



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Homeless Advocates Throw Their Support Behind Jan Perry for Los Angeles County Supervisor

*Leaders in the Fight Against Homelessness say Perry
is the Candidate Best Suited to Address the Crisis*

Los Angeles, Calif. (June 26, 2019) – A trio of homeless advocates considered pioneers and innovators in the fight against homelessness have declared their support for former Councilwoman Jan Perry’s bid to become the next Supervisor for Los Angeles County’s 2nd District. Ruth Schwartz, founder-executive director of Shelter Partnership,* Tanya Tull, social innovator-founder of Para los Niños* and president/CEO of Partnering for Change* and Orlando Ward, executive director of external affairs of Volunteers of America Los Angeles (VOLA)* agree that Perry is the candidate most qualified to tackle the myriad of issues that contribute to homelessness. Their endorsement comes at a time when the housing crisis in Los Angeles has reached a critical juncture.

Nationally recognized as a policy expert, Ruth Schwartz and her organization provide technical, developmental and material assistance to Los Angeles’ housing system for the homeless. She’s been active for more than 25 years and is a leader in the field of low-income housing, development and public policy.

“I’ve worked with dozens of capable, caring elected officials over the years, but Jan did the most to address our homeless crisis,” said Schwartz. “Jan has spent years working with my fellow homeless advocates, businesses, law enforcement, public and mental health officials to coordinate getting folks off the street and into housing and I believe she will continue that great work on the LA County Board of Supervisors.”

Tanya Tull is considered the innovator of the housing first approach to addressing homelessness, first launched in 1988 when she founded Beyond Shelter.* Operating from the premise that homeless families and individuals should be assisted back into permanent rental housing as quickly as possible, rather than remain in the homeless services system for long periods of time, this approach evolved into the rapid rehousing programs at work in our communities today. Tull also founded A Community of Friends* and co-founded LA Family Housing Corp.* She has received numerous accolades including the Gleitsman Foundation’s prestigious National Citizen Activist Award from the Kennedy School of Government – Center for

Public Leadership, Harvard. She is a senior fellow at the UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs and is a senior fellow at Ashoka, an organization of the world's leading social innovators.

“We need tenacious leadership if we are to even begin to tackle the housing, health and economic issues that contribute to homelessness in Los Angeles,” said Tull. She continued, “Jan is not only unwavering in her approach to problem solving, but she has the experience and ability to bring people together to create innovative solutions for the thousands of people who are disenfranchised, without a home and access to critical services.”

Orlando Ward designs and operates programs that strive to end individual homelessness. Ward was vice president of operations for The Midnight Mission* for 12 years and as part of his duties with VOLA he operates two of the largest homeless shelters in Los Angeles County. Formerly homeless, he is a fierce advocate for LA's most vulnerable population and has served as a Commissioner on LA County's DPSS Commission on Family Homelessness and Poverty and the City of LA's Affordable Housing Commission.

“It's going to take guts, independence and know how to successfully address our homelessness crisis,” said Orlando Ward. “Jan's leadership, practicality and passion is the right recipe for the times we are in,” he continued.

As the former representative of Downtown Los Angeles Perry was a fixture on monthly walks in the Skid Row area to learn more about the people living on the street and to offer appropriate assistance and services. Perry has been driven by people who desperately needed help, refused and then passed away as a result. She learned very quickly that life on the streets is fragile and that it will take a steadfast commitment from the public, private and non-profit sectors to help restore stability to the lives of Angelenos who find themselves without a home.

“I can't even begin to express how grateful and honored I am to have the support of Ruth, Tanya and Orlando who are considered giants in their field,” said Perry. “They consistently served as an important sounding board for me and collectively, they shared a wealth of expertise and information that was invaluable to carrying out my work in service to the City of Los Angeles. I will continue to be guided by their wise counsel.”

From July 2013 to December 2018 Perry served as the general manager of the City of Los Angeles Economic Workforce Development Department (EWDD) where she oversaw a broad range of programs offering assistance to business, job seekers and disconnected youth. During her tenure, the department enrolled approximately 91,000 people in its training and placement programs. Currently, she serves as the executive director of the Infrastructure Funding Alliance, a national initiative to meet future infrastructure, economic development, and environmental challenges. She lives in Ladera Heights with her daughter and her rescue dog Frank.

*Organizations listed for identification purposes only.