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Maxine Waters' Legacy of Service and Fearless Advocacy Continues to Resonate Across Her District

By James C. Luckey, Jr.
Publisher/Editor, Observer Group Newspapers of Southern California, Inc.

For decades, Congresswoman Maxine Waters has stood as one of the most recognizable and unapologetic voices in American politics — a leader many across Los Angeles County and beyond affectionately call "Auntie Maxine."

As she once again seeks reelection, supporters throughout communities including South Los Angeles, Compton, Inglewood, Torrance and neighboring areas continue reflecting on a political career built on advocacy, accountability and an unwavering commitment to Black and Brown communities, working families and those too often left behind in Washington.

Long before she became a national political figure, Waters was already fighting for equity in California. During her 14 years in the California State Legislature, she championed affirmative action policies aimed at expanding opportunities for Black and Brown communities, women and historically excluded groups. Supporters say many of those efforts mirrored what would later become known nationally as diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives.

Her work helped expand access to contracting opportunities, employment and economic mobility at a time when many systemic barriers remained firmly in place.

Waters also emerged as a strong international voice on human rights issues, including the global fight against apartheid in South Africa. Over the years, she has additionally advocated for humanitarian support and policy attention involving Haiti and Caribbean communities, efforts supporters say reflected her broader commitment to Black communities and underserved populations worldwide.

But it was in Congress where Waters would become one of the nation's most influential advocates on economic justice and financial accountability.

Since arriving in Congress in 1991 and joining the House Financial Services Committee, Waters has built a national reputation as a fearless and outspoken advocate for women, children, Black and Brown communities, seniors and low-income families. Through her leadership roles on the committee, she has consistently pushed for stronger protections for consumers, investors, small businesses and vulnerable populations often overlooked in national economic policy debates.

Over the years, she developed deep expertise in financial services and banking policy, often challenging Wall Street firms and major corporations over predatory lending and abusive financial practices that disproportionately impacted working-class communities.

In a historic move, House Democrats selected Waters to become the first woman and first African American to chair the powerful House Financial Services Committee — a milestone that reflected decades of leadership on consumer protection, housing and economic justice issues.

At the time, Waters said her priorities included protecting consumers from abusive financial practices, expanding affordable housing opportunities, addressing homelessness and ensuring underserved communities had fair access to the financial system.

That leadership became especially important during periods of economic uncertainty, housing instability and widening racial wealth gaps.

Among Waters' most notable accomplishments was her work during the nation's housing and foreclosure crisis, where she pushed aggressively for protections aimed at keeping families in their homes. She played a key role in creating the Neighborhood Stabilization Program, which provided billions in grants to states, local governments and nonprofit organizations to combat foreclosures, abandoned properties and neighborhood blight. Through multiple rounds of funding, Waters helped secure approximately \$6 billion for the program, helping stabilize communities hit hardest by the economic downturn.

Housing justice has remained one of Waters' defining priorities throughout her career. Beyond foreclosure prevention, she has consistently introduced and supported legislation aimed at helping vulnerable populations secure stable housing and economic security.

Her legislative efforts included the Ending Homelessness Act, which focused on expanding affordable housing opportunities nationwide, as well as legislation aimed at increasing housing assistance for foster youth transitioning into adulthood.

Waters also championed protections for military service members through consumer protection legislation designed to shield troops and their families from predatory financial practices. In addition, she advocated for reforms intended to help senior citizens avoid foreclosure and remain safely in their homes.

Supporters say those priorities reflect Waters' longstanding focus on communities too often overlooked in larger political debates — including low-income families, seniors, foster youth, veterans and working-class Black and Brown communities.

While Waters is widely known for her outspoken political style, supporters also point to her effectiveness as a legislator. Over the years, she played key roles in advancing bipartisan measures involving flood insurance reform, community lender relief, terrorism risk insurance and economic investment protections.

Waters' influence has also extended far beyond Capitol Hill. While she has long been recognized for her outspoken advocacy and willingness to challenge those in power, the rise of social media introduced her leadership style to a younger generation of Americans who affectionately embraced her as "Auntie Maxine."

Moments such as her now-famous insistence on "reclaiming my time" during congressional hearings became cultural touchstones online, particularly among millennials and younger Black and Brown voters who saw in Waters a fearless voice



Trump to Black Woman Reporter About White House Ballroom: 'I Doubled The Size of It, You Dumb Person'

WASHINGTON D.C. — White House defends Trump's comments, stating they are in line with his transparency and the public's distrust of the media.

For the second time in recent weeks, President Trump has lashed out at a Black woman journalist questioning his expensive building projects. The latest blowup, over a question about the ballooning cost of the new White House ballroom, adds to a long pattern of Trump attacking female journalists, often women of color, whose reporting he doesn't like.

Trump's latest personal attack against a woman reporter came as the president took questions before departing for a trip to China. In an exchange shared across social media, MS Now reporter Akayla Gardner asked Trump about the ballooning budget of the ballroom that Trump is attempting to build after he controversially tore down the East Wing of the White House.

"I've doubled the size of it because we obviously need that," Trump said of the ballroom project. "And we're right now on budget, under budget and ahead of schedule."

As Gardner asked a follow-up question about the cost of the ballroom doubling, Trump cut her off, leaned toward her and snarled, "I doubled the size of it, you dumb person. I doubled the size. You are, you are not a smart person."

White House defends Trump's comments

Despite the personal nature of Trump's comments against Gardner and his long track record of going after women asking him questions, the White House is defending the president's latest remarks. The Daily Beast reports that White House Deputy Press Secretary Abigail Jackson said in a statement, "President Trump has never been politically correct, never holds back, and in large part, the American people re-elected him for his transparency."

Jackson further said of Trump's remarks to Gardner, "This has nothing to do with gender — it has everything to do with the fact that the President's and the public's trust in the media is at all-time lows."

The White House's Rapid Response 47 social media page also doubled down on the exchange, posting a clip of Trump's exchange with Gardner and attaching the label "FAKE NEWS" to her accurate remark that the price of the ballroom project has recently doubled from previous estimates.

Growing list of Trump insults against women in journalism

Trump's remarks against Gardner represent the second time in the past few days that the president has personally attacked a Black woman journalist. Last week, Trump called ABC News Senior Political Correspondent Rachel Scott "one of the worst reporters" and "a horror show" after saying she'd asked "a stupid question" about the cost of construction projects Trump has launched around Washington, D.C., monuments.

These attacks are part of a long list of personal insults launched by Trump against women journalists. Scott herself has been on the receiving end of Trump's ire before; in December, he called her "obnoxious" and "a terrible reporter" over a question about controversial strikes against alleged drug boats. In other incidents, Trump has referred to women reporters as "stupid" or "ugly" and shouted down one journalist by saying, "Quiet, piggy."

As Trump pushes controversial projects like the White House ballroom while many Americans remain unhappy with the economy, the war with Iran and other policies, the president can expect more tough questions. If those questions come from women, and particularly women of color, Trump seems determined to personally attack these reporters with comments unbecoming of the president of the United States.

Floyd Mayweather Jr. Ordered to Pay \$1M in Child Support in Paternity Case With Former Stripper

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA — Floyd Mayweather Jr. has been ordered by a Nevada court to pay nearly \$1 million in back child support after being legally declared the father of a child with a former Las Vegas strip club dancer. He must also pay monthly support and court lien enforcement.



Court records state that Paige Moorehead, who previously worked at his Las Vegas strip club, claimed she had an 8-year relationship with him before becoming pregnant in 2021, according to TMZ.

Moorehead filed a petition in June 2023 asking the court to establish legal paternity. She also alleged that Mayweather ended their relationship after learning about the pregnancy and later removed her from his business.

She further claimed he pressured her to end the pregnancy while she was still employed at his Girl Collection club. The dispute eventually escalated into a formal court case.

Mayweather failed to respond to court orders and did not take a required DNA test. Because of this, the judge issued a default ruling and legally recognized him as the father.

The court ordered him to pay \$32,850 per month in child support, along with \$933,050 in back payments covering years since the child's birth.

Records show Mayweather has already paid about \$151,000. The court also allowed Moorehead to place a lien of up to \$2 million on his California properties to secure the remaining balance.

"Flipping the Script on Aging":

California Pushes for Greater Support During Older Californians Month

By Edward Henderson
California Black Media

As California closes out Older Californians Month this May, the state recognizes that its senior population continues to grow at a historic pace.

Acknowledging that fact, state leaders and advocates are warning that the quality of life for aging adults in the state will depend not only on access to healthcare and housing, but also on ensuring older adults are fully included in conversations around mental and behavioral health.

In a proclamation recognizing Older Californians Month, Gov. Gavin Newsom emphasized the increasingly important role older residents play across the state.

"California is home to nearly nine million older residents who immeasurably enrich our families, communities, and economy through their diverse life experiences, cultures, and contributions," the proclamation states.

Newsom's announcement highlighted that California is facing a major demographic shift. By 2030, one in four Californians will be age 60 or older, while more than one million residents are projected to be over the age of 85. State officials say those changes are already reshaping discussions around healthcare access, caregiving, transportation, housing, and community support systems.

This year's Older Californians Month theme — "Flip the Script on Aging" — focuses on challenging stereotypes surrounding older adults and promoting a more inclusive vision of aging.

"Stigma and stereotypes are harmful to the self-image of older people and feed inequities and discrimination in systems of care and in communities more broadly," the proclamation reads.

At the same time, the California Commission on Aging (CCoA) is launching a new statewide awareness initiative centered specifically on older adult behavioral health. The effort follows the implementation of Proposition 1 and the Behavioral Health Services Act, which significantly restructures how behavioral health programs are funded throughout California.

According to the Commission, the initiative aims to ensure older adults are not overlooked as counties redesign mental health and substance use services.

"These materials are a call to action," said CCoA Behavioral Health Committee Chair Janet Frank.

