

WHEN BROKEN STREET LIGHTS IMPEDE WELLBEING, CHWS WORK TO GET THE LIGHTS BACK ON

THROUGH REACHING FOR THE HEIGHTS

By Melina Castelan, CPHT Admin Program Manager

During household outreach efforts in Boyle Heights, Community Health Workers (CHWs) from Reaching for the Heights heard repeated concerns from residents across six households and three different streets regarding ongoing power outages affecting neighborhood streetlights. Residents shared that several light poles had stopped working, leaving streets extremely dark at night and creating significant concerns about safety and visibility. Many residents reported that they had already submitted complaints through MyLA311 and even visited City Hall to raise the issue. Although repairs were completed, residents stated the lights stopped working again only days later, leaving the problem unresolved.



After hearing directly from community members, the Reaching for the Heights team contacted the office of Ysabel Jurado to elevate residents' concerns. A representative from District 14 responded promptly, listened carefully to the concerns being shared by residents, and requested information on the affected streets so they could be prioritized for repair efforts. The office also shared that recent funding had become available for neighborhood infrastructure repairs such as these, making the timing of the community's advocacy especially important.

As a result of this follow-up and advocacy, the streetlights were repaired, and residents expressed great appreciation and relief at seeing the issue addressed. Community members shared that having properly lit streets again helped them feel safer and more comfortable in their neighborhood during the evening hours.

This experience highlights the importance of community voice and advocacy. Reaching for the Heights works alongside residents to help connect them with resources, systems, and local leadership so their concerns can be heard and addressed. While our team can help elevate issues impacting the neighborhood, empowering residents to speak up, engage with their elected officials, and advocate for their community remains an important part of creating sustainable change beyond the life of this project. Reaching for the Heights remains committed to building trust, strengthening community connections, and supporting residents in improving the health, safety, and well-being of Boyle Heights neighborhoods.

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I feel very grateful to belong to this group for the community, to be able to help with anything related to our community.

What I like is that they involve us in all the events that are held for the community, so we can serve the community.

Residents in Reaching for the Heights' Advocacy Committee

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