

# News Release

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## **Supervisors Support Blue Ribbon Commission Recommendations to Reduce African American Child Mortality in County**

Sacramento, CA – On Tuesday, May 7, the Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to support and fund the Blue Ribbon Commission's recommendations to reduce disproportional African American child mortality rates in Sacramento County.

"The recommendations are the culmination of tremendous work by so many people," said District 1 Supervisor Phil Serna at the conclusion of the presentation. "The Board's action today demonstrates a collective commitment to reversing this disturbing trend and making a positive difference."

In 2011, the Board of Supervisors received the Child Death Review Team's 20-year report that included findings that African American children in Sacramento die at a rate two times higher than children of all other races. A Blue Ribbon Commission was established by Supervisor Serna to better understand the disproportionality and formulate recommendations to decrease all child deaths. During the last 18 months, the multi-disciplinary group analysed available data, explored causes of child deaths, and conducted a series of community meetings to gather feedback.

The Commission's specific recommendations focus on the four leading causes of African American child deaths: maternal and perinatal health, infant sleep-related, child abuse and neglect homicides, and third party homicides. Recommendations also include the formation of a steering committee to provide coordination and oversight, create a strategic plan, monitor and evaluate implementation, and give annual progress reports to the Board of Supervisors. In addition, the Commission requested \$100,000 of County General Funds to help finance staff support for the steering committee, and will seek \$200,000 in matching funds: \$100,000 from the First 5 Sacramento Commission and \$100,000 from the County's hospital systems and other foundations. Details on funding will evolve as the effectiveness of current programs and resource allocations are evaluated.

For more information about the Blue Ribbon Commission and their recommendations, visit Supervisor Phil Serna's website at [www.philserna.net](http://www.philserna.net).

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