Today, an unprecedented collaboration of hospitals, health systems, universities and The California Endowment announced it will take major steps to rescue, restructure and reinvigorate Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science (CDU).

We want to tell you personally about this critically important development before you hear about it in the news.

Here are the main points of this developing CDU story:

- The California Endowment was asked – along with a group of prominent partnering institutions serving Greater Los Angeles – to provide assistance to CDU’s leadership to enable the university to navigate through serious and difficult fiscal circumstances that have threatened the existence of the valuable research and teaching institution.

- The California Endowment, and its collaborating institutions – UCLA, USC, Catholic Healthcare West, Cedars-Sinai and Kaiser Permanente – have committed to develop new governance, reorganize the Board of Trustees, and develop a new management team at CDU.

- The partnering institutions moved with a great sense of urgency to protect and preserve this historic institution. These are difficult economic times and the CDU collaboration was formed to prevent the loss of a significant health research and medical education resource in Los Angeles.

- The CDU collaboration is hopeful and confident there is a ‘roadmap’ that can be drawn to help guide Charles R. Drew University through its imminent financial matters. We hope, through these efforts, CDU will be able open the university’s newly constructed nursing school complex very soon.

- Lastly, but most importantly, CDU will continue its mission to serve the community and restore its standing as an outstanding medical university.

We hope you join us in supporting the steps being taken to protect and preserve our legacy of medical education, allied health training and urban medicine in South Los Angeles.

With hope,

Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas and Dr. Robert K. Ross