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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Metro and American Heart Association 'Go Red for Women' on Valentine's Day**

### Video

Metro joined the American Heart Association on Valentine's Day, Feb. 14, in celebrating heart health for women by urging Metro customers and others to participate in the Metro Fit program, which encourages exercise as a path to good health. This is of particular importance to women since cardiovascular disease claims the lives of almost 500,000 women each year. That's nearly one death every minute.

As part of the American Heart Association's Go Red for Women campaign, Los Angeles City Council President Pro Tem Wendy Greuel took the Metro Red Line to Union Station for the 7:30 a.m. American Heart Association and Metro press conference in the East Portal. The event included activities to educate morning commuters on how to live longer, stronger, heart-healthy lives. Council Member Greuel demonstrated the ease and speed of blood pressure testing at the Feb. 14 event.

"Today I join the American Heart Association and Metro, in reminding Angelenos of the impact our health can have on our hearts. Nearly half a million women die each year due to cardiovascular disease. I hope that everyone who hears this message will start exercising and practicing daily heart healthy activities," Council Member Greuel said.

"One great way to start moving is to get out of our cars. Taking public transportation can be a convenient way to start an exercise program because it automatically builds walking into your daily schedule. Catching the bus or the Metro can be the beginning of a new healthier life."

Free health screenings were conducted by St. Joseph Hospital of Orange County, the official Southland sponsor of the Go Red for Women campaign. Such screenings can help women – and men – determine their risk for heart disease and begin to take steps toward a healthier lifestyle.

In fact, exercise is one of the best ways women can protect themselves from heart disease, said Claudia Keller, executive director of the American Heart Association.

"Women who don't exercise have twice the chance of dying from heart disease as women who do," Keller said. "And women who smoke double their chances of dying from heart disease when compared with women who don't smoke."

Exercise is also essential to people in their later years of life.

"Elderly women who haven't been physically active experience more disability in their daily functioning than women who've been active," Keller said.

Studies have shown that the best way to make exercise happen is to incorporate it into daily life. There's a Metro stop within 1 mile of most homes in Los Angeles. So just walking to transit or getting off a stop or two before the destination could easily add up to a mile or two of walking per day. It's also a convenient and easy way to lose weight and save money.

The Metro Fit program can encourage a schedule of moderate exercise that is easily adapted to any schedule.

The goal is to walk 10,000 steps a day – about 5 miles – either by getting off before the intended Metro destination or by walking to a stop beyond the one closest to that destination. Metro Fit also recommends using the stairs at Metro rail stations, discovering local attractions via Metro and on foot and combining bicycling with public transit.

To find out more about Metro Fit and to see a Metro Fit video and the Metro and Heart Association list of heart-healthy exercise facts, go to [www.metro.net/metrofit](http://www.metro.net/metrofit).

At sunset Feb. 14, Metro windows were lighted to create a heart-shaped valentine to remind women to take care of their hearts.

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