



Los Angeles Community Action Network/Stop LAPD Spying Coalition Statement on Racist Recording of City Leaders

We are disgusted by the hateful and racist language used by Council President Nury Martinez, Councilmembers Kevin De Leon and Gilbert Cedillo, and LA Labor Federation president Ron Herrera. We are calling for the immediate resignation or removal of these elected officials. These individuals, who comprise a powerful faction of this city's leadership, are recorded engaging in reprehensible discourse, and violent language that dehumanizes the Black community in Los Angeles. Using racist rhetoric that would have made the ghost of Governor George Wallace proud. Council President Martinez and her colleagues engage in a conversation that included comparing Black children to monkeys needing to be taken out of sight and beaten so they would act right and comparing the entire Black community to the Wizard of Oz, a single white man behind a curtain.

The rhetoric weaponized by the council members insidiously frames this city as an adversarial battleground between monolithic Black and Brown communities. Los Angeles communities know this is not the case, many of LA's hardest-won victories have come through solidarity between poor Black and Brown communities. City leaders have historically thrived from our division, leveraging their borders between our communities to more easily secure resources and prevent us from building community power. The Councilmembers captured in the recording continue this racist tradition of division for their own personal gain. Their comments undermine the efforts of groups who have worked tirelessly to bring Black and Brown communities together. We cannot have leadership that is working to undo the work we've already done especially since there is still so much to do. Los Angeles continues to not address one of the largest unhoused populations in the country. LAPD continues to be a violent and racist police force with an ever-ballooning budget and surveillance arsenal. There is no tapping our feet together and wishing we were home in Los Angeles, Black people have been violently abandoned. These recent conversations reveal that more of the same is in store for the Black community if left uninterrupted.

The aforementioned issues have always impacted Black communities with disproportionate severity. We cannot trust anti-Black city leaders to remedy ills driven by and exacerbated by anti-Blackness. For months City Council, led by Nury Martinez has lectured politically engaged Angelenos on their "lack of decorum." She's created legislative devices in order to silence questions and dissent; most of which are driven by criminal penalties. In a twist that drips with irony, she is caught on tape disparaging L.A.'s Black community with three colleagues while scheming to divide the city in a way that benefits Brown folks at the expense of African Americans. Every decision they have made and continue to make, must be viewed through the lens of their anti-Black conspiracy.

There is no way for Los Angeles to move forward without the removal of all three elected officials. Our expectation of Black elected officials is to lead the call for the immediate removal and resignation of all three council members. Now is not the time to find common ground nor give political cover or courtesy to individuals demonstrating they have the worst intentions for our people. Black and Brown organizations and communities have worked for decades to resolve the tension between our communities. We will not allow racist city council members to derail that. We call upon the Los Angeles City Council and the breadth of organizations committed to the liberation and well-being of Black and Brown communities to demand the resignation of these three elected officials. **Moving forward the only agenda item for LA city council meetings on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays - REMOVE Nury Martinez, Kevin de Leon, and Gil Cedillo.**