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NO on Measure J(acking): Time To Stop Ballot Initiative Exploitation in LA Between The Lines

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For the past year, the Los Angeles black community has been trying to negotiate a suitable and acceptable plan to mitigate traffic and business disruption around the construction of the Crenshaw/LAX rail line that will be coming down Crenshaw. Like every other community that has been impacted (or will be impacted) by permanent transportation infrastructure, the Crenshaw community should be heard, listened to and cooperated with on something that will effect their lives, the lives of their children and their children's children.

Light rail infrastructure will be around for 100 years. Once it's done, it's done. It will be around longer than the politicians and experts that planned it, constructed it and cut the ribbon. Once that's done, it's the people's lives that will be disrupted and disgusted over the impediments and inconveniences caused by undesirable, and unwanted, transportation design. Crenshaw's elected officials are listening. Crenshaw's Mayor is not. He hasn't heard us, and he ain't hearing us. But I BET he'll hear this. His ballot initiative to pay for his darling "Subway to the sea" dream gets a NO from us.

Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa pitched the federal government with this lofty plan of building 30 years worth of transportation infrastructure. He floated a bond measure, Measure R, in 2008, that would raise approximately \$35 billion dollars over 30 years with a half cent sales tax earmarked for transportation projects. The black community overwhelming supported Measure R, in hopes of getting its long awaited Crenshaw Rail line built, a line first proposed 26 years ago in 1986.

Some analysts said the black community vote was the tipping point for Measure J in Southern California's highly anti-taxation environment. However, when the ballot measure passed, all parts of the county came with dream projects and demands for the money grab. The reward to the black community was to finish the controversial Expo Line and put a bus line down Crenshaw. If it wasn't for the effort of Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, demanding the rail line stay on the table, the black community would have seen essentially nothing for their vote to tax themselves. Instead, the reward has been a rail line, but a rail line with a design the community doesn't support, and a "take it or leave it" attitude from the Mayor.

A Mayor, we have to keep reminding (kicking) ourselves that our community put in office. A Mayor hell bent on trying to complete 12 transportation projects in ten years. He pitched President Obama to sign the America Fast Forward bill this past summer that would offer up \$105 billion dollars in loans for stalled and unfunded turnkey transportation projects. Still, no love for the Crenshaw/LAX line. \$545 million was set aside for the Leimert Park stop that he made conditional to the design if the money was found. Still no effort to take a highly disruptive rail line thru the middle of a commerce starved Hyde Park business district - essentially assuring its demise. With this facing a disgusted community, Villaraigosa has the audacity to float another half cent tax bond to complete current projects - not including the Crenshaw/LAX project. Let's me get this straight - you want the black community to tax itself, until the year 2069, for transportation projects that won't impact nor improve our community?

Well, that's straight-up JACKING. Robin Hood in reverse. Take from the poor and give to the rich. Who are the rich in Los Angeles? Say it with me now, "The Westside."

Villaraigosa's Measure J, which the community is now calling, "Measure Jackin' Us," essentially is a tax to help Villaraigosa fulfill "his dream" of a subway to the sea - which runs from downtown to Santa Monica, and runs underground when the community said so. So, again - it's all about him - and the rest of the city, particularly the Southside and the Eastside that will have to pay without sufficient return on its investment. Why should these communities always be expected to negotiate away their dignity - or have some suit negotiate it away for them. The Space Shuttle was pretty - but not *that* pretty for our community to lose four hundred trees. Yeah, they'll replace them two to one, but what do we breath 20 years in the meantime? What replaces the oxygen in the time it takes for trees to be planted and

become full grown? Oh, nobody thought that through, huh? Other communities did. That's why it went down Crenshaw.

You can only put so much on one community before they have to draw a line in the sand. The Crenshaw Community did that with Villaraigosa months ago. He danced all over it and smiled. Now he's trying to tax us for 65 years and still smiling. Well, smile at this...

NO ON Measure J. Tell your friends, family, people you don't like. Vote Obama, Jackie Lacey and NO on Measure J. Shout from the mountain tops, and the street corners. Hold up signs, and have a candle vigil. There's something for everybody to do on this one. But it's time.

Let's stop the jacking that about to occur on South L.A. If MTA can't find money for a Leimert Park stop and a tunnel at 48th, we can't find a vote on Measure J. S**t just got real...

Vote No on Measure J.

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