"As counties implement major system changes, we must ensure older adults are not left behind in



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behavioral health planning, funding, and services," said Frank.

The Commission recently released two publications outlining growing concerns over service gaps and access barriers affecting older Californians. Among the issues highlighted are reduced local resources, cuts to prevention and early intervention programs, and ongoing barriers such as transportation limitations, cost, stigma, and complicated healthcare systems.

The reports also point to troubling statistics. More than 12% of older adults experience mental illness annually, while roughly one in nine older adults need substance use treatment each year. Yet many never receive care.

Carolyn Johnson, a 70-year-old Sacramento resident, says those challenges are becoming more visible as California's aging population grows.

"A lot of people still think mental health is something older generations don't talk about," Johnson said. "But loneliness, grief, anxiety, and depression absolutely affect us, especially when people lose spouses, retire, or become isolated."

Johnson, who retired after more than 30 years as a school librarian, says she has watched many friends struggle to navigate behavioral healthcare systems that often feel designed for younger populations.

"Sometimes seniors just give up trying to get help," she said. "The process can feel overwhelming."

The Commission warns that unmet behavioral health needs can lead to worse physical health outcomes and higher healthcare costs over time. Advocates are now urging local governments and policymakers to include older adults directly in planning decisions as counties develop new Integrated Plans under the Behavioral Health Services Act.

"Older Californians are at a critical intersection of health, aging, and equity," Commission Chair Dr. David Lindeman said in the release. "We cannot afford to reduce services at a time when need is growing."

State officials say California's broader Master Plan for Aging is intended to address many of these concerns through expanded healthcare access, dementia prevention and care, affordable housing initiatives, climate preparedness programs, and greater support for caregivers.

The governor's proclamation specifically highlighted "home and community care essential to our economy and our families" as well as efforts to improve "behavioral health system modernization, including more geriatric care."

For Johnson, the discussion surrounding aging is ultimately about dignity and visibility.

"There are so many older people still contributing every day," she said. "People volunteer, care for family members, mentor our grandchildren, and stay active in our communities. Aging shouldn't mean becoming invisible."

World & Nation

We Need Money Now: Altadena and Pasadena Fire Survivors Rally at State Capitol for More Rebuilding Support

By Antonio Ray Harvey
California Black Media

More than 80 survivors of the devastating January 2025 Eaton Fire from Pasadena and Altadena visited the California State Capitol on May 19 to advocate for more recovery support from Sacramento during what they describe as a slow rebuild.

Organized by the Dena Rise Up (DRU) coalition, the survivors are demanding housing relief, fair insurance protections, environmental remediation, long-term recovery funding, and preservation of their communities' cultural legacy.

"The reason why we are here is that we're in a position of being at risk of never returning to Altadena," said Heavenly Hughes, co-founder and executive director of the mutual aid nonprofit My Tribe Rise. "Today, we're saying 'SOS.' We need help today. We need money now. We need urgent and immediate assistance when it comes to housing funds, (and) when it comes to rebuilding funds."

The My Tribe movement actively protects local Black and Brown families in Altadena from being priced out or pressured into selling their generational land to luxury developers. DRU is a diverse coalition of local grassroots organizations advocating for an inclusive, survivor-led recovery.

State Sens. Sasha Renée Pérez (D-Pasadena) and Ben Allen (D-Santa Monica) joined to support the residents at the Capitol Annex Swing Space. Hughes said less than 1% of the significantly damaged homes in the Altadena and Pasadena areas have been successfully rebuilt.

Over the last 15 months, survivors have been struggling with the loss of their properties, prolonged recovery challenges, cleanup efforts, severe housing displacement, toxic soil, structural contamination, and fights with insurance companies that refuse to cover the costs, homeowners claim.

Hughes' home, which she shared with her 78-year-old mother and grandchildren, was completely leveled by the Eaton Fire on Jan. 8, 2025. They lived in the house for over 50 years.

Through her organization, Hughes has collected and distributed emergency cash grants to help fellow survivors in her community pay mortgages on non-existent homes and avoid foreclosure. Now, she is lobbying state lawmakers in Sacramento for wildfire contamination testing, insurance protections, and immediate housing support.

"Right now, we still have families living in tents, living in cars, and Airbnbs today," Hughes said. "We're asking Gov. Newsom, 'where is the



On May 19, 2026, California State Sen. Sasha Renée Pérez (D-Pasadena) and community leader Heavenly Hughes spoke at a press conference at the State Capitol in Sacramento, calling for urgent state assistance, stronger insurance protections, and housing relief for families recovering from the Eaton Fire in Altadena and Pasadena. CBM photo by Antonio Ray Harvey.

money? Where is the money that has been set aside for fire survivors? Right now, there's not enough funding to rebuild homes, to rebuild our schools, to rebuild our businesses. We need support today."

Altadena is one of the most diverse neighborhoods in California and has served historically as a haven for middle-class Black families. It is home to one of the largest communities of Black homeowners in Los Angeles County.

Hughes and other survivors say that only 6% of ruined properties have been rebuilt since the fires. Shortly after the fires, Newsom provided a \$2.5 billion state relief package for survivors of the Los Angeles wildfires, which included the Eaton Fire in Altadena and Pasadena.

Nearly 16 months later, Hughes said \$1.5 billion remains unspent.

In his May 2026 budget revision, Newsom proposed an additional \$100 million disaster recovery fund. The survivors and activists say the funding is a step in the right direction. However, it only bridges the financial gap between insurance payouts and construction costs, lower monthly loan costs, and helps survivors secure private construction financing.

"They need to hear the voices of survivors," Hughes said. "We know it's important to put pressure on those who are holding the key to our recovery."

DRU Coalition and My Tribe Rise are actively supporting a specific slate of legislative reforms.

Assembly Bill (AB) 1642, authored by John Harabedian (D-Pasadena), is the Wildfire Environmental Safety and Testing Act. It sets stricter environmental remediation and contamination testing standards for fire-impacted communities.

After initially being placed on the suspense file, the bill passed out of the Assembly Appropriations Committee with an 11-0 vote on May 14.

Senate Bill (SB) 1301, authored by Allen provides policyholder protections that prevent insurance companies from dropping coverage (non-renewal) for survivors recovering from disasters.

On May 14, the bill passed out of the Senate Appropriations Committee with a 5-2 vote. The bill advances to a third reading on the Senate Floor. If approved by the Senate, SB 1301 will move to the Assembly.

Authored by Pérez, SB 878, the Insurance Payment Accountability Act, ensures timely insurance payouts to allow displaced families the opportunity to rebuild without enduring unnecessary wait times.

The bill requires "insurers to pay a 20% annual interest penalty" on delayed claim payments, Pérez said. It passed out of the Senate Appropriations Committee with a 5-2 vote on May 14 and was



Eaton Fire survivor Shimica Gaskins traveled to Sacramento to advocate for families affected by the disaster in Altadena and Pasadena. She called for swift state action to accelerate recovery efforts, protect historic Black homeownership communities, and ensure displaced residents have the resources and opportunities needed to return home safely. CBM photo by Antonio Ray Harvey.



Survivors of the Eaton Fire from Altadena and Pasadena traveled to Sacramento and held a rally and press conference at the State Capitol Swing Space Annex on May 19. They voiced frustration over delays in rebuilding, inadequate insurance payouts, and concerns about displacement from their communities. CBM photo by Antonio Ray Harvey.

ordered to the Senate floor for its third reading. "It is already state law that insurance companies are supposed to pay claims in a timely manner," Pérez said. "They need to make sure that their customers are made whole."

The devastating Eaton Fire in Southern California destroyed a total of 9,418 structures.

Damon Blount and his wife Audra lived in Altadena for 26 years and put three daughters through college while living there. They lost everything.

Blount, a truck driver, lost his work truck in the fire, and both his weekday and weekend jobs because of the fire.

"That home was our peace. That home was our joy. That home was our security," Blount said. "That was our future we'd hoped to leave to our daughters and granddaughter. My wife and I knew the rebuild would be difficult. What we did not expect was that insurance delays would become another disaster."

Kai Timbadia, 18, and his family are facing severe hardships after losing their home.

Timbadia said that his mother suffered a brain injury that has left her paralyzed and wheelchair-bound, and his sister has special needs.

"We should not have to fight against the systems that are supposed to protect us," Timbadia said.

Amy Sherald Comes Home: "American Sublime" Opens at the High Museum

By Noah Washington
The Atlanta Voice

Standing before an Amy Sherald painting is an exercise in aspiration. Her canvases, saturated with soft pastels and bold chromatic contrasts, construct an American landscape where Black subjects exist not at the margins of the imagination, but squarely at its center. On May 15, the High Museum of Art opens "Amy Sherald: American Sublime," a mid-career retrospective featuring more than 35 paintings made between 2007 and 2024. It is the largest exhibition of Sherald's work to date, and Atlanta is its final stop. The road to the High was anything but straightforward. The exhibition, organized by the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, was originally slated to close its national tour at the National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C. That changed after the Trump administration signed an executive order directing Smithsonian institutions

to remove what it called "un-American content" from their exhibitions and programming. "Amy was concerned that her work could potentially be censored," said Angelica Arbelaez, assistant curator of modern and contemporary art at the High, "and that, for her, was something that she did not want for this exhibition." Sherald made the difficult decision to cancel the D.C. stop. Museums across the country moved quickly to fill the vacancy, and the High secured the fourth and final slot following the Baltimore Museum of Art. The announcement came in September 2024 at the museum's Driskell Gala, where High Director Rand Suffolk made it official. What followed was roughly six months of coordination between the High, SFMOMA, Sherald's studio, and her gallery, Hauser & Wirth. Atlanta's connection to Sherald runs deep.



Breonna Taylor, 2020, Oil on Linen, by Amy Sherald. Photo by Noah Washington/The Atlanta Voice.

She was born in Columbus, Georgia, and attended Clark Atlanta University, earning her BFA in 1997.

