolsters Lee's network of support among California's large bases in communities of color — because of her record on racial, economic, and social justice.

"Congresswoman Barbara Lee is courageous, principled, and dedicated. Her vote against the war, her persistence on diversity in our federal government, and her decision to run, making sure Black women are at the table of federal public policy, are examples of why we need [her] in the U.S. Senate," said Dr. Michael Davis, President of NFDC. "While money is critical to success, ultimately



U.S. SENATE  
Barbara LEE  
speaks for me

U.S. Senate Barbara Lee

it's the vote of the people that matters most. Congresswoman Barbara Lee will embrace those issues that make America what it ought to be!"

The NFDC was founded in 1960 in Los Angeles as a means of engaging Black communities in California in John F. Kennedy's presidential campaign, expanding to an ongoing mission of political participation and powerbuilding following the campaign. Other organizations endorsing Lee, like San

Francisco Latinx Democratic Club and Black Women Organized For Political Action mirror NFDC's roots of political action and continued advocacy.

"The New Frontier Democratic Club has a rich legacy of building community power, galvanizing Black Californians to participate in the democratic process and shaping the system to better meet all of our needs," said Congresswoman Lee.

## Biden-Harris Administration Take Steps to Address Racial Wage Gap

By Stacy M. Brown

Taraji P. Henson's powerful statement that highlighted the glaring wage disparities faced by Black women in Hollywood perhaps pales in comparison to the meager salaries those in America's workforce historically contend with. And on January 29, the anniversary of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, the Biden-Harris Administration unveiled comprehensive measures to tackle persistent gender and racial wage gaps in the United States.

Henson recently emphasized the inequities, stating that "the math ain't mathing" when it comes to the disproportionate pay differences for Black women in the entertainment industry. Her poignant observation underscored the broader issue of unequal pay in that industry. President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris reaffirmed their commitment to equal pay as a fundamental component



The Biden-Harris Administration recently unveiled comprehensive measures to tackle persistent gender and racial wage gaps in the United States.

of their mission to ensure fairness and opportunity for all workers by observing the law that Barack Obama signed in 2009.

The administration said it recognized that women are paid, on average, only 77 cents for every dollar paid to men. The wage gap is even more pronounced for women of color, where African Americans earn only 64 cents and Latina women earn a mere 55 cents for each dollar earned

by their male counterparts.

Obama's legislation, signed on January 29, 2009, responded to the Supreme Court's decision in Ledbetter v. Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co., which stripped protections against pay discrimination.

"The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act reinstates prior law and emphasizes that pay discrimination claims based on sex, race, national

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## Controller Malia Cohen Sets 25% Goal for Small and Minority Businesses Contracting

By Tanu Henry

On Jan. 30, State Controller Malia Cohen announced that she is requiring that 25% of all procurement contracts signed by her department are with small and minority-owned businesses.

Cohen stated in a letter that her action is necessary to meet the objectives of Assembly Bill (AB) 2019. The law, which took effect on Jan. 1, 2023, requires state agencies to establish goals for including small businesses and microbusinesses among their contracted suppliers.

"January 1 is now behind us and there still appears to be some uncertainty as to which agencies and or procurements are covered by AB 2019," Cohen stated. "One of my statutory duties is to recommend to the legislature ways to improve the public revenues. I plan to ask the legislature to remove any



State Controller Malia Cohen

ambiguities in the law and to make it applicable to all agencies," Cohen added.

Under the AB 2019, agencies are required to develop an "economic equity first" action plan and policy for the agency to provide, among other things, direction, recommendations, and strategies to ensure that small businesses, as specified, are effectively involved and benefiting from the agency's procurement process.

According to the Controller,

"small businesses not only contribute significantly to the tax base of the State of California" but also account for approximately seven million employees, or 48.8%, of all employment in the state.

"This is a win-win for all involved. Making an equitable distribution of dollars to small and minority-owned businesses and allowing this sector to grow will expand state revenues without increasing taxes," stated Cohen.

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**Amelia Ashley-Ward**  
Editor/Publisher

# MAYOR LONDON BREED ANNOUNCES INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO ENHANCE SAN FRANCISCO'S LEGACY BUSINESS PROGRAM

**S**an Francisco, CA – Yesterday, Mayor London N. Breed introduced legislation to enhance the Legacy Business Program. The proposal, which is co-sponsored by Board President Aaron Peskin, would allow the City to provide funding directly to Legacy Businesses, with a goal of stabilizing these long-standing businesses which add to San Francisco's culture.

In November 2015, San Francisco voters approved Proposition (Prop) J, which established the Legacy Business Historic Preservation Fund and directed the Office of Small Business to award Rent Stabilization Grants to landlords that enter into long-term lease agreements with Legacy Businesses. The grants, which served as an incentive to landlords that may not otherwise extend or sign new long-term leases for longstanding businesses, resulted in 56 long-term leases established since the start of the Legacy Business Rent Stabilization Grant Program.

However, under Prop J, landlords are not required to provide any grant funding to Legacy Business tenants. The proposed legislation would

require landlords to share at least 50% of the grant with their tenants.

"Being a small-business-friendly City means supporting entrepreneurs at every stage whether by helping them develop an idea or providing them with the resources they need to become iconic," said Mayor Breed. "San Francisco's first-in-the-nation Legacy Business Program honors nearly 400 longstanding institutions, and we need to continue to find new ways to support their longevity."

