

## **Public Fills Town Hall Meetings in Support of the Power to Subpoena the Sheriff's Department**

**For Immediate Release:** April 27, 2015  
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**Next Town Hall Meeting:** Monday April 27th, 700 Exposition Park Drive, Los Angeles CA 90037, 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

**Los Angeles, C.A.** – The working group tasked with giving the Board of Supervisors recommendations on the future Civilian Oversight Commission's size, scope, structure and responsibilities is hosting a series of nine town hall meetings in Los Angeles County's five districts to reach out to the community for recommendations and comments. With 50 - 100 people in attendance at each of the initial six town hall meetings in Compton, Sylmar, La Puente, Lancaster, Hacienda Heights, and Arcadia there has been overwhelming public support for a commission with subpoena power and without law enforcement or retired law enforcement.

The Coalition to End Sheriff Violence in Los Angeles Jails – which includes over 20 organizations countywide, survivors of sheriff violence, their families, and communities – have been calling on the county for three years to create an independent civilian oversight commission over the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department *with* subpoena power. **In addition to subpoena power their demands are 1) that it be composed of 9 members, 5 appointed by the supervisors and 4 appointed from a list of nominees identified by the community, 2) it directs the functions of the Inspector General, 3) is comprised of no current or former law enforcement, 4) it has its own legal counsel.**

The next Town Hall takes place tonight at Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas's 2nd district office in Exposition Park. Mark Ridley-Thomas has repeatedly voted in favor of the Civilian Oversight Commission and has been outspoken in support of a commission with "teeth." He has not yet publicly addressed the community's demands.

"For years the public has cried out for a commission with the power to hold the largest and most violent sheriff's department in the country accountable," says Mark-Anthony Johnson, director of health and wellness at Dignity and Power Now. "That's why The Coalition to End Sheriff Violence put this issue on the map and that's why Mark-Ridley Thomas supported it. We expect no less tonight in Exposition Park –or anywhere else in Los Angeles County."

For more information, please visit [dignityandpowernow.org](http://dignityandpowernow.org).

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