

## PARTICIPANTS

**Ben Allen** represents California's 26th Senate District, which consists of the Westside and coastal South Bay communities of Los Angeles County. Elected in 2014, he chairs the Senate Elections and Constitutional Amendments Committee and the Joint Committee on the Arts. He serves on several other committees, including the Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee. In his first year he authored several bills, including SB 439, which authorizes voting in the two weeks preceding an election. He is a leading proponent of SB 450, another electoral reform aimed at increasing voter turnout and civic participation. Previously, he worked for the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs and as communications director for Congressman Jose Serrano (D-NY). He is a senior fellow with Humanity in Action, a member of the Pacific Council on International Policy, and a graduate of the Jewish Federation's New Leaders Project. He holds a JD from the University of California, Berkeley, and a master's of philosophy from the University of Cambridge.

**Mark Baldassare** is president and CEO of the Public Policy Institute of California, where he holds the Arjay and Frances Fearing Miller Chair in Public Policy. He is a leading expert on public opinion and survey methodology, and has directed the PPIC Statewide Survey since 1998. He is an authority on elections, voter behavior, and political and fiscal reform, authoring ten books and numerous reports on these topics. He often provides testimony before legislative committees and state commissions, and regularly hosts PPIC's Speaker Series, a public forum featuring in-depth interviews with state and national leaders. Previously, he served as PPIC's director of research. Before joining PPIC, he was a professor of urban and regional planning at the University of California, Irvine, where he held the Johnson Chair in Civic Governance. He has conducted surveys for the *Los Angeles Times*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, and the California Business Roundtable. He holds a PhD in sociology from the University of California, Berkeley.

**Matthew Harper** represents California's 74th Assembly District, which includes Huntington Beach, Costa Mesa, and Laguna Beach. Elected in 2014, he is vice chair of the Committee on Elections and Redistricting and serves on several other assembly committees, including Natural Resources and Budget. Before he joined the assembly, he served on the Huntington Beach City Council. In his final year of service on the city council, he served as mayor of Huntington Beach. He began his career in public service in 1998, when he was elected to the Board of Trustees for the Huntington Beach Union High School District. After transferring from Orange Coast College, he earned his BS in public policy and management at the University of Southern California.

**John Myers** joined the *Los Angeles Times* as Sacramento bureau chief in 2015 after more than two decades in broadcast news, much of that as an award-winning reporter covering statehouse policy and politics. His online projects have included everything from one of Sacramento's original politics blogs to California's first politics podcast. He served as the moderator of gubernatorial debates in 2014 and 2010. Cited by state and national news organizations as one of Sacramento's top journalists, he's a graduate of Duke University and the University of California, Berkeley.

**Mindy Romero** is founder and director of the California Civic Engagement Project at the UC Davis Center for Regional Change. She is a political sociologist whose research focuses on the intersection of political behavior and race/ethnicity. She has been invited to speak about civic engagement and political rights in numerous venues, and her research has been cited in major news outlets, including the *Washington Post*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *Politico*, and the *Huffington Post*. She joined the PPIC Statewide Survey Advisory Committee in 2016; she also serves as president of the board of Mutual Housing California and vice-chair of the Social Service Commission for the City of Davis. She holds a PhD in sociology from the University of California, Davis.