



**Office of the Mayor
City of Los Angeles**

ANTONIO R. VILLARAIGOSA

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**Contact: Matt Szabo
(213) 978-0741**

MAYOR VILLARAIGOSA'S STATEMENT ON THE DEATH OF AUGUSTUS HAWKINS

LOS ANGELES — Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa today ordered City flags lowered to half-staff to honor the death of long-time South Los Angeles leader Augustus Hawkins, a former state legislator and the first African-American elected to Congress in California. The Mayor also made the following statement:

"Today people from all corners of Los Angeles mourn the loss of Augustus Hawkins, an indefatigable legislator, an inspirational mentor, a defender of human rights, and a great Angeleno.

"Soft-spoken in manner, but mighty in his principles, Gus Hawkins blazed a path for generations of leaders across America to follow. From Sacramento to Washington DC, from women's rights to children's welfare, there was no injustice or inequity on which he stood silent in more than 55 years as a law-maker.

"Those of us who saw the violence in Watts erupt 42 years ago remember not only the frustration of a community turn to flames, but also the tremendous leadership Gus Hawkins showed in its aftermath. Our Congressman saw a moment to transcend finger-pointing and to address the fundamental disparities in opportunity for African Americans in Los Angeles — and for underprivileged Americans everywhere.

"Today, as we mourn the passing of an irreplaceable elder statesman, we celebrate a man who opened the doors for people everywhere. The prayers of the people of Los Angeles are with his stepchildren, grandchildren and great-grandchild."

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