"This legislation will enable more funds to be provided to our cherished Legacy Businesses while continuing to incentivize landlords to provide long-term leases at commercially reasonable rates," said Board of Supervisors President Aaron Peskin. "Legacy Businesses contribute significantly to San Francisco's uniqueness, vibrancy, and economic prosperity, and they make the city an exciting place to live, work, and visit."

Legacy Businesses that benefit from the Rent Stabilization Grant experience greater stability in operations.

About the Legacy Business Program

The Legacy Business Program, managed by the Office of Small Business, recognizes longstanding, community-serving, and culturally vital businesses. A total of 388 businesses have been added to the Legacy Business Registry since it started in 2015.

"Legacy Businesses are valuable community assets," said Katy Tang, Director of the Office of Small Business. "Their stability as anchor institutions benefits entire neighborhoods and sectors. The Legacy Business Assistance Program will enable the City to do more to ensure their ongoing success."

A Legacy Business is a for-profit or nonprofit business that has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years. The business must contribute to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community, and it must commit to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary or art forms. If a business has operated in San Francisco for more than 20 years but less than 30 years, it may still be included in the Registry if the business otherwise faces a significant risk of displacement.



Proposed legislation will enable the City to provide funding directly to San Francisco's nearly 400 Legacy Businesses

To register a business for the Legacy Business Program, businesses must apply with a nomination by the Mayor or a member of the Board of Supervisors and submit a written application. They receive Legacy Business status with an advisory recommendation from the Historic Preservation Commission and approval of the Small Business Commission.

Inclusion on the Registry provides Legacy Businesses with recognition and support as an incentive for them to stay in the community. The program also provides educational and promotional assistance to encourage their continued viability and success in San Francisco.

"San Francisco understands the hardships facing small businesses," said Connie Kong, owner of Tin Wah Noodle Co. "Through its Rent Stabilization Grant for Legacy Businesses, our 80+ year old noodle factory was able to relocate down the street and maintain our operations in San Francisco. Having that stability, we can focus on business and support community passion projects."

**For more information about the Legacy Business Program, including a list and map of businesses on the Legacy Business Registry, visit [www.legacybusiness.org](http://www.legacybusiness.org). Visit [sf.gov/legacybusiness](http://sf.gov/legacybusiness) to learn more about applying to be on the Registry**

# BLACK HISTORY

# HISTORY

## Parade & Community Party

### FEBRUARY 24TH 2024

PARADE STARTS AT THE BAYVIEW OPERA HOUSE AT 11AM  
PARADE ENDS AT SOUTHEAST COMMUNITY CENTER  
COMMUNITY PARTY STARTS AT 12:30PM  
AT SOUTHEAST COMMUNITY CENTER  
SOUTHEAST COMMUNITY CENTER: 1550 EVANS AVE. SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94124  
FOOD, ENTERTAINMENT, KID ZONE AND MUCH MORE!  
FEATURING THE AFRICAN BUSH MAN  
FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT REV. BURCH AT 415-240-0313

**S.F. Homeless**  
Continued from page 1

\$2.1 million in funding for the Coordinated Entry system to improve access to housing for youth and survivors of domestic violence.

"This is a good day for San Francisco," said Shireen McSpadden, executive director of the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing. "HUD's Continuum of Care funding provides vital resources to a diversity of programs and projects that have helped people to stabilize in our community. This funding is a testament to our work and the work of our nonprofit partners."

The 2024 Continuum of Care Renewal Awards Include:

\$42.2 million for 29 renewal PSH projects that serve chronically homeless, veterans, and youth

\$318,000 for one new PSH project, which will provide 98 affordable homes for low-income seniors in the Richmond District

\$445,000 for one Transitional Housing (TH) project serving youth

\$6.4 million dedicated to four Rapid Rehousing (RRH) projects that serve families, youth, and survivors of domestic violence

\$750,000 for two Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) projects

\$2.1 million for three Coordinated Entry projects that serve families, youth,

chronically homeless, and survivors of domestic violence

In addition, the 2023 CoC Planning Grant, now increased to \$1,500,000 from \$1,250,000, was also approved. Planning grants are submitted non-competitively and may be used to carry out the duties of operating a CoC, such as system evaluation and planning, monitoring, project and system performance improvement, providing trainings, partner collaborations, and conducting the PIT Count.

"We are very appreciative of HUD's support in fulfilling our funding request for these critically important projects for San Francisco that help so many people trying to exit homelessness," said Del Seymour, co-chair of the Local Homeless Coordinating Board. "This funding will make a real difference to people seeking services and support in their journey out of homelessness."

In comparison to last year's competition, this represents a \$770,000 increase in funding, due to a new PSH project that was funded, an increase in some unit type Fair Market Rents (FMRs) and the larger CoC Planning Grant. In a year where more projects had to compete nationally against other communities, this represents a significant increase.

Nationally, HUD awarded nearly \$3.16 billion for over 7,000 local homeless housing and service programs including new projects and renewals across the United States.



# Conservation, Plus Construction, Can Address California's Water Crisis, Say Advocates

By Maxim Elramisy | California Black Media

**Last month, Groundswell for Water Justice, a grassroots advocacy group, joined civil rights leaders at the State Capitol in Sacramento. They demanded immediate action to address the state's worsening water and housing crises.**

A 2021 California auditor Report found that more than one million Californians lacked access to safe, clean drinking water. Two in three of those people, they found, were people of color. According to data from the US Census Bureau Annual Survey of State and Local Government Finances found that expenditures on drinking water infrastructure in California declined overall since 2010, but much of the infrastructure is old. The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) estimates that a third of their 6,780 miles of water pipes installed over 80 years ago will reach the end of their useful life in the next 20 years.

