



For Immediate Release
May 28, 2008

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***** MEDIA ADVISORY *****

COUNCILMEMBER ALARCÓN HOSTS MEETING WITH VALLEY RELIGIOUS LEADERS TO KICK- OFF “WORSHIP WATCH” PROGRAM

WHO: Hon. Richard Alarcón, Los Angeles City Councilmember (District 7)
Rabbi Allen Freehling, Exec. Director, LA City Human Relations Commission
Commander Jerry Szymanski, Los Angeles Police Department
Chaplain Ken Crawford, Los Angeles Police Department
David Liske, Senior Arson Investigator, Los Angeles Fire Department
Cambria Smith, President, Valley Interfaith Council
Fr. Hugo Melvin Aldana, Pastor, Church of the Nazarene
Pastor Dudley Chatman, Greater Community Baptist Church
Dozens of local religious leaders

WHEN: Thursday, May 29th, 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

WHERE: The Marvin Braude Constituent Center
Conference Room 1B – First Floor
6262 Van Nuys Boulevard
Van Nuys, CA 91401

BACKGROUND: Last Friday Los Angeles City Councilmember Richard Alarcón introduced a motion to create a city-wide “Worship Watch” program to be coordinated by the Los Angeles Police Department. The creation of this program was inspired by three recent arson attacks against places of worship in the San Fernando Valley. The “Worship Watch” program will be modeled after the successful Neighborhood Watch and Business Watch programs and will be available for all places of worship to join. The program will bring together religious leaders from local places of worship with the Los Angeles Police Department providing coordination of the program, trainings on how to protect the place of worship and information on crime statistic in the community, giving participants the opportunity to work together to increase safety both at the place of worship and in the surrounding community.

“A crime against a place of worship is a crime against all of us and our fundamental first amendment right to freedom of religion,” said Councilmember Alarcón. “Los Angeles is the most religiously diverse city in the world and Worship Watch will bring together leaders from mosques, churches, temples and synagogues for the common goal of increasing safety and reducing crime. This program will be a big win both for the individual places of worship and for the community as a whole.”