



# MITCH O'FARRELL

COUNCILMEMBER, 13TH DISTRICT ★ CITY OF LOS ANGELES

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CONTACT:**

Dan Halden 213-254-7214 [daniel.halden@lacity.org](mailto:daniel.halden@lacity.org)

## **Councilmember O'Farrell, Joined by Civic and Health Leaders, Calls For Shuttered St. Vincent Hospital to be Opened, Initiates Public Petition**

*The facility, which has nearly 400 beds, has been vacant for over two years - despite repeated attempts by the City, led by O'Farrell, to reactivate the site*

**WESTLAKE** - Los Angeles City Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell today called on Dr. Patrick Soon-Shiong, the [richest person in Los Angeles](#) and the owner of the vacant St. Vincent Medical Center, to work with the City on an agreement to reopen the hospital as part of the region's response to homelessness. O'Farrell announced the formation of a public [petition](#) urging Dr. Soon-Shiong to make use of the shuttered facility.

"It's time for the richest person in Los Angeles, Dr. Patrick Soon-Shiong, to put his vast financial wealth and considerable influence to good use and work with us to reopen St. Vincent as an acute care center for people experiencing homelessness," said Councilmember O'Farrell. "He has owned this hospital and campus for over two years. Except for a very brief time in 2020, when the State paid Dr. Soon-Shiong \$27 million to use the facility as a temporary COVID hospital, the property has sat vacant. Rather than trying to sell it for redevelopment, and refusing to even consider working with us on adaptive reuse or repurposing, I urge Dr. Soon-Shiong to work with our broad coalition of local, County, and State leaders to make something happen here to the benefit of all, and especially the most vulnerable in our region."

St. Vincent Medical Center, which was bought by Soon-Shiong in April 2020, has been mostly closed for over two years. Though the City has attempted to work with Soon-Shiong over the past two years, efforts to reactivate the facility have been unsuccessful. **(See attached timeline and legislation.)** With the State of California currently enjoying a \$97 billion budget [surplus](#), Councilmember O'Farrell will be traveling to Sacramento this summer to seek State funding to combat homelessness in Los Angeles.

Angelenos who are interested in signing or circulating the public petition to reopen St. Vincent Hospital can access it via this link: [bit.ly/openstvincent](https://bit.ly/openstvincent). Several civic and health leaders have echoed O'Farrell's call for the facility to be reopened, stressing the need for public-private partnerships to ease the homelessness crisis.

"Between 2020 and 2021, the City lost 369 'board and care' beds, and I ask the owner of this property to work with the City and the County to not only replace the beds lost, but add to the desperately needed inventory," said Kerry Morrison, Founder and Project Manager, Heart Forward. "St. Vincent has the capacity to provide a total of 500 beds for people living with serious mental illness, as well as our growing elderly population, who are otherwise not served by our traditional affordable housing continuum. This is an opportunity to lead by



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example in showing how the private sector could step up to the plate to collaborate with government partners and not turn a blind eye to the suffering of the unsheltered.”

“The surge in homelessness across Los Angeles presents challenges that can only be solved by public-private partnerships,” said Mark Valentino, CEO, LA Downtown Medical Center. “If a facility like St. Vincent were to become operational again, it would have a profound impact on our community. We could relieve stress on our emergency rooms and local hospitals, which have already dwindled in number during the pandemic. Better health care, and access to more resources, can lift up the tide for everybody.”

“For the past two years, we’ve been fighting a pandemic that has affected many in our community,” said Carlos Vaquerano, CEO, Clínica Monseñor Oscar A. Romero. “Our clinic serves over 15,000 patients, and many years ago, we used to be a partner with St. Vincent. We call upon the owner to open this facility to serve people experiencing homelessness, many of whom are undocumented, underserved, good people. We need to support them with whatever they need, and we are grateful to Councilmember O’Farrell for being a champion in the fight against homelessness.”

*Los Angeles City Council President Pro Tempore Mitch O’Farrell represents the 13th District, which includes the neighborhoods of Atwater Village, East Hollywood, Echo Park, Elysian Valley, Glassell Park, Historic Filipinotown, Hollywood, Larchmont Village, Little Armenia, Melrose Hill, Rampart Village, Ridgewood-Wilton, Silver Lake, Spaulding Square, St. Andrews Square, Sunset Square, Thai Town, Verdugo Village, Virgil Village, Western-Wilton, Westlake, and Windsor Square. More information can be found at <http://CD13.com>.*

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