"I think the very first piece is making sure that the plight of the million Californians that don't have access to water are being heard," Groundswell for Water Justice spokesman Ed Sanders told California

Black Media (CBM).

"Policy leaders can have an honest conversation about this but understand that there are human lives that are impacted. And that has to sort of be put at the front. That need is urgent, it's sort of born of a legacy of discrimination, and needs to be addressed."

California had one of its wettest years ever in 2023, following a harsh decades-long drought that left many of the state's lakes and reservoirs dry, forcing Gov. Newsom to create water restrictions across the state.

"There's not a silver bullet that solves all of this. I think, you know, obviously, we need to sort of look holistically at the whole water supply. Where the demand is, where the water is captured, how we convey it," Sanders continued.

A coalition of community, civil rights, labor, and infrastructure leaders around the state combined efforts and resources to create Groundswell for Water Justice. The organization advocates for policies that improve the delivery of water by supporting small water system operators throughout the state which often serve low-income communities of color.

Groundswell advocates say extreme weather swings from intense heatwaves to powerful atmospheric rivers have

required California to upgrade the water capture, purification, and distribution infrastructure, much of which is decades old and not built to support the nation's most populous state. They contend that water infrastructure must expand if California is going to meet its housing mandates. Without proper water infrastructure, developers cannot get new housing approved.

Groundswell co-founder Robert Sausedo calls the water crisis the "civil rights issue of our time. He insists that conservation and construction are the two approaches that will solve it.

"Several 100 people who are directly impacted by this issue of clean safe drinking water joined us to raise their voices towards a clarion call for justice for the have-nots to share in the same privileges of the haves when it comes to water," Sausedo told LA Focus at the rally.

"The goal now is to continue moving forward in our efforts to organize the state and bring on more organizations to participate with the 52 organizations across the state that are currently involved and advocate for those who are too often overlooked and to ensure that both state and federal legislatures continue to do the right thing for those who are disenfranchised when it comes down to one of the

most critical needs -- clean water," he added.

California's earthquake-prone environment presents an additional risk. According to former U.S. Geological Survey seismologist Lucy Jones, water infrastructure represents "the single biggest vulnerability we're facing in Southern California."

These risks can be mitigated, says Jones, by relying less on transporting water long distances and developing more local sources of water. However, there's a built-in challenge with that solution. According to the California Department of Water Resources, the state received 75% of its rain and snow in the watersheds north of Sacramento, but 80% of the state's water demand comes from the southern 2/3 of the state.

Among guest speakers at the rally were Richard Polanco, former State Senator; Antonio Villaraigosa, former Mayor of Los Angeles; Marc Morial, CEO and President of the National Urban League; Tony Thurmond, State Superintendent of Public Instruction; and more.

The California Aqueduct is infrastructure that is critical for water distribution in the state. Built in the 1960's, it transports water 444 miles from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta to the agricultural breadbasket



California had one of its wettest years ever in 2023, following a harsh decades-long drought that left many of the state's lakes and reservoirs dry, forcing Gov. Newsom to create water restrictions across the state.

San Joaquin Valley, through the largest water lift, the Edmonston Pumping Plant, then stored in Pyramid Lake, Castaic Lake, and Lake Perris for distribution throughout Los Angeles, and inland empire cities.

Los Angeles imports water from the Sierra Nevada Mountain ranges via the 242-mile-long Los Angeles Aqueduct. Southern California imports water from the Colorado River via the 233-mile-long Colorado River Aqueduct.

California also gets water from groundwater, though water from these 515 subterranean basins is being extracted faster than it can be recharged. As a

result, the available water from most groundwater basins is decreasing, according to the CDWR.

Advocates point out that water is and has always been a critical factor in shaping California's population and economy. The balance of urban development, agricultural sustainability, and ecological preservation of watersheds (fish need water too) will be strained as Californians endure the effects of climate change.

The leadership at Groundswell for Water Justice says the organization is working to make sure that all people are represented in decisions affecting the livability of their communities.

## Black Mayors Visit Innovative Temporary Housing Complex in LA

By Tanu Henry

**Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass hosted Black mayors visiting from different parts of the country this past weekend.**

While in L.A., Bass, who declared homelessness her top priority after she was sworn in as mayor, took her guests on a tour of the Hilda L. Solis Care First Village. The development features an innovative design, using modular units, and offers wraparound mental health care and social services.

For the mayors, the village provided a model of an affordable, effective and nimble solution to addressing the intersecting mental health and homelessness crises gripping cities around the country, and disproportionately impacting Black communities.

"Welcome to our African American mayors from around the country. We are very, very happy to welcome you," Bass said to her guests.

Staff and business leaders were among the guests that attended the event.

Mayor Bass introduced two key players instrumental in the creation of the facility: Los Angeles County

supervisor Hilda Solis, after whom the complex is named, and former California Assemblymember and Senator, and current president and CEO of the Weingart Center Association, Kevin Murray.

The Hilda L. Solis Care First Village is one of the Weingart Center's 15 locations in California designed to address homelessness. Located next to the Twin Towers Correctional Facility, Los Angeles' county jail, the village opened in May 2021 with \$51 million from pandemic relief funds and \$6 million from Los Angeles County discretionary funds,

according to Solis. She also pointed to the jail as the reason more facilities like the one named after her.

