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For Immediate Release

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SENATOR PRICE'S ADVANCE SCREENING OF "THUNDER SOUL" DRAWS POSITIVE RESPONSE FROM INFLUENTIAL VOICES IN THE ARTS

Los Angeles, CA- Senator Curren D. Price, Jr. co-hosted an advance screening of the documentary, "Thunder Soul" at the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles, on Tuesday evening. The special screening brought together community and faith leaders, educators, business leaders and arts advocates who recognize the value of arts in the classroom.

"Thunder Soul" is a moving documentary, which demonstrates how one teacher, Professor Conrad O. Johnson, made a positive and often life changing difference in the lives of his students through the power of music.

The event was held in partnership with the Museum of Tolerance, Ovation, the California Arts Council, the California Alliance for Arts Education, Music Center: Performing Arts Center of Los Angeles County, and the Los Angeles Arts Commission/Arts for All.

"Thunder Soul" is a must-see for everyone who cares about helping our kids gain access to arts education," said, Mark Slavkin, Vice President for Education, LA Music Center "We appreciate Senator Price's leadership in sharing this important film with our community,"

Senator Price said he was proud to work with arts groups to host a special screening of the inspiring film.

"Professor Johnson was a gifted music teacher and a respected mentor to his students," said Senator Price, Chair of the Joint Committee on the Arts. "The lessons taught went beyond an ability to play an instrument in the school band. He shifted student attitudes towards education and helped them gain pride and the confidence necessary to exceed the expectations of them."

"Professor Johnson's story exemplifies the important role that the arts and music play in providing a creative outlet for not only high-achieving students, but also for students who might not otherwise thrive. He taught students lessons that will last a lifetime."

Those in attendance at the screening had high praise for the documentary:

“It was a beautiful, fascinating documentary,” said Camille Schenckan, Development and Operations Manager for Arts for LA. “The first thing I did when I got home last night... was to write my band teacher to thank her for the positive influence she made on my life and the lives of hundreds of other students.”

Joining Senator Price at the screening, were Rabbi H. Meyer May, Director, Simon Wiesenthal Center; Charles D. Segars, Chief Executive Officer, Ovation; Malissa Feruzzi Shriver, Chair, California Arts Council; Craig Watson, Director, California Arts Council, Joe Landon, Executive Director, California Alliance for Arts Education.

Also on hand were the film’s director Mark Landsman, producers Keith Calder and Jessica Wu, co-executive producer Jamie Rucker-King and Markus King; chart-topping recording artist Lalah Hathaway; Hubert and Eloise Laws of the legendary jazz family; and well-known educator, George McKenna, Ray Charles, Jr. and other distinguished guests.

"Thunder Soul is an incredibly powerful film with a powerful message," said Craig Watson, Director of the California Arts Council who attended the screening. "The film captures beautifully the impact that one caring teacher, armed with the unifying and transforming power of music and the arts, can bring to a classroom, a school, a state -- and, by extension, an entire world. It reminds us of why we must keep the arts alive in our public schools."

At the age of five, *actor and “Thunder Soul” executive producer Jamie Foxx*, began his love affair with music and began piano lessons. He issued this statement about arts and music education: “Great things can happen when you work hard to express yourself creatively. Arts education plays an integral role in producing engaged, successful college and career ready students.”

The film was screened in commemoration of California Arts Day, which is Friday, October 7, 2011.

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