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Contact: Text Diana Rubio, 562-225-2338

**Assembly Member Wendy Carrillo Announces \$17.2 Million for Clínica Romero's new Mental Health Center for Central American and other Latino Immigrants**  
*New Center Will Address Trauma Experienced by Migrants Who Risk Their Lives Coming to the U.S.*

(Los Angeles, CA)—Today Assembly Member Wendy Carrillo announced a \$17.2 million award for a new mental health center to Clínica Oscar A. Romero, a legislation which she championed and authored. The center will provide mental health services for immigrants who often experience severe trauma in their perilous journey for a better life.

Part of the approved California budget allows for two billion dollars to provide mental health coverage through Medi Cal for low-income people regardless of their age or immigration status.

Research indicates immigration has a real, harmful impact beyond one person. Latina mothers separated from their children report significant symptoms of depression, anxiety, and stress. Scholars say that war-related, post-traumatic stress extends beyond the individual to affect families with potential long-term effects on the health and psychosocial well-being of individuals and future generations. And children isolated from their parents also exhibited higher rates of anxiety, distress, and symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Additional studies say that for many immigrants asking for help is sometimes hindered by feelings of shame, inferiority, embarrassment and believing they are not able to make it in the U.S.

For 39 years, Clínica Romero has been a cornerstone of trust in the immigrant and Latino community, and its leadership believes health care is a human right. Though it currently offers mental health care services, the new center will provide a robust staff and resources to address this issue in a comprehensive manner--making people feel safe and comfortable to ask for help. Demands for health care services will continue to rise as more flee from violence in their native countries.

“Assembly Member Wendy Carrillo has not only been a friend to Clínica Romero but a champion of immigrants who use our services,” said Carlos Vaquerano, CEO of Clínica Romero. “We cannot thank her enough for her support and leadership. This new funding will allow us to not only treat individual patients, but also take a comprehensive approach to mental health care and its effect on their families. The center is going to change and improve our patients’ and our community’s quality of life.”

“The development of the new mental health center will provide a comprehensive set of services to thousands of low-income residents in my district, and I am proud to have been a part of the effort to secure its funding” said Assemblywoman Carrillo. “This state investment, which will build out a full scope social services and health center, will go a long way in addressing the long-ignored physical and mental health needs of our immigrant community in LA. Today, 38 years after its inception, Clínica Romero continues to provide health care and other services to the people across the Greater Los Angeles region, regardless of their ability to pay.”

Services offered by Clinica Romero’s new mental health center will include primary care, individual counseling, group counseling, substance abuse disorder, family therapy, bilingual services, community organizing and advocacy.

Completion will take two-and-a-half years.

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