"The biggest institutions [jails] that have more people who should be in these types of housing units because they're big on mental health issues, substance abuse, many were homeless," said Solis.

The three-story facility was conceived, approved and built in a remarkably swift span of six months due to a combination of prefabricated units, custom made trailers and 60 shipping containers. Modular designs lowered costs per unit from \$531,373 down to \$245,689.

Each room is private and includes a television and

shower. These items provide a way to allow residents to have personal space and reduce arguments and conflict. There are 232 units, 10 of which are reserved for use by the Los Angeles District attorney's office and Project 180, a program which seeks to lower recidivism rates.

Site director Chris Castaneda explained that the purpose of the interim housing is to usher residents into permanent housing. The population covers a wide range including the elderly, who make up about 23% and each person has a different set of needs.

"So far we have placed about 25% of our clients into permanent housing," said Castaneda. "But we're very happy to have that in the 25% range, which might sound like a small number. But, when you look at all the barriers that we have to work through, it's pretty good."

Murray, who is a former chair of the California Legislative Black Caucus, led the mayors' tour and answered questions. He explained the concepts behind many of the facilities spaces, and discussed philosophies leaders and staff ascribe to at the village.

The amenities of the facility are a part of a talking a humanizing approach to addressing homelessness,

according to Murray, who guided visitors through safe outdoor areas, views of the living spaces and a dog park.

The center also includes laundry facilities, on-site kitchen, and parking spaces for residents. There are even veterinary services for pets.

For some staying at the facility, this model has afforded them the opportunity to focus on healing.

Judith A. Brown's room was one of the highlights of the tour. Brown is a cancer survivor and says the services and security she found at the center gave her space to recuperate. She is in remission and has grown her hair back and has had visits from her daughter.

"I mean, since I've been at the shelter, I've concentrated on my health and mental health," said Brown.

Another resident said he has been in the village for two years and has not received enough help.

Leaders say the village is not designed as a catch-all. So those with more severe medical or mental issues are referred to locations better equipped for them, according to Murray. It costs about \$70 to \$80 per person, per day to operate. This includes security and case management.



Lourdes Castro Ramirez, left, Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass, center, and chair of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Hilda L. Solis, left, introduce members of the African American Mayors Association to the Hilda L. Solis Care First Village in Los Angeles

"I think one of the things about homelessness is you need different kinds of houses. I think the biggest flaw in homeless policy right now is the cookie cutter approach," said Murray. "Certainly, do some of that but you got to look at every site, every neighborhood, every community every city a little bit differently and see what works for them."

For others the facility is a second chance at life.

Tommy Mitchell is 67 years old and disabled. He has been at the facility for over three months but was on the street for over two years. A few

months ago, he was sleeping in his truck and was robbed by two men who took his money and cut him several times across his stomach. When he was taken to the hospital he was connected to the village where he received help navigating the city's housing process. On the day of the tour, he received some good news — he qualified for an apartment. His counselor gave him the good news in person.

"This was a blessing. This place really helped me a whole lot," said Mitchell. "This place is a good place if you want help. You follow the steps, do what they ask you and you'll win."

### Wage Gap Continued from page 1

origin, age, religion, and disability 'accrue' whenever an employee receives a discriminatory paycheck," Biden remarked. "This is

a crucial step in rectifying historical injustices and creating a fairer future for all."

Building on the law's foundation, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is finalizing a rule to eliminate the consideration of an individual's current or

past pay when determining federal employee salaries. Simultaneously, the Federal Acquisition Regulatory (FAR) Council proposes measures to prohibit federal contractors from seeking and considering applicants' compensation history during

the hiring process.

"The wage disparities faced by women, particularly women of color, are not just statistics; they represent real challenges that demand real solutions," Harris emphasized. "Our actions today are a commitment to building a

more equitable future."

The Department of Labor's (DOL's) Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs will also provide guidance to clarify existing protections against discrimination in hiring or pay decisions for federal contractors.

"Today's announcements build on our commitment to closing wage gaps, creating a fairer economy, and ensuring that every American has the opportunity to thrive, regardless of their gender or race," Biden declared.

# The Sun-Reporter

## EDITORIAL

We wish to plead our own cause.  
Too long have others spoken for us.

*Freedom's Journal, March 16, 1827.*

## Setting the Record Straight on an Important Piece of Black History

By Ben Jealous

**W**ith the start of Black History Month, I brace myself for the mis-telling of Black History yet again.

In schoolhouses and everywhere the stories are told, a persistent myth shows its ugly head: the ridiculous notion that great Black leaders are not just exceptional but exceptions.

It is an idea rooted in the ahistorical and unnatural misperception that the most notable Black Americans were superhumans that sprung forth from collective misery. It discounts the many, many Black leaders who were –

and are – the children and grandchildren of courageous leaders in their own right.

Paul Robeson was a phenomenal actor, orator, singer, athlete, and activist. The family that produced him might be even more impressive. His father escaped enslavement to earn two college degrees and become a prominent minister. His mother was part of the Bustill family, who were famous abolitionists and included Grace Bustill Douglass, the crusading abolitionist and feminist.

