



N E W S R E L E A S E

MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS

CA Senate District 26

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Gutierrez**

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**RIDLEY-THOMAS APPLAUDS GREATER BALDWIN HILLS ALLIANCE for DEVELOPMENT OF OIL FIELD COMMUNITY STANDARDS**

***Senator cites CHD as “the Quintessence of Citizen Empowerment”***

LOS ANGELES –Senator Mark Ridley-Thomas (D-Los Angeles/Culver City) today commended representatives of the Greater Baldwin Hills Alliance (GBHA) on the occasion of a GBHA press conference announcing the release of their Baldwin Hills Community Standards District (CSD) document, which offers recommendations for the health-conscious and environmentally responsible operation of the two-square mile Baldwin Hills Oil Fields.

“It is noteworthy that citizens from the neighborhoods surrounding the Baldwin Hills Oil Fields have taken the time to educate themselves on the health and environmental impacts of the proposed expansion of oil drilling in the Baldwin Hills Parklands, followed up on that action by engaging their government at the city, county, and state levels to articulate the community’s findings and concerns, and ultimately crafted a CSD document” said Ridley-Thomas. “That sequence of actions, the self-education, the civic engagement, and drafting of a community-driven document, is the quintessence of citizen empowerment,” he added. “It is very gratifying to hear that the work that we began in partnership with GBHA almost a year ago has come to fruition in the form of the Greater Baldwin Hills Alliance CSD.”

The Senator was referring to the “*Environmental Health Empowerment Summit on the PXP Oil Wells and Baldwin Hills Parklands*” convened by his 26<sup>th</sup> Senate District office, the Baldwin Hills Conservancy, Community Health Councils, Culver Crest Neighborhood Association, and the Empowerment Congress on July 21, 2007 at West Los Angeles College. The Summit brought together concerned citizens from Baldwin Hills, Culver City, Ladera Heights, and View Park, as well as environmental and health-related community groups for a day long education and strategy session in anticipation of the impending expiration of the oil drilling moratorium issued in June 2006 by LA County.

The July 07’ Summit action plan yielded a “Baldwin Hills Working Group” which later became the Greater Baldwin Hills Alliance and continues to meet regularly. “Given that all of us, particularly the elected officials interested in this process, are employed by and serve at the pleasure of the citizens, it seems to me the GBHA version of the CSD must be viewed as the foundation upon which any other variations of a CSD should be built,” Ridley-Thomas stated. “This is a great first step for the establishment of the Baldwin Hills Community Standards District, and an even greater step toward the continuation of the exemplary citizen empowerment that is the hallmark of this community. I am very proud to be part of, and to represent the communities within the Greater Baldwin Hills Alliance.”

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