The High has honored her before, awarding her the David C. Driskell Prize in African American Art and Art History in 2018. Her portrait of former First Lady Michelle Obama appeared at the museum as part of the 2022 Obama Portraits Tour, and a diptych of two motorcyclists was included in the 2024 "Giants" exhibition drawn from the collection of Alicia Keys and Swizz Beatz. "American Sublime" brings that history into focus. The exhibition presents the Michelle Obama portrait alongside dozens of other works, many featuring ordinary Black Americans rendered with the same gravity and care typically reserved for heads of state. The show is organized into five thematic sections tracing Sherald's development as an artist, from her early explorations of identity and performance to her most monumental, large-scale works and also includes a film showcasing her process. "I grew up in a world that was very black and white," Sherald said during a public conversation at the High. "It wasn't until I moved back here for five or six years to take care of family that I realized a great part of my personality had been shaped by performance, that assimilation was something I felt very comfortable with, making people feel comfortable with my presence. And I think that found its way into the work early on." Among the exhibition's most significant works is Sherald's Vanity Fair portrait of Breonna Taylor, a commission she approached with painstaking care. She met Taylor's family, watched videos to hear her laugh, and composed the work deliberately to counter the rapid, often dehumanizing circulation of Taylor's image following her 2020 death at the hands of Louisville police. It was the first time Sherald had painted someone who was not alive and present before her. "We decided not to have Taylor isolated and sort of memorialized," Arbelaez said, "but to have her among friends, among her peers, and to just acknowledge that in spite of the tragedy that fell upon her, she was just an ordinary girl before all of that." The dress Taylor wears in the portrait was designed by Jasmine Elder, an Atlanta-based designer. A small ring on Taylor's hand was included to honor her relationship with her partner, who had intended to propose to her before her death. Also on view is "For Love, and for Country," which reimagines Alfred Eisenstaedt's iconic V-J Day photograph with Black subjects at the center, and Sherald's first triptych, "Ecclesia (The Meeting of Inheritance and Horizons)," created specifically



Michelle LaVaughn Robinson Obama, 2018 Oil on Linen. Photo by Noah Washington/The Atlanta Voice.

for this exhibition. Sherald has spoken about her work as an act of historical reclamation, describing the process of making paintings as one that reaches across time. "As Black artists, making work, we're almost quantum leaping," she said. "Every time I make a painting, I'm constantly reaching back from the past, but we have to be simultaneously in each era, present with the now and in the past, while also trying to expand into something greater for the future." "American Sublime" runs May 15 through Sept. 27 at the High Museum of Art. "I hope visitors will walk away understanding how Amy developed as an artist, how she has been thinking about the way images work, how they create meaning, how they circulate in the world," Arbelaez said. "She has a very deep and incredible commitment to rendering Black American life with joy, dignity, and confidence."

How Solar Energy is Becoming a Wealth-Building Tool for Homeowners

By Amy Kang

Homeowners are using solar panels for wealth building, and it is working well. By lowering their utility bills, increasing property value, and reducing taxes, they can turn their roofs into investments. For Black homeowners, solar energy offers a path toward greater economic stability and long-term financial freedom. Small-scale solar power has grown steadily since the EIA (the U.S. Energy Information Administration) began reporting on it in 2014. The amount of power produced by small solar systems was over 90,000 GWh in 2025, 11% more than the year before. This shows how many homeowners are interested in using the sun for electricity. For generations, Black families have worked to buy their own homes so they can pass on wealth to their children. Today, multiple resources are available to help individuals accomplish their wealth-building goals. One of the most powerful tools available now sits on top of their roof: What Does Wealth Building Mean? Building wealth means using your earnings to create and accumulate money and assets over time. This provides you and your family with a sense of security for the future. The concept holds special significance for Black communities. Generations of discriminatory practices, such as redlining and unequal access to credit, have limited the ability of Black families to build wealth. This is why each smart financial decision, such as a home solar investment, is important. It is a meaningful step toward reducing the wealth gap. How Do You Build Wealth Fast? You build wealth faster by lowering your expenses, building assets such as a solar panel system, and creating passive income. With a solar panel system on your house, you reduce how much money you spend on utilities. At the same time, you increase the value of your property and improve your economic standing. The Benefits of Solar Energy as a Long-Term Investment Tool Solar energy does not have to be thought of like other investments, such as stocks. To get the maximum solar energy benefits, you need to consider how solar energy can create long-term opportunities. Savings Through Lower Utility Bills With solar panels, you generate your own electricity. This creates a significant reduction in the amount of money you send to the utility company each month. Your renewable energy savings will quickly add up to make a difference. In areas with net metering, any extra electricity



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your panels produce can be sent back to the grid for credit, lowering your bill even further. The Effect of Solar Panels on the Resale Value of Homes Your solar panel system does two things. It saves you money while you own the house and increases the amount you will receive when you decide to sell. There are four ways solar energy can increase property value: A higher sale price

A faster sale
Increased appraised value
A competitive advantage

As home-based solar investments become more common throughout the U.S., now is a great time to install solar panels at your residence. Building Your Own Prosperity With Renewable Energy When you combine clean energy with its ability to help you grow wealth, solar energy becomes a unique financial tool. Once you realize how all of these elements come into play, it is easier to see why many families are moving away from fossil fuels. How Government Tax Credits Help Increase the Return on Investment A homeowner using solar panels can receive a tax credit from the U.S. federal government. It allows them to subtract a significant portion of their solar installation cost from what they owe in taxes. Regardless of location, homeowners considering Solar Panel Installation in Placitas, NM should research all local incentives and rebates. This assistance helps reduce the amount an individual pays to purchase and install solar panels. Passive Savings Generated Over Time Once you have paid off your solar panel system, each kilowatt-hour (kWh) of electricity produced will

cost you almost nothing. This is because the utility company no longer collects money for that power. Solar technology advancements have led to a long life expectancy for these systems. It is also common to see them protected by a warranty that extends for 25 years or longer. How Solar Helps Create Long-Term Financial Stability for Homeowners Solar energy provides homeowners with financial stability through low-cost, predictable monthly payments. The four ways solar energy helps protect the financial well-being of homeowners are: Protection against rate increases

Reduced financial stress
Growing emergency savings
Building generational wealth

Producing your own clean energy results in fewer financial risks and a higher degree of control over your personal finances. Frequently Asked Questions When Will You See a Return on the Money Spent? Most homeowners recoup the cost of their solar panel system within six to 10 years. Once this period has passed, your energy is virtually free. Will Solar Panels Still Generate Electricity if It Is Cloudy Outside? Yes, they will. Modern solar panels can absorb indirect light as well as direct sunlight, though output is lower on overcast days. Can You Still Use Solar Panels When the Power Goes Out? Generally, standard solar systems automatically shut down when the grid loses power. With an additional battery installed, however, you can continue to draw power from your stored energy. Are Solar Panels Difficult to Keep Running? No. They do not contain any moving parts. To keep them running at peak efficiency, all you need to do is clean them a few times per year. Can Solar Energy Save You Money During Retirement? Yes. Since a solar energy system locks in low energy rates for long periods, it is a great financial resource for people living on a fixed income. Invest in a Brighter Tomorrow With Solar Energy Today The benefits of solar energy are clear: it reduces your utility costs, increases your home's value, and creates a long-term source of energy savings. With so many Black families working toward wealth building through homeownership, the window of opportunity to invest in solar is now. The decisions you make today can benefit your family for many years to come. Discover news, culture, and trends shaping the Black experience at home and abroad.

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CEO: Jon Coley
Publisher/Editor: James Luckey Jr.
Operations Manager: James Luckey
Intern: William Clark Coley

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Floor 10, Los Angeles, CA 90045 Mailing Address:
PO Box 2341, Bakersfield, Ca. 93303 Phone
(661) 324-9466 FAX (661) 324-9472

General Info: observernews@gmail.com
Advertising: observeradvertising@gmail.com
Online: www.ognsc.com

Entertainment

Inside George Clinton's \$1.1M Lawsuit and His Most Iconic Samples

From Funkadelic all the way to Childish Gambino and Salt-N-Pepa, these are some of Clinton's most sampled songs across hip-hop.

By Phenix S Halley

BEVERLY HILLS, CALIFORNIA – MAY 08: George Clinton of Funkadelic attends the GRAMMY Hall of Fame Gala 2026 at The Beverly Hilton on May 08, 2026 in Beverly Hills, California. (Photo by Emma McIntyre/Getty Images for The Recording Academy)

The music industry owes funk music legend George Clinton more than just his flowers, and now, he's ready to collect on everything he's owed in the form of a \$1.1 million lawsuit.

On May 15, Clinton filed a civil suit against Universal Music Group (UMG) for allegedly skimping out on royalties that are just due, according to the 20-page document obtained by Music Business Worldwide. While it's now in the hands of the court to determine how much—if anything—the Prime Minister of Funk is owed, we can't help but recognize how Clinton's career as a singer, songwriter and producer has lived on through the delicate art of sampling.

From Parliament and Funkadelic to Childish Gambino and Ice Cube, these are some of Clinton's most sampled songs and the artists who added their own flair to the funk mega hits!

Parliament – "Mothership Connection (Star Child)"

The fourth song on Parliament's "Tear the Roof Off 1974-1980" is one of many Clinton-produced tracks that have lived on for several generations. "Mothership Connection (Star Child)," which was released in 1975, has been heavily sampled predominantly by rap and hip-hop groups.

Dr. Dre – "Let Me Ride"

Dr. Dre teamed up with Snoop Dogg to give us "Let Me Ride" in 1993, which not only samples Clinton, but it also flips the African American spiritual, "Swing Down Sweet Chariot," which was notably covered by Elvis Presley.

Pimp C – "Swang Down / 10 a Key"

Pimp C's "Swang Down / 10 a Key" also samples "Mothership Connection (Star Child)." Pimp C was a massive student of George Clinton's P-Funk catalog. Funny enough, UGK's "Front, Back & Side to Side" samples this same Clinton song, too.

