



EDUCATE  
ENGAGE  
EMPOWER

*Celebrating 20 Years*

*1992-2012*

EMPOWERMENT  
CONGRESS

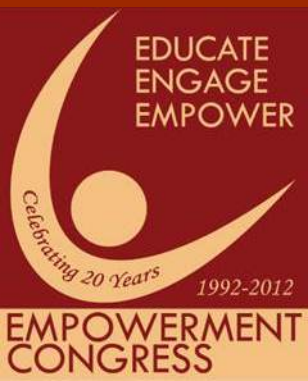
# History

- Founded in 1992 by Los Angeles City Councilman Mark Ridley-Thomas
- Dynamic partnership among neighborhood groups, residents, nonprofit organizations, businesses, religious institutions, and community leaders.
- Model and precursor for the City of Los Angeles' Neighborhood Councils



# Purpose

- Reciprocal accountability
- Constituent involvement in decision-making
- Develop strategies that shape policies and legislation
- Educate, engage, and empower individuals and communities



# Structure

**Executive  
Committee**

**Leadership Council**

**L.A. County Board of Supervisors,  
Mark Ridley-Thomas**

**Empowerment Congress Support staff**

**Arts &  
Culture**

**Economic  
Development**

**Education**

**Environment**

**Health**

**Human  
Services**

**Mental  
Health**

**Public  
Safety**

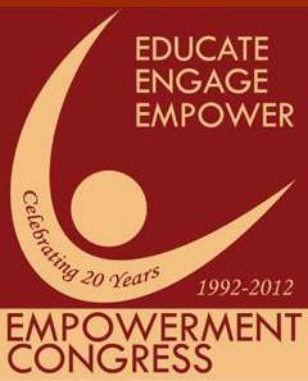
**Senior  
Services**



# Roles and Responsibilities

## Empowerment Congress Committees

- 9 Committees, each led by a Chair and Co-Chair
- Individuals represent communities and organizations
- Identify and discuss issues and concerns within a specific policy area
- Discuss how the committee will address issues impacting the community



# Roles and Responsibilities

## Empowerment Congress Leadership

- Comprised of Committee Chairs and Co-Chairs
- Reviews and sets the overall direction of the Empowerment Congress
- Guides the work of the Committees
- Recruits and develops membership
- Represents the Empowerment Congress in the community
- Works with Supervisor Ridley-Thomas' Office to implement the work of the Committees.



# Roles and Responsibilities

## Supervisor Ridley-Thomas/Second District Staff

- Provide input to Committees about how EC work intersects with work of SD2
- Connect to individuals/communities/organizations that are directly impacted by policy work
- Receive candid feedback on policies and strategies from those most directly impacted and connected to the community.





## Annual Summit

- Convenes a broad base of community representatives and organizations
- Engages and motivates the community to remain or become involved
- Celebrates the work of the Empowerment Congress
- Provides:
  - Overall status report that often features a keynote speaker
  - Workshop sessions covering most relevant issues



## Key Features of EC

- Proactive process for engagement
- Connects communities with their elected representative
- Long-term commitment and sustainability
- Flexible structure
- Diversity: individuals, organizations, and communities
- Leadership development

# Public Policy Impacts

## City of Los Angeles (1991 – 2002)

- Land Use Issues
- Animal Control
- Institutionalization of Neighborhood Councils
- Predatory Lending
- Economic Development
- Redlining

## Public Policy Impacts

### California State Assembly and Senate (2002 – 2008)

- School-based health centers
- Rochester House
- Budget
  - Addressed funding impacts at local level
  - Ensured communities accessed funding

## Public Policy Impacts

County of Los Angeles (2008 – present)

- Health Services
  - New Martin Luther King, Jr. Hospital
  - School-Based Health Centers
- Economic Development
  - Jobs
  - Small Business Advocacy
- Transportation
  - Crenshaw/LAX Transit Line