Kamala Harris's path to the vice presidency began as a transformative district attorney. She refused to pursue the death penalty, and shifted her department's punitive focus away from sex workers and squarely onto

sex buyers and traffickers. She both provided a model for the movement to elect more Black and progressive district attorneys and spawned the national training institute for female candidates known as Emerge America. Vice President Harris would readily admit there is no explaining her uncommon courage without accounting for her civil rights activist parents and her education at the very university that produced Thurgood Marshall.

Martin Luther King is perhaps Black America's best-known leader. His grandfather was himself a crusading Black Baptist preacher and the first president of the Atlanta branch of the NAACP.

Whitney Houston became an iconic star of radio and

the silver screen. Her first cousin was Dionne Warwick. Through Warwick, Houston had close, life-shaping relationships with other celebrated female singers and actors like her "honorary aunt" Aretha Franklin, godmother Darlene Love, and close friend Cicely Tyson.

Malcolm X is America's most famous Black nationalist. Before him, his father Earl Little was a Black nationalist Baptist preacher who organized for Marcus Garvey. Harassment by the Ku Klux Klan forced the Littles to relocate from Omaha, Nebraska to Lansing, Michigan, where Earl was murdered by a Klan-like white supremacist group.

Stacey Abrams rose to become the first woman leader of a party in Georgia's legislature and the most impactful voting rights activist of the 21st century. Her parents were courageous civil rights activists and her father was among the youngest leaders of the Hattiesburg boycott in Mississippi.

Middle Tennessee claims a famous political father-son pair in former Congressman and Senator Albert Gore, Sr. and former Senator and Vice President Al Gore. But western Tennessee saw its own confrontational and crusading former Congressman Harold Ford, Sr. followed by the diplomatic, incisive, and consensus-building former Congressman Harold Ford, Jr.

From the time he started preaching at the age of four, Reverend Al Sharpton's early years were shaped by the mentorship of Black leaders



Ben Jealous

like Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., James Brown, and the incomparable Jesse Jackson. But it was his mother Ada Sharpton's work that inspired her son's founding of the National Action Network. Mrs. Sharpton rose from poverty to power as a prominent civil rights activist in New York City's outer boroughs and became president of Mothers in Action.

Fifteen years ago, I was named the youngest national president in the history of the NAACP. My grandmother Mamie Bland Todd trained future US Senator Barbara Mikulski as a social worker early in her career. In researching my latest book, I followed my own ancestry back to my grandmother's grandfather. In the late 1800s, Edward David Bland led Black Republicans into coalition with former white Confederate soldiers to form a third party that took over the Virginia state government. Known as the Readjusters, the bipartisan political movement won all statewide elected offices and controlled the Commonwealth of Virginia from 1881-85.

In that time, they abolished the poll tax and the whipping post; radically expanded Virginia Tech and created Virginia State University; and readjusted the terms of the Civil War debt to save the free public schools and take the state from a financial deficit into a surplus.

Parentage and family connection are not and never should be a prerequisite for leadership in our country. But we can still recognize that one of the greatest traditions in Black leadership is Black leaders who raise Black leaders.

Some of those leaders inspire with their art; others with their activism; many with both. The historical arc they help form – which sometimes wavers but ultimately bends towards justice – would not be possible without that tradition.

**So, if it occurs to you that you do not know enough about how your ancestors might have led, get curious and do some research. You might just find an interesting and inspiring piece of family history.**

## Biden-Harris Campaign Appoints Director of Black Media for Enhanced Outreach to Black Voters

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Newswire Senior  
National Correspondent  
@StacyBrownMedia

**W**ith hopes of strengthening its connection with Black voters, the Biden-Harris 2024 campaign has hired Jasmine Harris as the Director of Black Media. Jasmine Harris, who previously held a similar role for Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer.

Harris, who announced via email, will spearhead the campaign's efforts to engage and mobilize Black communities.

The decision follows the Biden-Harris reelection

campaign's significant investment in early ad purchases targeted at Black communities, more than a year ahead of the upcoming Election Day on Nov. 5.

However, despite tens of millions in ad buys directed at African Americans, the campaign still hasn't included the Black Press of America, one of the major catalysts in Biden's 2020 campaign victory over the twice-impeached and four-times indicted former President Donald Trump. The trade association, the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), represents the 250 African American-owned newspapers and media companies that comprise the Black Press of America, founded before the end of slavery in

1827 in New York.

The Black Press of America, which includes the Washington Informer, has reached out on multiple occasions to the Biden-Harris campaign, the Democratic National Committee, and the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.

Still, Quentin Fulks, the Principal Deputy Campaign Manager, emphasized to theGRIO the importance of mobilizing the diverse Biden-Harris coalition that secured their victory in 2020. "Black voters are a critical part of that winning coalition," Fulks stated.

He also highlighted the campaign's historic and early investment in Black media, starting in August 2023, and

its on-the-ground organizing initiatives in key communities.

"There's no one better equipped to continue to build on that work and communicate the stakes of this election directly to Black voters across the country," he said of Harris, who expressed gratitude for the opportunity to work with the campaign.

"Black reporters and outlets must always have a seat at the table as it relates to our nation's political leadership, especially when the stakes are as high as they are this election," Harris affirmed.

Democratic strategist Joel Payne praised the party's commitment to engaging with core constituencies and applauded the Biden-Harris campaign's decision



The decision follows the Biden-Harris reelection campaign's significant investment in early ad purchases targeted at Black communities, more than a year ahead of the upcoming Election Day on Nov. 5.

to appoint a Director of Black Media. "These types of investments in experienced staff show that the president and his team understand what it will take to keep their coalition together for 2024," Payne stated.

