



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

ANTONIO R. VILLARAIGOSA

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 20, 2008**

**Contact: Gil Duran
(213) 978-0741**

MAYOR VILLARAIGOSA LAUNCHES ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN

As the first in a series of initiatives under the Economic Action Plan, Mayor Villaraigosa will roll out his jobs strategy to create and place thousands of Angelenos in living wage jobs

LOS ANGELES – Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa joined business, labor and City leaders today to launch his Economic Action Plan to confront a slowing economy, help families and businesses in need, and move thousands of Angelenos into living wage jobs.

“Jobs create financial security, safe streets and bright futures for working families in our City,” Mayor Villaraigosa said. “The health of our economy depends on a steady supply of good jobs for local residents. With this six-point plan, we are on track to move 100,000 Angelenos into high quality jobs by July 2010.”

The first in a series of initiatives under the Economic Action Plan, the Workforce Development Strategy will move thousands of Angelenos into living wage jobs by first providing education and job training programs, and then placing workers into jobs through the City’s workforce centers. The Mayor is also working with both the business and labor communities to turn low-wage jobs into living wage employment.

The national economy is currently confronting slow job growth, a severe mortgage lending crisis and credit crunch, and a widening income gap. Mayor Villaraigosa’s jobs strategy is part of a broader Economic Action Plan to address these challenges on a local scale, help the hardest hit families and businesses, and bring more Angelenos into the middle class.

The Mayor’s office is working with the LA Unified School District, the LA Community College District, the LA Area Chamber of Commerce, the Workforce Investment Board, and organizations like Goodwill Industries of Southern California, to implement the job training, placement and creation strategy.

With the goal of creating or placing 100,000 workers into living wage jobs in LA by July 1, 2010, Mayor Villaraigosa outlined the following six workforce development strategies to train, educate and place workers into well-paying jobs:

Strategy #1 – Focus Job Training in Key Economic Sectors

The City will leverage its sector-based training fund with additional grant money and initiate nine training programs in seven key economic sectors, including: logistics, construction, health care, hospitality and tourism, utilities, financial services, and advanced manufacturing.

These economic sectors were specifically chosen because they have the potential to grow, even during an economic downturn; they pay a living to their workers; they provide opportunities for career advancement; and they are secure within the regional economy.

Strategy #2 – Coordinate Regional Job Training Efforts

In June 2007 under the Mayor's leadership, the City of Los Angeles signed an agreement with the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), the Los Angeles Community College District, the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, and the United Way, to build a regional job training strategy and leverage regional resources.

Together, these entities can provide over \$465 million in funding for job training, job placement, job recruitment and adult education programs.

The need for coordinating regional resources is clear. The LAUSD and the region's community colleges provide vocational and occupational skills training while the City's workforce centers provide job listing, case management and job placement services.

Strategy #3 – Leverage Public Sector Hiring and Contracting

Mayor Villaraigosa is working with a wide variety of government departments and agencies to expand the City's hiring, purchasing, economic investment and contracting powers, and create additional living wage job opportunities in the public sector.

The Mayor's efforts have resulted in a series of agreements that require recipients of City contracts to train and hire local residents for living wage jobs. In addition, the City oversees the LA CityWorks Programs, which prepares young workers for jobs being vacated by retiring baby boomers.

These two components come on the heels of Mayor Villaraigosa's solar jobs initiative, which he unveiled yesterday alongside House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

Strategy #4 – Connect Young People to Jobs

Since taking office, Mayor Villaraigosa has placed summer youth jobs programs at the top of his economic development agenda. A central component of this effort is “Hire LA’s Youth 18-24,” an initiative to train and place 18 to 24 year-old workers in private sector jobs.

As part of his broader jobs strategy, Mayor Villaraigosa will collaborate with the LA Area Chamber of Commerce and other agencies to expand the City’s youth jobs efforts and place special emphasis on the young adults striving to secure living wage employment and begin their careers.

Strategy #5 – Transition Workers from Low Wage Jobs into Living Wage Jobs

Recent studies have shown that nearly one-quarter of LA workers had jobs paying less than a living wage. These workers cannot afford basic necessities, lack good benefits and have little hope of entering the middle class.

In order to address this challenge head-on, the Mayor is working with partners at the Port of Los Angeles, the LA World Airports, the Department of Water and Power and other agencies to ensure that the public sector takes the lead in moving workers from low wage to living wage jobs.

Strategy #6 – Create Living Wage Jobs Through Economic Development

The City will provide direct and indirect financing, technical assistance and tax incentives to businesses that offer living wage jobs. In addition, the Mayor’s Office will expand the Los Angeles Business Assistance Program to help entrepreneurs and small businesses grow into viable and profitable companies which create new jobs and hire local residents.

Through his efforts to promote major redevelopment projects like LA Live, the Grand Avenue Project and NBC Universal, the Mayor is working to ensure that projects generating the greatest revenue and the most excitement also create middle class jobs.

###