

JOHN LEE

LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCILMEMBER • DISTRICT 12



Contact:

Roger Quintanilla, Communications Deputy
Email: Roger.quintanilla@lacity.org
Phone: 213-473-7012

**April 14, 2023
For Immediate Release**

COUNCILMEMBER JOHN LEE AND THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES DECLARE APRIL AS 'AUTISM ACCEPTANCE MONTH'

Los Angeles – Today Councilmember John Lee, representative of the Twelfth Council District of Los Angeles officially declared April as **'Autism Acceptance Month'**. This is the first time 'Autism Acceptance Month' has been proclaimed in the City of Los Angeles and marks a change in course from the traditional celebration, 'Autism Awareness Month.' Councilmember Lee was joined by the executive director of the Korean American Special Education Center, Rosa Chang, and Subodh Garg from the hit series, *Love on the Spectrum*.

"In discussions about the naming of this celebration and working with various organizations who make this their focus on a daily basis, we've learned that this is about more than just raising awareness and it's equally, if not more important, that we focus on acceptance," **said Councilmember John Lee.**

About 1 in 44 children have been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder in the United States. Of this group, boys are 44% more likely than girls to be diagnosed. Parents of those on the spectrum are frequently fighting to receive the services necessary for their children to learn the life skills needed to live their lives as independently as possible.

The recent movement from the phrase 'autism awareness' to 'autism acceptance' has been created in hopes of changing the narrative of autism being something negative that needs to be tolerated to a positive embracement of what makes autistic individuals unique in order to foster an environment of acceptance.

In her remarks about the declaration, **Rosa Chang said,** "Autism Acceptance Month delivers and calls for a message of actively creating an inclusive society for individuals with Autism that goes beyond awareness and acknowledgement. Acceptance is an intentional action of understanding and embracing, and as a society, it is the direction we all ought to head to foster true inclusion. Through this declaration, we hope that people will not only understand and accept individuals with autism for just this month but that they will continue to work towards creating a world where people with autism are valued members of society throughout the year."

"There are no two people on the spectrum that are exactly the same, each person with autism has a different experience and like every person in our society, they all have their own personal set of needs," **Lee continued.** "So today I am pleased to declare the month of April as 'Autism Acceptance' month in the City of Los Angeles to show our city's commitment to supporting and uplifting this community."

Tonight, April 14, 2023, Los Angeles City Hall will be illuminated in red, green, blue, and yellow to commemorate the declaration.

####

Los Angeles City Councilmember John Lee represents the Twelfth Council District in the Northwest San Fernando Valley which includes the communities of Northridge, Chatsworth, Granada Hills, North Hills West, West Hills, Porter Ranch, and Sherwood Forest.

DRAFT