

## February 04, 2002- Budget Drops Empowerment Zone Grant Funding For Santa Ana

February 4, 2002 Proposed Bush Budget Drop Empowerment Zone Grant Funding For Santa Ana  
White House economic stimulus priorities called into question  
following proposed cuts to successful community development program

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Federal Empowerment Zones, federally mandated, assistance programs for economic and community development in blighted communities, were absent from the proposed budget released by the Bush Administration today for Fiscal Year 2003. Though Federal Empowerment Zones would still receive some special tax incentives, the grant program for which many successful development projects received funding would be terminated. The City of Santa Ana is one of 15 U.S. cities benefiting from the program.

"The primary goal of the Federal Empowerment Zones was to stimulate economic and community development in these communities and the program has been very successful in doing that," said Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez. "If the Bush Administration is serious about stimulating our economy, proven programs like the Empowerment Zones are part of the solution. They are a great example of how investment in our neighborhoods and small businesses can rebuild communities and stimulate growth. I am concerned about the direction the Bush Administration is heading in cutting important programs like this one, but I am hopeful that we can work together to come to a compromise."

Through Empowerment Zone funding, Santa Ana has created many successful programs through cooperative efforts between public and private organizations including:

The Santa Ana W/O/R/K Center - providing job search assistance, workshops on resume writing and interview techniques, employee referrals, job placement and use of telephone, fax, computer and Internet services. Since the programs inception, more than 800 residents have been placed in jobs, with 300 more placements expected by June 2002.

Gold Coast Baking Company - through use of an Industrial Development Bond (IDB), Gold Coast Baking Company was able to add an additional bread processing line and upgrade the existing facility. The expansion increased production by 20 percent and created more than 100 new jobs, many of which went to Empowerment Zone residents.

### Empowerment Zones Cut

Delhi Community Center - With assistance from Empowerment Zone funding, a state-of-the-art community center was created offering youth counseling and leadership services, a homework center, emergency family assistance, free health services, job placement services

### About Federal Empowerment Zones . . .

On Jan. 13, 1999, Vice President Gore announced that 15 cities and 5 rural communities were selected as Federal Empowerment Zones. Santa Ana was the only city west of the Rockies to receive this designation. The grant focuses on ten different areas including: education, job training and placement, business development, safety, childcare, health, transportation, housing, recreation and youth, and arts and culture.