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CONTACT: Vy Nguyen
Weingart Foundation
213-688-6319

2017 EQUITY PROFILE OF THE LOS ANGELES REGION HIGHLIGHTS DRAMATIC INEQUITIES IN THE REGION

New Report Names LA as Seventh Most “Unequal” Metropolis Nationwide

LOS ANGELES, Calif., March 2, 2017 – The *2017 Equity Profile of the Los Angeles Region*, released today, highlights the widening inequities in income, wealth, health and opportunity in Los Angeles County. The report was developed by [PolicyLink](#) and the [Program for Environmental and Regional Equity \(PERE\)](#) at USC, and is supported by the [Weingart Foundation](#).

“Across the region, people are struggling daily for the things so many of us take for granted—safe streets, good jobs, access to health care, affordable housing and a quality education for our families,” said Fred Ali, president and CEO of the Weingart Foundation. “Over the past several decades, long-standing inequities in our communities have reached unprecedent levels. Addressing these disparities is both a moral and economic imperative for us all.”

The *2017 Equity Profile of the Los Angeles Region* is the first in a series of reports of the *Southern California Regional Equity Atlas*—a joint project of PolicyLink and PERE that will result in the publication of equity reports and analysis on an annual basis. The *Southern California Region Equity Atlas* will provide an ongoing resource for a variety of stakeholders and policy makers to help guide collective strategy, support advocacy and measure progress in addressing these issues.

The new report underscores that, over the past several decades, long-standing inequities in income, wealth, health, and opportunity have reached historic levels. And while many have been affected by this growing inequality, communities of color have felt the greatest pains as the economy has shifted and stagnated.

“Los Angeles’ diversity is a major asset in the global economy, but inequities and disparities are holding the region back,” said Manual Pastor, Director of PERE. Pastor points to a widening gap in wages as partly to blame. According to the report, since 1979 the highest-paid workers have seen their wages increase by 13 percent while wages for the lowest-page works have declined by 25 percent.

Other key findings in the report include:

- Los Angeles County’s economy was hit hard by the downtown of the early 1990s and job growth and economic output have lagged the national average since then.

- Since 1990, poverty and working poverty rates in the region have been consistently higher than the national averages.
- While the pursuit of education has increased for all youth, youth of color are still far less likely to finish high school than their white counterparts.

“If racial gaps in income and employment were closed, the LA economy would be nearly \$380 billion stronger,” said Angela Glover Blackwell, CEO of PolicyLink. “We call this the ‘racial equity dividend.’ Full inclusion benefits all Angelenos.”

The *2017 Equity Profile of the Los Angeles Region* was released at the Weingart Foundation’s March 2nd “Achieving Equity” convening in Los Angeles. Additional convenings regarding equity are being planned throughout 2017. To download a copy of the report, *click here* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/per/equity-profile-los-angeles-region/>.

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