## OP-ED: Patients Over Profit Congress Can Improve 340B

By Ed Towns

**C**ongressman Mike Johnson, the new Speaker of the House has an opportunity to work in a bipartisan manner with Minority Leader, Hakeem Jeffries and follow the lead of a group of six U.S. Senators John Thune (R-S.D.), Debbie Stabenow (D-Mich.), Shelley Moore Capito (R-W.Va.), Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.), Jerry Moran (R-Kan.), and Ben Cardin (D-Md.), who formed a bi-partisan working group to find solutions that would provide stability and appropriate transparency to ensure the 340B program can continue to achieve its original

intent of supporting entities serving eligible patients.

Recently, the Senate HELP Committee Chairman Bernie Sanders (D-Vt.) released a report in which the senator called into question many of the practices we see today in the non-profit hospital industry. Referring to their tax-exempt status, the report observes that non-profit hospitals could play a significant role in delivering necessary care to Americans while also satisfying their charity care obligations. Instead, too often we learn that some of these hospitals are not directing these discounts to the patients they serve.

It takes decades to get anything big done in Washington, DC.

That's not something politicians there like to admit, but it's true—nowhere more than in the complicated field of healthcare policy. When I first became a congressman in the early 1980s, I worked with Ben Chavis on Health Care issues for example, we didn't have a prescription drug benefit for seniors. When I left the House a decade ago, seniors had access to lifesaving drugs, but the government lacked the power to negotiate prices with manufacturers. Last week the Biden Administration announced the first steps to setting up negotiations in Medicare made possible by the Inflation Reduction Act. There is more that can be done, and Congress has an obligation to do more when it comes

to making sure everyone has access to prescription medicines at affordable prices. Back in the early 1990s (with my support) Congress passed a law known as "340B" to do just that. Drug manufacturers are required by law to make medicines available to charity hospitals and pharmacies at a steep discount, with the idea that these healthcare centers would in turn make the medicines available to local patients for free or nearly for free (regardless of ability to pay).

Believe it or not, Congress is still trying to make the 340B program work three decades later. Hospitals today are rarely stand-alone concerns. They are usually part of broad, corporately owned networks

consisting of healthcare facilities in neighborhoods ranging from poor to rich, and from urban to rural. If one hospital qualifies to get discounted 340B drugs, this shouldn't matter—the local patients are the intended beneficiaries. But that's not how hospital networks are using 340B. As seen recently in Richmond VA, too often hospital networks are happy to use their branches in poor areas to get 340B drugs into the pipeline, but then re-route these medicines throughout the hospital network to be sold at full price to patients of all income levels. As someone who voted for the original 340B law, I can assure you this was not Congressional intent. We

wanted the drug companies to get affordable medicines to the patients who need them—we never intended for hospital networks to profit off this using clever redirection tactics.

Maybe that's why a bipartisan group of U.S. senators recently requested information from stakeholders about how the 340B program is working. I was pleased to see so many traditional civil rights, and other healthcare leaders weigh in on these and make health care disparities a key civil rights issue. efforts on this issue. We want to improve the 340B program Democrats and Republicans agree that the program should work the way Congress intended it to.

THE SUN-REPORTER

# RELIGIOUS SECTION

THE BAY AREA'S CHURCH NEWS & ACTIVITIES



## Sunday School Lesson

By Shunda Criswell

# The Supremacy of Christ

**Lesson Text: Colossians 1:15-28**

**Time: A.D. 60**

**Golden Text: "It pleased the Father that (Christ) should all fullness dwell" (Colossians 1:19).**

Jesus Christ is the Firstborn of every creature in the entire universe. The term "Firstborn" Biblically speaks of one who has

legal privilege of ownership. As the eternal Son of God, Christ has authority over everything that has been created. He is the Lord of the universe, the Sovereign of the world, the very One who merits (deserves) all praise, worship, and adoration. In Colossians 1:16, the Apostle Paul stated that all things were created by Christ. Who was the active

agent in creating the world? Jesus! All things that are seen and the things that are invisible came into existence by the Creator activity. Even the angels were made by God. Not only were all things made by God, but all things have a distinct purpose under the sun. Amen! Nature and all of creation must acknowledge Him as Lord. God is the Sustainer of all things in Colossians 1:17. Jesus Christ existed before Creation, and all things owe their existence to Him. It is Christ that maintains the universe He created. And Jesus Christ is the head of the church. This is why Paul records in Colossians 1:19, "For it pleased the Father that in Him, should all fullness dwell." Scholars have pronounced and alleged that Christ was a created being. Not so! Even Paul rejected that the false notion by stating that Christ is the divine Creator. He, Jesus, is the One who also died and rose again to become the Head of the

church. This opens up the door to reconciliation between a holy God and unholy mankind. Now through reconciliation, God reconciles all things to Himself, both things on earth and in Heaven. In the end of time, Jesus Christ will dominate, and bring Satan under control (see Revelation 20:10). There will be a new heaven and a new earth in which God rules in perfect righteousness. Now the Colossian Christians' sin and unbelief morals had made them the enemies of God. Their wicked ways opposed to the standards of God. Christ, however, had transformed the believers' lives. In their sinful behavior, the Colossians were unwilling and unable to please God. Nevertheless, through Christ's death on the cross, the Colossians Christians had been personally reconciled to God. Jesus Christ can present Christians Holy, unblemished, and beyond accusation in God's sight. Even though Christians sin at

