
**EVITARUS CONGRATULATES LOS ANGELES COUNTY AND THE BOARD
OF SUPERVISORS ON THE HISTORIC PASSAGE OF MEASURE H
TO HELP END HOMELESSNESS**

**MEASURE H—THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY PLAN TO PREVENT AND COMBAT
HOMELESSNESS—PASSES WITH TWO-THIRDS SUPERMAJORITY**

¼ CENT SALES TAX WILL PROVIDE:

- HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION SERVICES
- HOUSING & SHELTERS
- COORDINATED OUTREACH
- MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
- JOB TRAINING SERVICES
- CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES

March 31, 2017—EVITARUS congratulates Los Angeles County, Chairman Mark Ridley-Thomas and the Board of Supervisors, the Los Angeles County Homeless Initiative, and the Yes on Measure H campaign on the successful passage of “the Los Angeles County Plan to Prevent and Combat Homelessness”—Measure H.

Voters approved Measure H with nearly 70 percent support, a near 40-percentage point vote margin. The victory sent a clear message to policy makers—providing services for residents who are homeless ranks among the very highest priorities for Los Angeles County.

EVITARUS is honored to have provided public opinion research, strategic advice, and counsel to the Board of Supervisors and the Los Angeles County Chief Executive’s Office in connection with the measure.

The passage of Measure H represents a historic moment. According to the County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk, records from as far back as 1902 show Measure H is the only revenue proposal ever attempted during a March election, when voter turnout is typically low and a two-thirds majority is needed for approval.

Board Chairman Ridley-Thomas was the driving force behind efforts to declare a state of emergency on homelessness and to place an initiative on the March 7th ballot, according to [Los Angeles County](#). “This is a historic victory, as Measure H will kick-start an unprecedented effort to fight and prevent homelessness, the defining civic issue of our time,” Supervisor Ridley-Thomas said. “Thanks to the generosity and compassion of the people of Los Angeles County, we now have the means to end this crisis.”

Shakari Byerly, EVITARUS Managing Partner and Principal Researcher, directed the research conducted on behalf of the Chief Executive’s Office. “The research made evident that there was considerable public will to invest in a comprehensive approach to addressing the homelessness crisis,” Byerly said.

“Measure H revenue will enable the most comprehensive plan to combat homelessness in the history of Los Angeles County,” said Phil Ansell, Director of the County’s [Homeless Initiative](#). This hard-earned victory showcased the leadership, vision, and values of the Board of Supervisors, which led the County in actualizing the best of our collective values.

Supervisor Sheila Khehl stated “passage of Measure H is a significant milestone in the County’s effort, in partnership with local cities and service providers, to reduce homelessness. The voters clearly recognized the urgency of addressing this crisis, and of providing the resources needed to fund solutions to it. We are on our way to reducing homelessness by helping people to stay housed, finding housing for those who don’t have a home, and providing the services necessary for folks to stay in their homes.”

According to [proponents](#), the ballot measure will “end homelessness for 45,000 families and individuals across Los Angeles County within five years. It will also prevent homelessness for 30,000 individuals and families over the same time period, including women and children, veterans, seniors, foster youth, and survivors of domestic violence.”

Supervisor Janice Hahn called Measure H “the most inspiring and moving campaign I’ve ever been a part of,” adding that it was “about helping people most of us will never meet.”

“The question we have to ask ourselves is not whether or not homelessness is solvable. It is,” Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti said at a news conference. “The question is, will we do something about it, a question we’re asking ourselves these days too much. What did we do in moments of crisis? Who are we? Will we step forward?”

“From Pomona to Palisades, from Palmdale to (San) Pedro, we have too many unhoused Angelenos,” Mayor Garcetti said. “It is unacceptable in Los Angeles. It is unforgivable if we do nothing about it.”

“Voters across L.A. County have made the historic decision that Measure H is a smart investment and the right thing to do for our fellow human beings,” said Supervisor Ridley-Thomas, whose office spearheaded the measure.

A Decisive Response to Overcome A Humanitarian Crisis

According to the [U.S. Housing and Urban Development Department](#), the City and County of Los Angeles have the most chronically homeless people in the country (approximately 47,000), and nearly all of them sleep on the streets.