George Clinton – "Flash Light"

Perhaps the Clinton song with the most samples ever is the one and only "Flash Light." It's one of those instantly recognizable records that's guaranteed to have people singing and dancing along. It's been sampled over 60 times

Here are just a couple of examples...

Salt-N-Pepa – "I'll Take Your Man"

The 1986 hit, "I'll Take Your Man," is one of Salt-N-Pepa's most iconic songs. Interestingly enough, the City Girls added their own hip to the Clinton-inspired track. The Miami duo's record goes by the same name, "Take Yo Man."

UGK – "Protect and Serve"

UGK's 1994 song, "Protect and Serve," is a satirical track that criticizes the police and police brutality. They mention Rodney King, the Black man whose brutal beating by police prompted the 1992 LA Riots.

Funkadelic – "Good To Your Earhole"

Funk music is more than just about syncopated basslines and groovy melodies. In his career, Clinton mastered the art of incorporating traditional funk elements while also keeping listeners on their feet, jamming along.

Childish Gambino – "Riot"



Decades after Funkadelic's prime, Atlanta singer and rapper Childish Gambino—aka Donald Glover—dropped his critically acclaimed album, "Awaken My Love."

On the record "Riot," Glover samples "Good To Your Earhole." Much of Glover's album was directly inspired by Clinton and Funkadelic. That includes the cover, which references Funkadelic's 1971 album, "Maggot Brain."

Funkadelic – "Get Off Your Ass and Jam"

It's almost impossible to listen to a record produced by Clinton and not feel the urge to bust a move! In this 1975 track, the title provides clear instructions about how to properly listen.

Public Enemy – "Bring the Noise"

If the riff from the Clinton track sounded strangely familiar, it's probably because it's sampled in "Bring the Noise," the 1991 track by Public Enemy.

N.W.A – "100 Miles And Runnin'"

Outside of the N.W.A track being a classic gangster rap song, the track also set an interesting precedent for sampling songs in rap music. In 2005, "100 Miles and Runnin'" was at the center of a lawsuit, officially called Bridgeport Music, Inc. v. Dimension Films. The landmark copyright case set a new standard, requiring artists to either get a license or not sample at all.

Funkadelic – "(Not Just) Knee Deep"

You've probably heard Funkadelic's "(Not Just) Knee Deep," but did you know the full version is over 15 minutes long?

2Pac – "Can't C Me"

Of course, the King of the West Coast would sample one of Clinton's most notable records! "Can't C Me" on his "All Eyez on Me" album is one of the most popular songs on the album... and that's saying a lot since the 2Pac record has no skips!

De La Soul – "Me Myself And I"

2Pac and De La Soul often compete for who

sampled Clinton's record the best.

George Clinton – "Atomic Dog"

Another popular song produced by Clinton is "Atomic Dog," which you can hear in various movies, TV shows and rap songs.

Snoop Dogg – "Who Am I (What's My Name)?"

The 1993 track, "Who Am I (What's My Name)?" by Snoop Dogg, Dr. Dre, and Jewell is the most popular sample of Clinton's 1982 hit. Snoop would go on to sample the same song on several other records.

Ice Cube – "Friday"

Clearly, Clinton's "Atomic Dog" resonated with West Coast rappers! In 1995, Ice Cube would sample the song in his "Friday" record. The title track also went along with the "Friday" film.

Ray J Gets Brutally Knocked Out in MMA Match Months After Claiming He Didn't Have Long to Live

By Antoinette Bueno

Ray J got brutally knocked out during his celebrity MMA match Saturday, amid his claim that he only has months to live.

The singer, 45, faced YouTuber Supa Hot Fire at livestreamer Adin Ross' UFC Apex event in Las Vegas. The fight was ended quickly in the second round when Supa Hot Fire, 35, delivered a knockout blow to the "One Wish" singer.

After the punch, Ray J was visibly stunned and fell against the ropes and onto the ground.

Although he was able to get back up, he had to sit down again on a stool, which is when the referee ended the match.

Ray J got knocked out by YouTuber Supa Hot Fire at livestreamer Adin Ross' UFC Apex event in Las Vegas Saturday.

A referee assisting Ray J who is sitting in the corner of a boxing ring after being knocked out.

The singer was dazed after Supa Hot Fire hit him with a punch to the face.



1,000's of Black Actors in Los Angeles Needed for Upcoming TV and Film Roles, Founder of Casting Platform Announces

Project Casting is inviting Black actors on the West Coast to apply for upcoming TV, film, and entertainment opportunities.

Jonathan Browne, the Founder and CEO of Project Casting, has announced a massive casting search focused on helping Black actors in Los Angeles, California, connect with more opportunities in television, film, and entertainment. The initiative is designed to make it easier for Black performers to get discovered, apply for roles, and take the next step in their acting careers through Project Casting's entertainment jobs platform.

Black actors in the Los Angeles area can now create or log into their Project Casting account to apply for upcoming casting calls, acting auditions, TV projects, film opportunities, and other

entertainment roles seeking diverse and authentic talent.

"Project Casting was built to help people find opportunity," said Browne. "As a Black founder in the entertainment industry, I understand how important representation is both on-screen and behind the scenes. We want to help Black actors in Los Angeles get discovered, get seen, and connect with real opportunities that can help move their careers forward."

This casting search is part of Project Casting's larger mission to make the entertainment industry more accessible, inclusive, and open to talented performers from all backgrounds.

Casting Opportunity Details

Who: Black/ African American actors
Location: Los Angeles, California
Project Type: TV, Film, and Entertainment
Opportunity: Auditions and casting calls for upcoming projects

Platform: Project Casting
Actors interested in being considered can join today by visiting ProjectCasting.com/login

Project Casting is a leading entertainment jobs platform that helps actors, models, content creators, and production professionals find casting calls, acting auditions, production jobs, and career-building opportunities. Project Casting is committed to helping talent discover real opportunities and build meaningful careers in the entertainment industry.



Jonathan Browne, Founder of Project Casting

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FILE NO: 2026 095969
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 at 1809 E 57th Street, Long Beach, CA 90805
 Mailing Address: same
 County: Los Angeles
 Full name of registrant(s):
YESENIA MELGAR at 1809 E 57th Street, Long Beach, CA 90805
 The business is conducted by: an Individual
 SIGNED: **YESENIA MELGAR, Owner**
 The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on: 05/2021
 This statement filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles County on: May 1, 2026
 DEAN C. LOGAN

Los Angeles County Clerk
 By: Cortney Maffitt, Deputy
 This fictitious Business Name Statement expires five years from the date it was filed in the County Clerk's Office. A new fictitious business name statement must be filed before that time. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious business name in violation of the rights of another to a trademark or trade name under federal, state, or common law (see section 14411 ET SEQ., business and professions code). I declare that all information in this Statement is true and correct. (A) Registrant who declares as true information which he or she knows to be

false, is guilty of a crime
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LOS ANGELES NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: May 7, 14, 21, 28, 2026
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
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 Doing business as:
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BEACH, CA 90277
 Mailing Address: same
 County: Los Angeles
 Full name of registrant(s):
NEFERTITI LAFONNE HAYNES at 407 N PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY #1070, REDONDO BEACH, CA 90277
 The business is conducted by: an Individual
 SIGNED: **NEFERTITI LAFONNE HAYNES, Owner**
 The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on: N/A
 This statement filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles County on: May 7, 2026
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RETRAC & ASSOCIATES / ELCM & ASSOCIATES / CEC & ASSOCIATES at 15421 E GALE AVE UNIT 91144, CITY OF INDUSTRY, CA 91715
 Mailing Address: same
 County: Los Angeles
 Full name of registrant(s):
STEPHEN D CARTER at 15421 E GALE AVE UNIT 91144, CITY OF INDUSTRY, CA 91715

BEAU F. CARTER at 15421 E GALE AVE UNIT 91144, CITY OF INDUSTRY, CA 91715
 The business is conducted by: a Joint Venture
 SIGNED: **STEPHEN D CARTER, General Partner**
 The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on: 05/2011
 This statement filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles County on: May 6, 2026
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 By: ISAUORA CORREA, Deputy
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Features

The Financial Investment Moves More Young Black Investors Are Exploring in 2026

By Shikha D

Wealth-building strategies that Black investors need to consider are real estate, stock market investing, long-term strategies, and entrepreneurship. The investing world is rapidly changing to fit the growing needs of new investors. The great news is that in 2026, more and more Black investors are taking an active role in managing their finances and investing in real estate, stocks, and other beneficial markets. Some reasons why Black investors are making smart financial moves in recent years are greater access to financial education, investing apps, online communities, and growing conversations around generational wealth. Are you ready to get some financial investment advice and start making some generous money moves towards your financial freedom? Stock Market Investing Historically, many barriers contributed to lower market participation among some communities, such as:

- Lack of access
- Limited financial education
- Distrust of traditional financial institutions

However, mobile investing platforms, educational content creators, and social media discussions have helped make investing feel more accessible to first-time investors. That's the brilliant thing about the tech age. No matter who you are or where you live, you can start investing in the market, as long as you have the minimum amount of funds to begin. Even \$5 is enough to start and get into the market, especially with DRIP investing methods. Long-Term Strategies Rather than Short-Term Speculation Broad-market index funds, retirement accounts, and dividend-paying stocks are gaining attention because they offer opportunities for steady growth over time. Younger investors are increasingly discussing interesting concepts as part of broader wealth-building goals, such as:

- Compound growth
- Dollar-cost averaging
- Long-term portfolio diversification

Remember that the compound effect was dubbed the eighth wonder of the world, according to Albert Einstein (the quote has been attributed to many different people). If you keep on taking money out of your investments, then you are not allowing the compound effect to do its job. Think long-term! Retirement Planning at an Earlier Age Rather than waiting until later in life, many younger professionals are exploring different choices designed to support long-term financial goals, such as:

