San Francisco Human Rights Commission Awards Violence Prevention Grant to El/La

(San Francisco, CA) The San Francisco Human Rights Commission (HRC) is pleased to announce that El/La, an education and outreach organization that provides services to the trans Latina community, will be awarded up to $200,000 in grant funding for violence prevention and intervention services for trans Latinas in the Mission District. El/La will use funds through a combination of case management, community building, and education/advocacy work with the trans Latina community.

“Keeping San Francisco the safest big city in the United States requires successful partnerships with our diverse communities and neighborhoods,” said Mayor Ed Lee. “This new partnership between the Human Rights Commission and El/La will make our City and our communities safer for everyone.”

“We are proud of El/La’s efforts to address violence against the trans Latina community and look forward to working with El/La in order to increase safety in the Mission,” said Theresa Sparks, Executive Director of the San Francisco Human Rights Commission. “The Commission appreciates El/La’s vision and leadership around transgender human rights issues,” added Commissioner Michael Pappas, who also chairs the Human Rights Commission’s LGBT Advisory Committee.

The Human Rights Commission was given $200,000 in add-back funding by the Board of Supervisors in order to address ongoing violence against the trans Latina community. It issued a “request for proposal” from community-based organizations working on violence prevention with the trans Latina community and determined that El/La was strongly positioned to carry out the grant objectives.

“El/La has a strong track record of engaging, supporting and informing trans Latinas in the Mission District, and I am thrilled that they will now be able to expand and deepen their role in the community through this grant. I look forward to continue working with the Human Rights Commission and the trans Latina community in our district in order to ensure that our neighborhood is safe for everyone,” said Supervisor David Campos, who represents the Mission District on the Board of Supervisors.

The grant announcement comes in light of a city-wide effort to address violence against the trans Latina community in San Francisco. Since 2010, the District Attorney’s office has reviewed thirteen transgender hate crimes cases and brought charges in nine of them, resulting in seven convictions. Crimes against transgender Latinas are often underreported because of barriers including language, immigration status, and historical relationships with law enforcement.

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"My office will continue to work on violence reduction policies that will help make our community safer. El/La is uniquely poised to deliver critical services to the trans Latina community," said District Attorney George Gascón.

El/La was founded in 2006 after Proyecto ContraSIDA Por Vida, an HIV/AIDS education and outreach project, lost its funding. Its programs include leadership development, safe spaces, and education and support services. El/La is a fiscally-sponsored program of the Lavender Youth Recreation and Information Center (LYRIC).

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The Human Rights Commission was established in 1964 by City Ordinance and became a Charter Commission in 1990. In 2014 the HRC will celebrate 50 years of distinguished public service in human rights advocacy for the City and County of San Francisco.

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