In addition, the Los Angeles homeless count revealed that the number of homeless residents continued to increase. From 2015 to 2016, there was a 55% increase in homelessness among women, and a 20% increase in encampments throughout the County. In response, the Board of Supervisors declared in early 2016 that the crisis of homelessness that consumes communities

across Los Angeles demands the maximum possible response by the County, cities, and community partners throughout the region.

The Board then directed the County’s Chief Executive Officer to explore options to increase revenues dedicated specifically to address Los Angeles County’s homeless crisis. The Board’s directive included an immediate commission to conduct polling and research activities to inform its decision making in connection with a potential revenue enhancement measure.

The Chief Executive Office turned to EVITARUS to provide data and advice to the Board on issues related to homelessness, transportation, parks and open space. EVITARUS also helped lead a bi-partisan group of researchers in crafting a consensus recommendation about voter support for a range of potential measures leading up to the November 2016 election—Measures M, P, and HHH (City of Los Angeles), all of which ultimately passed.

Notably, 5,155 Los Angeles County voters were polled across three surveys to assess support for a November 2016 ballot measure to address homelessness, and in each study, support remained at or above the 70% threshold.

Supervisor Ridley-Thomas emphasized, “we began polling to learn what we must do on this issue. In poll after poll—whether they were done by Republicans or Democrats did not make any difference—it was made abundantly clear that homelessness is the top-tier issue for the people of this county...homelessness was the No. 1 issue. This was an unprecedented revelation.

“That means, in effect, that it’s higher than crime and public safety, higher than transportation, higher than education, health—you name it.”

Following the November election, 2,002 Los Angeles County voters were polled across two surveys to assess support for a homelessness ballot measure in the March 2017 election. This research indicated that voters still felt strongly about dedicating sales tax revenue to addressing the homelessness crisis.

Even so, many felt that the ballot measure had little chance of passing, especially in a low turn-out election. Those who tend to vote in low turn-out elections are historically less likely to support tax increases. In addition, a higher percentage of low turn-out election voters vote by mail, making it harder to implement traditional get-out-the-vote campaigns.

Throughout all of the research conducted on the County’s behalf, however, the public voiced support with remarkable clarity, focus, and consistency—**eradicating homelessness continued to rank among the highest policy priorities for Los Angeles County voters.**

A Broad Coalition of Support

On December 6, 2016, the Board of Supervisors adopted a [Resolution](#) declaring a Homeless Emergency in the County of Los Angeles, and approved placing a sales tax ballot measure on the March 7, 2017 ballot.

Subsequently, according to the [Los Angeles Times](#), the Yes on Measure H campaign enjoyed the support of a historically broad coalition of stakeholders, including most of the region's elected officials, business, unions, and civic and community leaders. The Measure was endorsed by more than 250 business, nonprofit, labor, government, and religious organizations, including the United Way of Greater Los Angeles and the *Los Angeles Times* editorial board.

EVITARUS provided polling and advisory services to inform the planning and decision making of the Yes on Measure H campaign.

“With nearly 70% of voters supporting Measure H, it’s clear that our community will no longer accept homelessness as the status quo,” said Elise Buik, President and CEO of the nonprofit United Way of Greater Los Angeles. “We are proud to have been a part of such a broad coalition of civic and community leaders, all working towards a shared vision: a Los Angeles County without homelessness.”

The campaign received contributions from real estate and investment firms, labor organizations, philanthropists, and other groups with ties to Los Angeles, and sent about 4 million mailers and advertised in Los Angeles County newspapers. “Businesses realize that the cost of doing nothing is not nothing,” said Gary Toeb-ben, president and CEO of the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce. “We also realize that investing in the future is essential. Measure H is a wise investment and a smart decision.”

A Historic Victory

On March 28, 2017, the Board of Supervisors declared the March 7, 2017 Consolidated Municipal and Special [Elections](#) officially concluded. According to the County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk [Final Official Election Returns](#), Measure H garnered 585,905 votes or 69.34% of the total, exceeding the two-thirds supermajority required for passage.

Measure H will generate about \$355 million annually for homeless programs over 10 years.

“Thank you to all the voters,” said Mayor Eric Garcetti. “I’m hopeful this will not only help us address homelessness, but truly end it.”

“This is the face of democracy in the County,” Supervisor Ridley-Thomas emphasized. “All around us, we find human beings living in utter squalor – a shocking number of them families with children,” he said. “With this historic vote, we are taking a bold step towards ending this humanitarian crisis, the defining civic issue of our time.”