- Employer-sponsored retirement plans
- Individual retirement accounts
- Automated investing options

Starting earlier allows investments more time to potentially grow, making consistency an important priority for many investors. Even if you are in your teens or twenties right now, start investing. Putting \$5 or \$20 into an ETF starting in your teens or twenties could result in millions by the time you are ready to retire in your 50s or 60s. Don't lose out on the power of time to make smaller amounts of money into huge piles of retirement dough. Real Estate Homeownership continues to be viewed as both a personal milestone and a financial investment opportunity. Some younger Black investors are exploring different



Shutterstock / NNPA. strategies to build equity and create additional income streams: Purchasing starter homes

- Multi-family properties
- Income-generating rental units
- Others are becoming interested in real estate investment trusts (REITs), which offer exposure to real estate markets without directly purchasing property. Always keep in mind that your primary residence is not an investment property and should never be considered in your net worth calculations. It is always going to be just a home for you and your family to live in, nothing more. If you need additional funds to buy real estate, consider 100% hard money financing. Entrepreneurship Many younger investors are diversifying income through:
- Side businesses
- Digital brands
- Consulting work
- Content creation
- E-commerce ventures

Business ownership is often viewed not only as an income opportunity but also as a pathway toward greater financial control and long-term asset building. Financial Literacy No matter where you are in your financial journey right now, you can start becoming more financially literate from the comfort of your home. Podcasts, YouTube channels, online courses, books, and finance-focused communities have created more opportunities for younger investors to learn about:

- Budgeting
- Debt management
- Investing principles
- Taxes
- Wealth preservation

Online conversations around money management have become more normalized, especially among younger generations seeking practical strategies for financial growth. Frequently Asked Questions Should You Invest First or Pay Off Debt First? A lot of people wonder about this question, and it's an important one to consider, but everyone is going to be in a different situation and have a different answer to this conundrum. If you have a lot of credit card debt that has a high interest rate, you might consider paying that off first before starting to invest. However, mortgages, student loans, and car loans, which have a low interest rate, are fine to pay down slowly, while investing at the same time. Many younger investors are balancing investment goals while managing student loans, housing costs, inflation, or credit obligations. Financial planning often involves finding a balance

between paying down debt and investing consistently for future growth. Are Financial Investment Apps Safe? Absolutely! Of course, you don't want to choose just any investment app. The best way to go about it is to pick one that's associated with your primary bank or financial institution. Every bank has an investment platform built into it. There are also independent FinTech companies that you can use, like Robinhood and Interactive Brokers, which have been around for a long time and are well-liked by investors. They also have a very low barrier to entry and are easy to use. The most important thing here is to get over your fear and anxiety and start investing now. Do not wait for

some mysterious time in the future. The more time you waste, the longer it will take you to reach your retirement goals. Remember, time and compound interest are two important parts of the financial freedom journey. Get investment advice if you need it, but start investing as soon as possible. Smart Money Moves Include Sound Financial Investment Strategies Your financial freedom journey will not begin unless you start investing in real estate, stocks, and more. Financial investment is becoming important to Black investors, and that's such a great sign of the times to come. What are you waiting for? Please check out related articles on our website for more interesting content.

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Why More Black Couples Are Turning to Online Couples Therapy

By Amy Kang

Online couples therapy is giving many Black couples a better way to work on their relationships without having to reschedule their daily duties. They no longer need to travel to a therapist's office for relationship counseling; they can simply schedule a session and join from home. This is easier, more relaxing, and less intimidating. Many Black couples in Chicago do not have much free time, as most of their day is spent on work, family, and long commutes. This has led many of them to look for support that fits naturally into their everyday lives. Online therapy allows couples to plan and attend sessions without taking up much of their time. In 2024, the HHS Office of Minority Health found that Black adults were 36% less likely to receive mental health treatment than the general U.S. population. Barriers such as stigma around therapy, high costs, and a shortage of Black therapists are part of the reason. As online therapy continues to grow in popularity, many couples have started wondering what the experience feels like. This quick guide explains why online sessions are growing in popularity, how they work, and what couples can expect from them. Does Online Couples Therapy Really Work? Yes. Couples can benefit from virtual therapy in many of the same ways they would from face-to-face sessions. The American Psychological Association reports that teletherapy produces outcomes similar to in-person therapy for many common concerns. Couples therapy has also proven effective over time. Many couples who have gone through counseling report real improvements in their relationship, with benefits that can last for years. The setting does not matter as much as how willing both partners are to show up and work together. Here are a few points that can lead to a successful online session: Being in a quiet, private space where each partner feels comfortable opening up



Unsplash.com

couples give access to those who might struggle to attend face-to-face sessions due to: Long distances, especially for military couples or those living apart

- Unpredictable work schedules between partners

A lack of physical therapists in certain areas

Privacy is a big advantage here. Some partners prefer to join the counseling session from different rooms, which can feel more comfortable and relaxing. This makes counseling feel less stressful and more like part of their daily routine. Frequently Asked Questions How Much Does Online Couples Therapy Cost? The cost can vary depending on the therapist, where you live, and whether insurance covers part of the bill. Knowing the cost of your sessions upfront helps avoid financial surprises that may disrupt your progress down the road. Is Online Therapy for Families Private and Secure? Most professional services use secure, encrypted video systems, which can be considered safe for protecting privacy during online meetings. However, you need to make sure you are working with a licensed therapist. It is also a good idea to use a personal device and a secure internet connection rather than public Wi-Fi or shared networks. Can Virtual Marriage Counseling Help if Only One Partner Is Willing? Virtual counseling can work even when only one partner is willing. Therapists often start by working with the partner who is ready, which can help the other partner gradually feel more comfortable about joining. In many cases, couples begin online therapy with just one willing partner, and the other partner's interest tends to grow as the sessions continue. How Do Partners Choose the Right Online Therapist? When choosing a therapist, look for one who is licensed in couples counseling and uses proven approaches like Emotionally Focused Therapy or the Gottman Method. Many directories also let couples filter by specialty, language, and identity. How Often Should Couples Attend Online Therapy Sessions? Most couples start with weekly sessions to build momentum and keep progress steady early on. As communication improves, some therapists shift to biweekly or monthly check-ins. The right pace depends on your goals and challenges, so discuss a realistic plan with your therapist from the start. A Trusted First Step for Couples For many Black couples, online couples therapy has become a tool for rebuilding communication and trust in a way that feels less burdensome and more manageable for both partners. With more culturally aware therapists available online, finding the right match is easier than before. Every relationship goes through hard seasons, and no couple has to face them alone. Online therapy has made it easier for families and couples to access support, book sessions comfortably, and take a meaningful step toward a stronger relationship. Follow us for more health, family, and community coverage.

Having a stable internet connection and a well-charged device or a reliable power supply

- Giving honest answers even when the topic feels uncomfortable

Online couples counseling works best when both partners open up genuinely and are ready to listen. What Keeps Many Black Couples From Seeking Therapy? For many Black families, counseling has long felt out of reach due to several barriers. Some are practical, while others stem from historical experiences and concerns about trust. The most common barriers include: Cost, since therapy without insurance can strain a budget

- A shortage of Black therapists, which makes it harder for

Black couples feel understood

Stigma, including the belief that counseling means a relationship has failed

Culture plays a big role in how couples talk about stress, faith, money, and family. Having a therapist who shares their background can make it easier for couples to raise topics that feel hard to discuss. How Does Online Couples Counseling Work? Online couples therapy works much the same way as traditional therapy. Couples meet a licensed therapist over a secure video call, usually on a weekly basis. The therapist guides the conversation and shares practical ways to improve communication, handle conflict, and strengthen the relationship. What makes it stand out is the convenience. There is no need to drive or miss work, since little or no travel is involved. Couples can join a session over lunch or after putting their kids to bed. Online sessions allow more people to experience the benefits of couples therapy. Today, online therapy services for families and

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Features



Assemblymembers Tina McKinnor (D-Inglewood), left, and Patrick Ahrens (D-Silicon Valley). CBM photo by Antonio Ray Harvey.



On May 5, Sens. Laura Richardson (D-San Pedro), right, and Eloise Gómez Reyes (D-Grand Terrace), members of the Senate Standing Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review, voted to advance AB 108, a measure that would provide \$25 million in emergency assistance to financially distressed public hospitals. The bill passed out of committee on an 18-0 vote, but public hospital advocates are seeking \$500 million in the governor's proposed 2026-27 state budget to offset federal budget cuts. CBM photo by Antonio Ray Harvey.

Black Caucus Members Join Other Legislative Dems to Push Critical Funding for Distressed Public Hospitals

By Antonio Ray Harvey
California Black Media

Members of the California Legislative Black Caucus (CLBC), along with other Democratic lawmakers, are ramping up efforts to push for a \$500 million state budget investment to help stabilize California's 17 public hospital systems.

Federal budget laws, such as H.R. 1, the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, are dramatically decreasing Medicaid funding. Because more than 14 million Californians rely on Medi-Cal, the Golden State's version of Medicaid, these cuts represent a massive blow to the state's safety-net hospitals.

Assemblymember Tina McKinnor (D-Inglewood), chair of the Los Angeles County Legislative Delegation, said she and her colleagues in the Legislature are actively fighting for this direct state funding to offset devastating financial losses brought on by federal cuts and looming budget changes.

"Let me not mince words, my friends. H.R. 1 cuts that will begin this fall and continue until the new year will not just put a hole in California's public health safety net, it will burn down the net," said CLBC member McKinnor. "If public hospitals close, Californians will die."

McKinnor made the remarks at a news conference alongside Assemblymembers Patrick Ahrens (D-Silicon Valley), Robert Garcia (D-Rancho Cucamonga), healthcare executives, nurses, medical doctors, and hospital employees at the State Capitol on May 19.