times, in Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord, they can stand before a Holy and just God. Moreover, through the process of sanctification, Christ is continuing to refine the lives of His people. Amen! Paul urged the Colossians to continue in their faith in Christ Jesus. In doing so, this proved they had been reconciled to God. Paul's ministry constituted the main focus that believers are not moved from their hope in Jesus Christ. Paul's motto for his life in Christ Jesus was he suffered for Christ's sake. Paul suffered as he labored to bring the gospel to the people. Yes, just as Christ suffered during His earthly ministry, so Paul as a servant of Christ's body, continued suffering as he preaches the gospel to the world at hand. As a minister of the gospel, Paul preached after he received a specific commission from God. Paul did not design his own course of action. God gave him the task of revealing the mystery of the gos-

pel that had been hidden in time past. So it was, wherever Paul traveled, he had a single goal in mind, so spread the gospel that folks would be saved. His desire was to bring people to spiritual maturity in Christ. His preaching encompassed positive instructions to Christians so that they could reach their spiritual potential in the Christ. When it's all been said and done, we have been created by Christ and for Him. One scholar recorded, "We must never allow suffering to deter us from declaring God's Word; our trials may be sent upon us to benefit others." Amen! Jesus is the last word from God. Jesus is the full and complete manifestation of God. When we see and hear Christ in Scripture, we are in fact viewing and listening to God." (Mr. James R. Gordon). Be Blessed!

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921-4850, 921-0878

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qm  
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7:30pm  
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# Rep. Barbara Lee Says She Would Bring Missing Voice to U.S. Senate

By Tanu Henry

**R**ep. Barbara Lee (D-CA-12) says if she wins the U.S. senatorial race this year to succeed Sen. Dianne Feinstein, who passed away in September last year, she would bring the voice, insights and perspective of a Black woman to the U.S. Senate.

During a virtual roundtable with Black journalists in California on Jan. 30, Lee said, as Senator, she would be “one out of 100”, bringing her lived experiences as a Black woman and a progressive to the body.

She would also be able to include activists and advocates for housing and other issues in the process of

drafting legislation. “They will be able to get to Washington, D.C. and raise their voices. It is important to let people know that to make this democracy work, they have to be involved,” said Lee.

“The more people that have perspectives that are not represented in the Senate will be there with me in the

Senate,” added Lee. To win, March 5 primary voters would have to elect Lee over her three closest competitors: California reps Katie Porter (D-CA-47) and Rep. Adam Schiff (D-CA-30) – and well as Republican Steve Garvey, a former first baseman for the LA Dodgers and the San Diego Padres.

The three other African Americans in the U.S. Senate are men: Sen. Tim Scott (R-South Carolina), Sen. Cory Booker (D-New Jersey) and Sen. Raphael Warnock (D-Georgia).

Lee said, as Senator, she would also have the ability to invite witnesses to testify during senatorial hearings.

“It is selecting people who have perspectives that have not been heard for years -- or never – in the Senate,” said Lee. “I would ask them and find a way to get them to Washington, D.C., to share their experiences about why the legislation would help to make their lives better.”

# The California Black Freedom Fund Announces \$3.5 Million in Grants to 75 Black-Led Orgs

By Tanu Henry

**O**n Feb. 1, the California Black Freedom Fund (BFF) announced its seventh round of funding totaling \$3.5 million to 73 Black-

led “power-building” and “movement-based” organizations based in different parts of the state.

Since its launch in 2021, BFF has distributed more than \$37.7 million in funding to organizations committed

to addressing problems rooted in systemic and institutional racism. Among the organization’s focus areas are health, maternal health, gentrification and housing, over-incarceration and policing, education, among other issues.

“We are thrilled to support groups throughout the state that are working to build Black power and address the barriers standing in the way of opportunity and freedom for too many Black Californians,” said Marc Philpart, Executive Director of Black Freedom

Fund. “These courageous and visionary grassroots advocates and community leaders are transforming our cities, our state -- and our world.”

According to BFF leaders, the organization is expanding the work it does this year to include the launch of a

sabbatical program, an annual “State of Black California” report and corresponding conference; and a legal defense fund.

**BFF is supported by funding from the State of California and more than 50 private and institutional donors.**

# Irma Anderson, Richmond’s First Black Mayor, Passes at 93

By Tanu Henry

**T**he city of Richmond flew its flag at half-mast on Jan. 31 to honor Irma Anderson, the city’s first Black female mayor, who died on

Jan. 28, at her home. Anderson, who served as Mayor of Richmond from 2001 to 2006, was 93.

Before she was elected Mayor, Anderson served on the Richmond City Council from 1990 to 2022. Her late

husband, the Rev. Booker T. Anderson Jr., a civil rights movement activist, also served as Richmond Mayor from 1973 to 1974.

“She was a strong leader for quality housing and development. She worked

to help bring Target and the shopping center to downtown Richmond,” said former Richmond Councilmember Nat Bates to the Richmond Standard.

Prior to joining the Richmond City Council, Anderson was

the city’s first Black Public Health Nursing Director. For 20 years before that, she worked at Contra Costa Health.

