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For immediate release

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Los Angeles League of Conservation Voters Endorses Mark Ridley-Thomas for L.A. County Supervisor

Los Angeles –The Los Angeles League of Conservation Voters (LALCV) has endorsed State Senator Mark Ridley-Thomas for Los Angeles County Supervisor in the 2nd District. The endorsement came last night following a live debate between Ridley-Thomas and Councilmember Bernard Parks, the two front runners fighting to claim the seat being vacated by Yvonne B. Burke after 16 years.

“For decades, Senator Mark Ridley-Thomas has worked to protect California's environment,” said Mitchell Schwartz, President of LALCV. “Today, our organization thanks him with our heartfelt endorsement to be the next supervisor for the 2nd district.”

The live televised debate, sponsored by the Los Angeles League of Conservation Voters and the League of Women Voters, took place before a capacity crowd of 350 people at the Westside Jewish Community Center. Candidates Ridley-Thomas and Parks took questions from moderator Mark Brown of KABC and LALCV board members on a number of questions, including their environmental positions on public transit and recycling as well as how they would work to bring King Hospital back and address gang violence in the district.

“Although we believe Bernard Parks is a strong candidate in the race,” said Schwartz, “the board believes that Senator Ridley-Thomas will bring leadership and progressive ideas to the Board of Supervisors and work closely with environmentalists to make the right choices for the 2 million residents of Los Angeles County who live in the 2nd district.”

Although nine candidates have filed papers to run for the open seat, Ridley-Thomas and Parks are seen as the clear frontrunners to succeed Yvonne B. Burke. Los Angeles County's 2nd District is a central region of the county that extends from mid-Los Angeles south to Carson, comprised of nine cities and more than a dozen sections of unincorporated county land.

“Senator Mark Ridley-Thomas is clearly the candidate with the best proven track record of providing leadership, community empowerment and environmental stewardship throughout his life as a teacher, activist, City Councilmember and state senator,” said Effie Turnbull, land use attorney and a debate moderator. “We are proud to support him as the next County Supervisor in the 2nd district.”

The board members of the Los Angeles League of Conservation Voters met immediately following the debate to make its endorsement in the race.

"The Senator is a great choice for the Second District because he intimately knows the special environmental needs of our area," said Sandra Hamlat, planning associate of the Baldwin Hills Conservancy and a debate moderator. "For example, he's worked to protect the community from oil drilling in Baldwin Hills, created parkland in our park-poor district and is committed to building much-needed housing along transportation corridors, which will reduce air pollution. He is also the rare politician that gets the job done by empowering communities."

"For me the deciding difference between the candidates was summed up when Senator Ridley-Thomas said 'It is not acceptable to push problems to other levels of government; leadership steps up'," said David Allgood, Southern California Director of the California League of Conservation Voters and a debate moderator.

The election will be held on June 3, 2008.

The debate will be broadcast on May 3rd at 3:30 p.m. on Channel 7. The debate will also be shown on Channel 36 on April 29th at 2:00 pm, April 30th at 12:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. and on May 4th at 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

***PHOTOS OF THE DEBATE ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST Please contact :
mnemick@hotmail.com.***

The Los Angeles League of Conservation Voters is dedicated to endorsing and supporting candidates who are committed to preserve, protect and enhance the environment across Los Angeles County. Throughout its 20 year history LALCV has helped elect more than 100 environmental leaders to local offices. For more information on LALCV activities and our endorsements in the upcoming election, please go to www.lalcv.org.

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