The coalition urges state leaders to include the \$500 million investment in the final 2026-27

state budget to shield the state's 17 public hospital systems from severe federal and state funding cuts.

California's public hospital systems face a potential \$3 billion in annual losses due to federal health care policy changes under H.R. 1. An additional \$800 million decrease stems from changes made in Gov. Gavin Newsom's May budget revision.

"I was born in a public hospital and refuse to stand by while they are torn apart," said Ahrens, a member of the Assembly Budget Committee. "Without strong public hospital systems in California, health care access collapses, and people suffer. We can prevent this crisis through an emergency response. It's time for the state to extend a financial lifeline to public hospital systems now."

Dozens of hospitals and vital emergency services have closed in California in recent years, driven by financial distress, federal funding cuts, and changing regulations.

The state's 17 public health care systems span the northern and southern portions of the state, according to the California Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems (CAPH).

The public health care systems account for only 6% of hospitals in California but serve more than 3.7 million patients annually and operate in 15 counties where more than 80% of the population lives.

Public health systems provide 35% of all hospital care to Medi-Cal beneficiaries and 40% of hospital care to the uninsured, CAPH, and the California Health Care Safety Net Institute (SNI). Over 14 million Californians rely on Medi-Cal,

with African Americans representing over a million of those beneficiaries.

Over one million Black and African American Californians are enrolled in Medi-Cal. Statewide, Black or African American residents make up roughly 6% of all Medi-Cal enrollees, and studies indicate that roughly a quarter of all Black Californians rely on Medi-Cal for their health coverage.

According to the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), there are approximately 7.6 million Latinos enrolled in Medi-Cal, making up roughly 50% to 52% of all Medi-Cal beneficiaries in California.

"No matter how well-run, how lean or how committed its staff, no hospital system can absorb financial losses of this magnitude without stark cuts to services that will restrict health care access for millions of patients," said Katie Rodriguez, interim president and CEO of CAPH. "The decisions state leaders make over the next month will decide how painful and deadly this crisis becomes in communities across California."

A few hospitals have already dodged the risk of closing before the next budget cycle took effect on July 1.

Earlier in May, the state rushed Assembly Bill (AB) 108 into law. The core purpose of AB 108 is to ensure healthcare access continuity for low-income and isolated communities.

Authored by Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel (D-Encino), the bill provided \$25 million in emergency grants to keep public and nonprofit facilities with less than 10 days of cash on hand, financially solvent.

Lawmakers such as CLBC members Sens. Akilah Weber Pierson (D-San Diego), Lola Smallwood-Cuevas (D-Los Angeles), and Laura Richardson (D-San Pedro) agreed that while that funding helps stave off imminent bankruptcies, only a robust long-term funding package will avoid drastic reductions in regional healthcare.

Starting with its maternity ward, Martin Luther King Jr. Community Hospital (MLKCH) in South Los Angeles was on the brink of shutting down if it did not receive emergency funding from the state. All three CLBC members were part of the Senate Standing Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review, which voted 18-0 to pass AB 108 on May 5.

"We've already seen what happens when hospital access disappears," Smallwood-Cuevas said. "MLK's predecessor, King Drew Hospital, closed in 2007, and the current MLK hospital is again, we know facing financial pressure that continues to rise."

According to CAPH, Gov. Newsom's May 14 Revision budget includes up to \$50 million for short-term distressed hospital support, but healthcare advocates and legislators argue it falls drastically short.

The coalition is pushing back against the governor's proposed Medi-Cal modifications. Health care workers and administrators warn that these massive deficits will directly impact jobs, and vital community services like emergency rooms and labor and delivery units.

"Tens of thousands of public sector and public health workers are at risk of losing jobs if the state of California does not act," McKinnor said.

Opinion: Campaign Rhetoric Vs Constitutional Reality—Calif. Governor Candidates Are Making Promises They Can't Keep

Editor's Note: The views and opinions expressed in this commentary are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views, positions, or editorial stance of California Black Media, its publisher, editors, or affiliates.

By Craig J. DeLuz
California Black Media

Some politicians believe making any promise loudly and confidently is an adequate substitute for only supporting proposals that are realistic or implementable.

California's gubernatorial race has produced a bumper crop of them.

Tom Steyer, the billionaire liberal donor turned candidate, has called for abolishing ICE and jailing its agents, describing the federal law enforcement agency as a "violent extremist group."

Former Los Angeles mayor Antonio Villaraigosa compared ICE officers to members of the Ku Klux Klan, and State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond promised to have ICE agents arrested. Former HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra vowed to "police the immigration police."

These are all the leading candidates to become governor of the most populous state in the union.

One might ask: can they actually do any of this? The answer, rooted not in opinion but in two centuries of constitutional law, is no. And yet the question almost never gets asked; because the performance is the point.

Steyer's plan reads more like a campaign message than a governing blueprint. That is not an accident. Under the Supremacy Clause of Article VI of the U.S. Constitution, and under longstanding Supreme Court precedent, states may not criminally prosecute federal officers for actions taken in the lawful course of their federal duties, provided the officer reasonably believed those actions were necessary to fulfill that duty. This is not an obscure technicality. It is the foundational architecture of American federalism, and it has been settled law for longer than most of these candidates have been alive.

The legal test is not complicated. Was the officer authorized by federal law to be there and act? Did the officer reasonably believe the action was necessary to perform that duty? If the answer to both is yes, the state prosecution cannot proceed. Full stop. And if a state's Attorney General or a regional district attorney were reckless enough to try anyway, the Department of Justice can move the case to federal court, where federal supremacy immunity applies — and the state prosecution is barred entirely.

Steyer's plan pledges to give the state Attorney General authority to hold ICE leadership accountable for violence, and to pursue "supervisory liability" to criminally prosecute not just agents but their supervisors — without explaining how any state law could supersede federal authority.

It cannot. The candidates know this -- or



Craig J. DeLuz

should. Their lawyers certainly do.

What we are witnessing, then, is not a legal strategy. It is a political one. The incentive structure of the California Democratic primary runs in one direction: toward more confrontation with federal enforcement, more public spending on illegal immigrant legal defense, and more inflammatory language about ICE.

This has predictable consequences beyond the campaign trail. When a leading candidate for governor calls ICE a "criminal organization" engaged in "terrorism," it does not just shape a primary. It shapes the way state employees, local police, and community organizations interact with federal law enforcement. It signals that obstruction is not just tolerated — it is the official position of the state's aspiring leadership.

Economist and cultural commentator Thomas Sowell noted that "it is hard to imagine a more stupid or more dangerous way of making decisions than to put those decisions in the hands of people who pay no price for being wrong."

California's gubernatorial candidates have crafted a remarkable variation on this theme: they have found a way to make promises they know they cannot keep, at a cost they will never personally bear, to audiences who may never learn the difference.

The Supremacy Clause does not care about a press release. Federal supremacy immunity does not bend to a debate stage applause line. And the U.S. Constitution was not amended during the California primary season. The irony is particularly rich in the case of Xavier Becerra, who served as California's Attorney General (the state's chief law enforcement officer) before vowing to "police the immigration police." One might expect a man who once swore to uphold the rule of law to have at least a passing familiarity with the Supremacy Clause. Apparently, the learning did not take.

ICE responded simply. "ICE is not a political football. Our agents and officers are sworn to protect this nation from dangerous criminals ranging from child abusers to cartel members," the agency said. It is a statement that required no legal scholarship, no constitutional footnotes, and no grandstanding — which may be precisely why it went largely unreported.

The voters of California are being asked to choose between candidates competing to make the boldest promises about powers they do not have, against a federal government whose legal authority they cannot override. What they are not being asked — but ought to be — is a simpler question: If your signature proposal cannot survive its first day in court, what exactly are you offering?

The answer, in most cases, is a feeling. And feelings, unfortunately, are not subject to the Supremacy Clause.

About the Author
Craig J. DeLuz, has almost 30 years of experience in public policy and advocacy. He hosts a daily news and commentary show called "The RUNDOWN." You can follow him on X at @CraigDeLuz.

Political Playback:



California Capitol News You Might Have Missed

By Bo Tefu
California Black Media

California Officials Respond to Tragic Shooting at Islamic Center of San Diego

California leaders and elected officials are condemning the deadly May 18, shooting at the Islamic Center of San Diego, offering condolences to victims and calling for unity against hate and violence following the attack that killed three people.

Gov. Gavin Newsom and First Partner Jennifer Siebel Newsom said they were "horrified" by the violence at the mosque and school, describing the center as a place where "families and children

gather" and where "neighbors worship in peace and fellowship."

State officials confirmed that the California Highway Patrol and the Governor's Office of Emergency Services were coordinating with local and federal agencies to provide support.

"Hate has no place in California, and we will not tolerate acts of terror or intimidation against communities of faith," said Newsom in a statement. He also thanked first responders and told San Diego's Muslim community that "California stands with you."

California Assemblymember LaShae Sharp-Collins (D-La Mesa) called the shooting a "horrific act of violence" and said her heart was especially with the children and families connected to the Al Rashid School. She said no child should have to experience fear or trauma in a place meant for learning.

Sharp-Collins also condemned Islamophobia and urged communities to remain united in the aftermath of the attack. "An attack on the Islamic Center of San Diego's mosque and school is an attack on the safety and values of the entire community," she said.

State Senator Akilah Weber Pierson (D-San Diego) held a moment of silence on the Senate floor to honor the victims and families affected by the shooting. Weber Pierson said hate and violence "have no place in our communities or our country" and urged Californians to choose compassion over division.

U.S. Sen. Alex Padilla (D-Calif.) also condemned the attack, noting that the violence occurred during Dhul-Hijjah, one of Islam's holiest periods, ahead of Eid al-Adha celebrations.

Padilla praised law enforcement officers and first responders, while also recognizing Amin Abdullah, a security guard and father of eight who, he said, "gave everything to protect his community."

The senator said Americans must reject Islamophobia and White supremacy "in all its forms."

