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Contact:

Brenda J. Breaux
(323) 859-1393 / bbreaux@lapl.org

Los Angeles Public Library Board Soliciting Comments on Request to Rename the Board Room at Central Library after Leontyne Butler King, First African American to Serve on the Board

LOS ANGELES (September 16, 2025) — The Los Angeles Public Board is soliciting public comments on a proposal initiated to name the Central Library Board of Library Commissioners Meeting Room in honor of Leontyne Butler King, a trailblazer whose service marked a defining chapter in the Library's 153-year history.

Appointed by Mayor Sam Yorty in 1961, King became the first African American to serve on the Board of Library Commissioners. In 1968, she reached another historic milestone as the first African American elected Board President, breaking barriers and setting a powerful example of leadership and vision.

King devoted herself to expanding library services in underserved communities, particularly in older, predominantly African American neighborhoods of Los Angeles. She championed the establishment of permanent, fully resourced branch libraries rather than rented facilities and played a central role in founding the Vernon – Leon H. Washington Jr. Memorial Branch Library in South Los Angeles, just steps from her home. The branch's meeting room is officially named the Leontyne B. King Community Room.

King's leadership extended nationally. In 1969, she was appointed to the American Library Trustees Association Board of Directors, advocating for public libraries across Alaska, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. Through her service with the American Library Association and the California Library Association, she advanced a national vision of libraries as institutions of empowerment and lifelong learning. Read more about King's [contributions](#) to the community

The Board of Library Commissioners encourages written comments for this proposal to be submitted no later than December 12, 2025 via email to: libcommission@lapl.org, on online at lapl.org/rename-board-room-leontyne-butler-king or by mail to the attention of the **Board of Library Commissioners, 630 W. Fifth St., Los Angeles, CA 90071**. All feedback will be included in the public record and considered in finalizing the proposal to honor Leontyne Butler King.

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