**Bates is survived by her elder son, Ahmad Anderson who describes his mother as a “servant leader.”**



Mayor Irma Anderson

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## Empowering Health: Join us for Peripheral Artery Disease and Glucose Screenings

**A**s we navigate the complexities of modern life, it’s crucial to prioritize our health. In this spirit, the Southeast Community Center is excited to invite you to a special event on February 16th from 12pm to 4pm – a day dedicated to Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) and Glucose screenings.

will provide valuable insights into Peripheral Artery Disease and glucose levels. Following the screenings, attendees will have access to essential resources and information that can be utilized to advocate for their health with their healthcare providers. This event is not just about screenings; it’s about empowering individuals to be active participants in their well-being.

This event, organized in collaboration with 100 Black Men of the Bay Area, aims to raise awareness about diabetes, particularly within the black community.

Deputy Director Larry Berry emphasizes the importance of this event for SFPUC employees, saying, “Our health is our most valuable asset. I encourage all SFPUC employees to attend the Peripheral Artery Disease and Glucose screenings event. It is an opportunity to take charge of your health and be part of a movement that prioritizes well-being.”

Why focus on diabetes awareness? Diabetes is a prevalent health concern, and its impact is significantly felt in the black community. By attending this event, you not only take a proactive step towards understanding your health but also contribute to the broader movement to increase awareness within our community.

The Southeast Community Center is proud to partner with 100 Black Men of the Bay Area for this impactful event. It is open to everyone over the age of 18, emphasizing inclusivity and a collective commitment to health.

100 Black Men of the Bay Area has been at the forefront of advocating for health awareness, organizing similar events across the country. Their commitment to empowering individuals to know their health status and engage in meaningful conversations with healthcare providers aligns seamlessly with the goals of the Southeast Community Center.

**Mark your calendars for February 16th, and join us at the Southeast Community Center from 12pm to 4pm. Let us come together to raise awareness, take charge of our health, and build a healthier community. For more information about the event and registration, please visit Eventbrite or contact Larry Berry.**

The screenings at the Southeast Community Center

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# Atty Gen. Rob Bonta, Lawmakers, Announce Legislation to Protect Youth Online

By Tanu Henry

**A**t a press conference in Oakland on Jan. 29, Attorney General Rob Bonta joined Sen. Nancy Skinner (D-Berkeley) and Assemblymember Buffy Wicks (D-Oakland) to announce two pieces of legislation designed to protect children online.

The bills are Senate Bill (SB) 976, the Protecting Youth from Social Media Addiction Act and Assembly Bill (AB) 1949, the California Children's Data Privacy Act.

Skinner authored SB 976, which addresses online addiction affecting teenage users, while Wicks's bill, AB 1949, takes on big tech by proposing data privacy and children rights protections.

"Social media companies unfortunately show us time and time again that they are all too willing to ignore the detriment to our children, the pain to our children, the mental health and physical challenges they face, in order to pursue profits," Bonta said.

SB 976 would allow parents to control the nature and frequency of the content their under-18-year-old

children see on social media. Notifications from social media platforms would also be paused from midnight to 6 am and controls would allow parents to set time limits on their children's usage based on their discretion.

Skinner stated that the longer that kids are on their phones during the day, the higher the risk for depression, anxiety and other related issues.

Bonta and 33 other attorney generals had previously filed a lawsuit against Meta, owner of the popular social media applications Instagram and Facebook. The filing claims that the company purposefully

uses algorithmized content that harms younger audiences.

"Social media companies have the ability to protect our kids, they could act, but they do not," Skinner said.

The Child Data Privacy Act would strengthen existing protections for data privacy under the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA). The lawmakers argue that the law does not have effective protection for those under 18 years old.

"In a digital age where the vulnerabilities of young users are continually exploited, we cannot afford



**Bonta and 33 other attorney generals had previously filed a lawsuit against Meta, owner of the popular social media applications Instagram and Facebook. The filing claims that the company purposefully uses algorithmized content that harms younger audiences**

to let our laws lag behind, their online experience will our children deserve be safeguarded from invasive complete assurance that practices," Wicks said.

## Poll: 44% of Black Californians Give State's Health Care System Low Marks

By Tanu Henry

**A**ccording to results of a survey released by the California Health Care Foundation (CHCF) on Jan. 31, over 40% of Black Californians are dissatisfied with the state's health care system.

On racial equity, a statement

CHCF released last week read, "44% of Black Californians and 33% of Latino/x Californians say the state has made "only a little progress" or "no progress at all" in recent years."

The report, titled the 2024 CHCF California Health Policy Survey, is released annually. It provides a "snapshot of Californians' views on health issues." The research for it was conducted in September

and October last year.

"Access to mental health care and the rising cost of care have emerged in this year's poll as two of the health issues Californians are most concerned about," says Kristof Stremikis, director of Market Analysis and Insight at CHCF.

"Californians have strong views on the need to improve treatment options for people

experiencing serious mental illness — and they are increasingly frustrated with their own personal access to mental health providers," Stremikis continued.

Among all races and ethnic groups, the poll found that 53% of Californians postponed seeking medical care because of high costs.

It also revealed that 25% of

the people polled say they or someone close to them needs treatment for serious mental illness. For substance abuse or addiction, that number is 21%.

The survey also found that 14% of Black Californians say they or someone they know has experienced homelessness.

Sen. Susan Talamantes Eggman (D-Stockton), chair of the Senate Committee on

Health said policymakers should be concerned.

"The CHCF poll also highlights a range of other issues that we will all need to focus on in this year's health policy debates -- from promoting racial equity in the health care system to building a health workforce that looks more like California

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