All active registered voters in California are receiving vote-by-mail ballots for the June 2 primary election. County elections officials started mailing ballots on May 4.

Currently, voters can return completed ballots by mail, deliver them to county elections offices, or use official ballot drop-off locations throughout the state.

Although the standard voter registration deadline passed on May 18, eligible Californians can still register and vote through the state's same-day voter registration process. Residents who missed the deadline may register at county elections offices or any in-person voting location through Election Day.

Election Day is set for June 2, with polling places operating from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Officials said vote-by-mail ballots must be postmarked no later than June 2, to be counted.

State election officials are encouraging voters to cast ballots early, verify registration information, and review local voting options before Election Day as turnout efforts continue statewide.

Some Calif. Schools in Same District Receive Double the Funding of Others. Bill Aims to Change That

State Sen. Dave Cortese (D-Silicon Valley) has introduced Senate Constitutional Amendment 5 (SCA 5), a proposal designed to narrow longstanding funding disparities between California school districts, while securing the endorsement of the California School Employees Association (CSEA), one of the state's largest education labor organizations.

Known as the Education Equalization Act, SCA 5 would ask California voters to amend the state Constitution to establish an Education Equalization Reserve Account dedicated to increasing per-pupil funding in historically underfunded "non-basic aid" school districts.

The measure would not reduce funding for any district, alter Proposition 98 guarantees for K-12 schools and community colleges, or raise taxes, according to Cortese's office.

If approved by two-thirds of the Legislature, the proposal would appear on a future statewide ballot.

"California cannot continue accepting a public education system where a child's achievements and opportunities are determined by dramatically unequal funding formulas," Cortese said. "Right now, some districts are provided nearly twice as much per student as neighboring communities. That inequity is unacceptable."

According to California Department of Education data cited by Cortese, Palo Alto Unified School District spends about \$29,876 per student annually, while nearby Milpitas Unified School District spends approximately \$16,504 per student.

Similar disparities exist elsewhere in the state, including parts of Fresno and Kern counties.

The proposal has drawn support from education advocates and labor leaders.

"The California School Employees Association proudly supports SCA 5 because every student deserves an equal opportunity to a quality public education no matter where they live," said Adam Weinberger, president of CSEA, which represents more than 250,000 classified school employees statewide. "Classified school employees see every day how funding inequality puts some students at a disadvantage. This bill would help close that gap."

Dr. Lisa Andrew, president and CEO of the Silicon Valley Education Foundation -- whose organization is co-sponsoring the measure -- said the inequities are visible across communities.

"Students just miles apart are receiving dramatically different educations, not because of their potential, but because of their zip code," Andrew said. "We believe SCA 5 is the kind of bold, structural commitment California's students have long deserved."

Cortese said the amendment is ultimately about "fairness, educational opportunity, and California's economic future."

LAO Details Budget Risks After May Revise — Republicans Latch On, Blasting Newsom

California's nonpartisan Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) is warning that the state faces significant financial risks despite years of strong revenue growth, prompting Republicans to sharply criticize Gov. Gavin Newsom's latest budget proposal.

In its review of Newsom's May budget revision, the LAO said California is "ill-prepared for even a slip-up in revenues" and warned the state could face deficits nearing \$100 billion if financial markets decline.

"The state's current fiscal situation is genuinely unprecedented," the office said in its May 2026 assessment.

The report raised concerns that California continues operating with deficits during what analysts described as a historic revenue boom, signaling potential long-term fiscal instability.

Assembly Republican Leader Heath Flora (R-Ripon) said the findings validate years of Republican criticism over Democratic spending policies.

"You should not be running operating deficits during a historic revenue boom," Flora said in a statement. "Assembly Republicans have been warning for years that Sacramento is addicted to spending money it does not have."

Republicans accused Democratic leaders of draining reserves and expanding spending commitments without preparing for economic downturns. Flora said lawmakers ignored repeated warnings about California's growing structural deficit.

The LAO recommended that lawmakers deposit \$20 billion into state reserves, reject nearly \$10 billion in discretionary spending proposals, and take additional steps to stabilize the budget before conditions worsen.

Flora urged Newsom and legislative Democrats to adopt those recommendations, arguing California families are already forced to manage tighter budgets amid economic uncertainty.

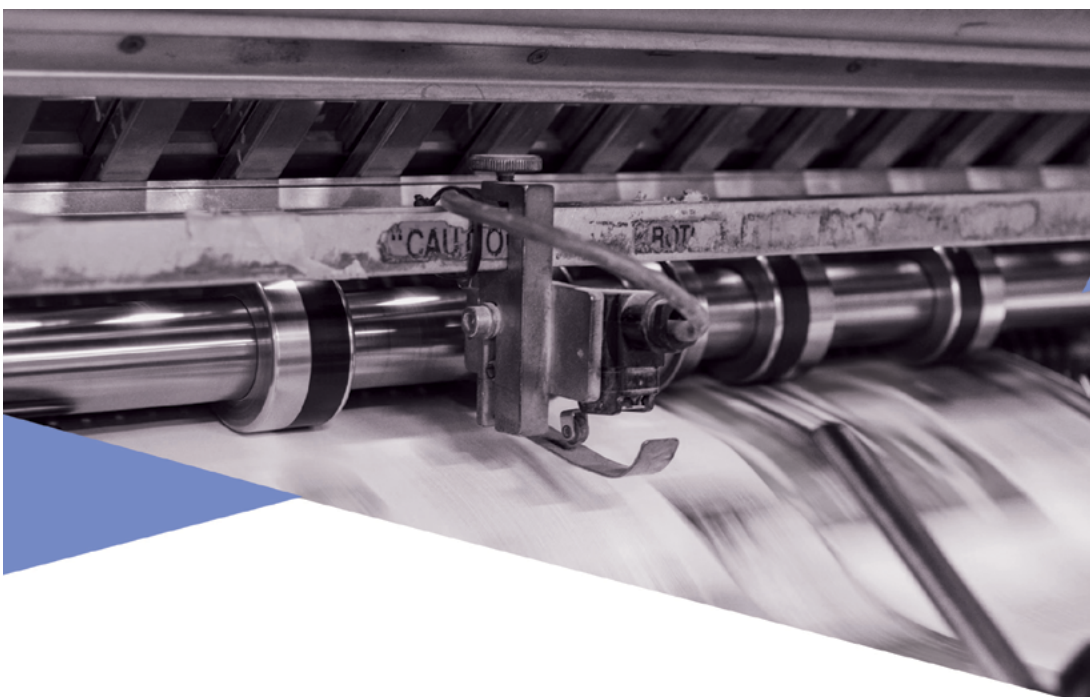
"Families across California are expected to live within their means," said Flora. "Those families deserve a government that does the same."

California 2026 Primary Elections: Early Voting Centers Open on May 30

California voters will have expanded access to early in-person voting beginning May 30 as the state conducts the June 2 primary election.

Election officials said early voting locations across California will open May 30, giving voters additional opportunities to cast ballots ahead of Election Day. The move comes as counties continue rolling out in-person voting options under the state's election system.

Vote centers in counties participating in the Voter's Choice Act already began opening May 23, while secure ballot drop-off sites became available statewide on May 5.



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Sports

Bruins Headed to WCWS for NCAA-Record 34th Time

By Earl Heath
Contributing Sports Writer

The No. 8-seed UCLA softball team is headed back to Oklahoma City.

The Bruins defeated UCF 14-4 on Saturday night at Easton Stadium to sweep the NCAA Los Angeles Super Regional and punch their ticket to the Women's College World Series for the third

straight season. With the win, UCLA advanced to the WCWS for the 10th time in the last 11 tournaments and for an NCAA-record 34th time overall.

"I couldn't be more proud of this team and their ability to be able to play for each other and with each other," UCLA head coach Kelly Inouye-Perez said. "But it's about big moments in postseason, and the ability to step up in those big moments when you have young Bruins."

UCLA launched four home runs in the win, including two from freshman Aleena Garcia, who delivered one of the biggest postseason performances in program history. Garcia finished 3-for-4 with seven RBIs, three runs scored and a walk. Her seven RBIs set a UCLA postseason single-game record.

The Bruins' power surge also made NCAA history. Their four home runs pushed their season total to 200, making UCLA the first Division I softball team to hit at least 200 home runs in a season.

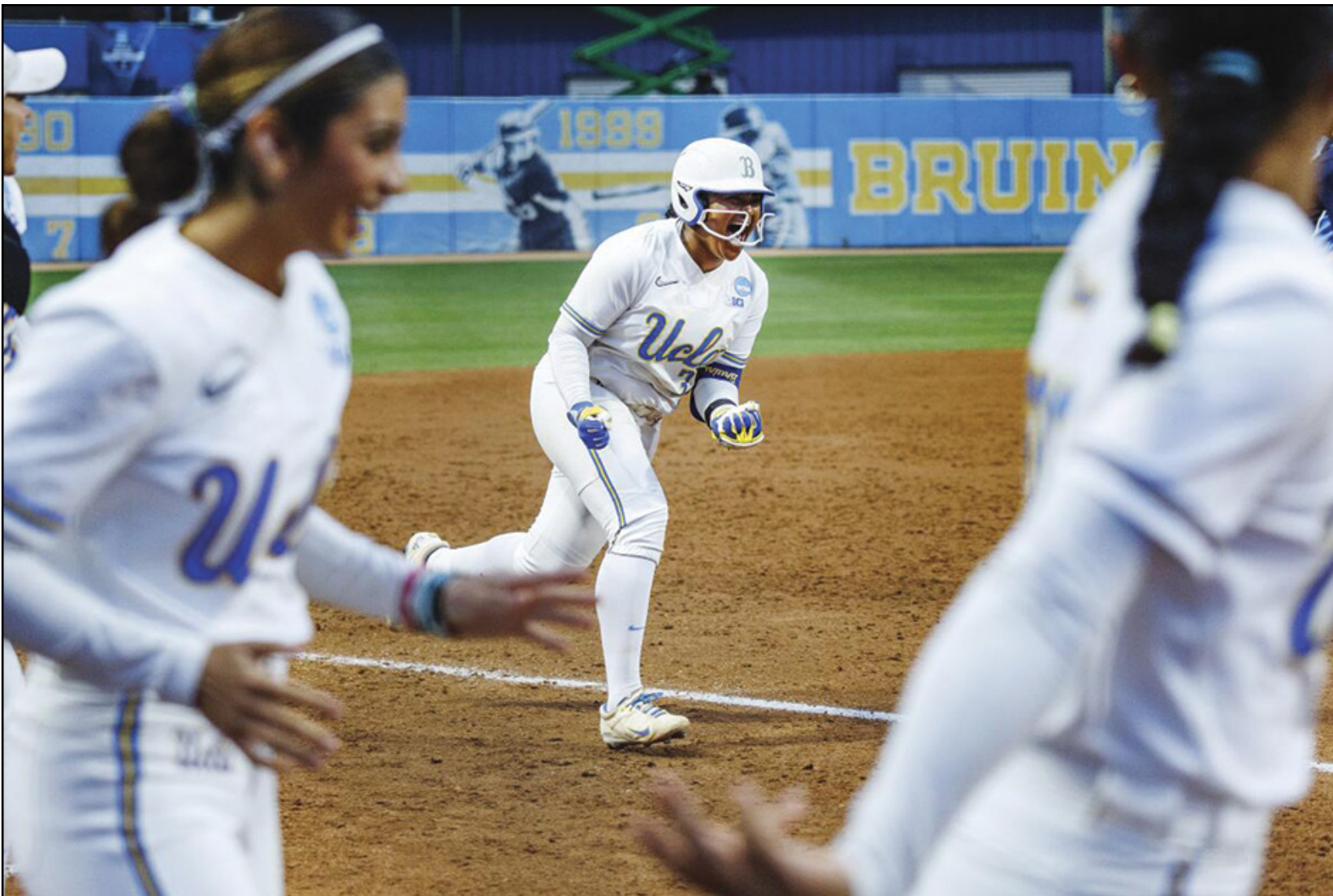
UCLA trailed 1-0 early after UCF opened the scoring, but the Bruins responded in the third inning. Megan Grant's sacrifice fly scored Soo-Jin Berry to tie the game, and Garcia followed with an RBI single that brought home Jolyna Lamar. Alexis Ramirez added a solo home run in the fourth to give UCLA a 3-1 lead.

The Bruins kept applying pressure. They scored three runs in the fifth, three more in the sixth and five in the seventh to turn a close game into a runaway. Ramirez was a major part of the attack, going 4-for-5 with a home run, a double and three RBIs. Bri Alexandre also homered as UCLA closed the night in dominant fashion.

Taylor Tinsley earned the win in the circle, improving to 32-6. She struck out a season-high 11 batters, walked three and went the distance for the Bruins. Tinsley picked up the win in each of UCLA's last four postseason victories — two against South Carolina and two against UCF.

UCF cut the lead to 6-4 in the fifth inning, but Tinsley worked out of a bases-loaded threat and UCLA's offense answered immediately. Garcia's three-run homer in the sixth stretched the lead to 9-4, and her second three-run shot in the seventh helped seal the victory.

UCLA, now 52-8, becomes one of eight teams in the Women's College World Series field. The Bruins will open play against Alabama on Thursday, May 28, at Devon Park in Oklahoma City.



UCLA's Kaniya Bragg shouts and celebrates as she runs toward home plate after hitting a three-run homer against Central Florida in the NCAA Super Regionals (Gina Feruzzi / Los Angeles Times)

Dodgers Get Hot in Rout of Rockies

By Earl Heath
Contributing Sports Writer

Mookie Betts and the Dodgers rolled over the Colorado Rockies on Tuesday night, winning by a score of 15-6 at Dodger Stadium. It was the Dodgers' fourth straight win and their 11th victory in the last 13 games, as the team is starting to look like the club many expected to see all along.

Betts led the way with two home runs and five RBIs, giving the Dodgers the kind of offensive spark they had been searching for. Kiké Hernández and Andy Pages each homered in the third inning, and Betts added his second blast of the night in the sixth. Will Smith also went deep in the sixth as Los Angeles matched season highs with 15 runs and 17 hits.

It was Betts' first multi-homer game since May 19, 2025, and a welcome sign for a lineup that has been trying to find consistency. Pages tied a career high with four hits, while Hernández, back after missing time following offseason elbow surgery, also made an impact before leaving the game with a left oblique strain.

Newcomer Eric Lauer gave the Dodgers exactly what their ailing rotation needed: quality innings. Making his Dodgers debut, the left-hander allowed just one run on four hits with one walk and four strikeouts over six innings. It was by far his best outing of the season and a strong first impression for a team in need of dependable arms.

A few more starts like that, and Lauer may want to start looking at real estate in La Cañada Flintridge.

The Dodgers' recent surge has not been only about the bats. In the previous series against the Milwaukee Brewers, the bullpen stretched its scoreless streak to 38 innings, the longest such run by a Dodgers bullpen since the mound was moved to its current distance in 1893, according to Elias Sports Bureau research cited by MLB.com.

That streak ended Monday against Colorado, but the message was clear: the Dodgers are heating up in every phase. With Betts finding his power stroke, Pages swinging a hot bat and Lauer giving the rotation a boost, Los Angeles suddenly looks dangerous again.



Mookie Betts #50 of the Los Angeles Dodgers hits a home run during the game between the Colorado Rockies and the Los Angeles Dodgers at UNIQLO Field at Dodger Stadium on (Photo by Nicole Vasquez/MLB Photos via Getty Images)

Leonard Earns All-NBA Second Team Honors After Career-Best Season

By Earl Heath
Contributing Sports Writer

LA Clippers forward Kawhi Leonard has been named to the 2025-26 Kia All-NBA Second Team, adding another honor to one of the most decorated careers in franchise history.

The selection marks Leonard's seventh career All-NBA honor and his fourth as a member of the Clippers. He is one of three players in franchise history to earn four All-NBA selections.

Leonard, a native of Moreno Valley, started all 65 games he played this season and averaged a career-high 27.9 points, 6.4 rebounds, 3.6 assists and 1.88 steals in 32.1 minutes per game. He shot 50.5% from the field, 38.7% from 3-point range and 89.2% from the free-throw line.

He was the only forward to rank in the NBA's top 10 in both scoring and steals this season. Leonard also earned his seventh career All-Star selection, representing the Clippers at the 2026 NBA All-Star Game at Intuit Dome.

Leonard's season included one of the strongest scoring runs of his career. From Nov. 28 through

April 10, he scored at least 20 points in 57 consecutive games, matching the longest streak in franchise history. He became one of only 10 players in NBA history to record 50 straight 20-point games in a single season.

His top individual performance came Dec. 28 against the Detroit Pistons, when he scored a career-high 55 points. Leonard also made three game-winning shots in the final five seconds of games this season, the most in the NBA.

Leonard helped lead the Clippers through a historic turnaround. After falling 15 games below .500 earlier in the season, the Clippers became the only team in league history to recover and finish with a winning record. The team also posted its 15th consecutive winning season, the longest active streak in the NBA and the fourth longest in league history.

Joining Leonard on the All-NBA Second Team were Jaylen Brown of the Boston Celtics, Donovan Mitchell of the Cleveland Cavaliers, Kevin Durant of the Houston Rockets and Jalen Brunson of the New York Knicks.





iStockphoto / NNPA.

'Whites Only' Signs Were Haunting Reminders of America's Racism

By Aaron Morrison,

Contributing Writer | Los Angeles Wave

NEW YORK (AP) — “No dogs, no Negroes, no Mexicans.” “Colored served in rear.” “For whites only.”

It's the type of signage that hung from the doors and windows of establishments across much of the American South for many years.

The words, like screaming headlines from Page One of a broadsheet newspaper, were the most visible, daily reminder of the subordinate status of Black people who lived life alongside and yet separate from people who, regardless of class, were considered white.

After the Civil War, and upon the collapse of Reconstruction, the Jim Crow system of public etiquette and laws regulated the free movement of

both Black and white people for generations until the civil rights movement began chipping away at legalized racial discrimination.

The Jim Crow system was undergirded by beliefs that formerly enslaved Black people and their descendants were inferior to white people in fundamental ways, including intelligence, morality and behavior. Allowing white and Black people to coexist as equals, the system's supporters believed, might encourage interracial sexual relations and spur the rise of an abominable race that would destroy the racial purity of the nation's superior white populace.

Spatial segregation first was culturally accepted, then enforced violently or through threat of re-enslavement via incarceration. After the 1896 Supreme Court decision *Plessy v. Ferguson*

established the “separate but equal” doctrine, Jim Crow segregation signs were more statutory than strongly worded warnings.

Ritualized humiliation became constitutional subjugation. Railway cars, buses, water fountains, restrooms, hotels, lunch counters and swimming pools were among a long list of the public facilities segregated by signage. Black people were forced to use substandard facilities. Schools, churches and cemeteries had long been racially divided. By design, it kept many Black men away from white women and stripped Black people of their dignity, sense of citizenship and social and political belonging.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 ended legalized racial separatism, although many in the American South resisted desegregation after signs were pulled down and placed into museums. Steven Reich, a

history professor and author of an encyclopedia on the Jim Crow era, says one lasting impact of legalized segregation remains evident in the modern American workforce.

Segregation divided the working class and compelled white workers to identify more with their employers than with their Black co-workers, Reich says. That continues to stifle opportunities for Black and white workers to organize and work together on common issues, including diversity and inclusion.

Aaron Morrison writes for the Associated Press. This story was featured in the Los Angeles Wave, an NNPA member publisher, and is part of a recurring series, “American Objects,” marking the 250th anniversary of the United States.

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