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## PARTICIPANTS

**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.

**Kathay Feng** is executive director of California Common Cause. She helped spearhead a successful effort to pass initiatives to create an independent citizens redistricting commission, which has become a model for other states. She also led efforts to pass laws that have brought online voter registration and same-day registration to the state. Before she joined Common Cause in 2005, she headed the Voting Rights and Anti-Discrimination Unit at the Asian Pacific American Legal Center. She serves or has served on numerous boards, including the California secretary of state's Advisory Committee on Voter Participation and Outreach, the L.A. County Human Relations Commission, and the Asian Pacific Policy and Planning Council. She holds a law degree from UCLA School of Law and is a graduate of Cornell University.

**Donna Lucas** is founder and CEO of Lucas Public Affairs, a California-based strategic consulting, public affairs, and communications firm. She joined PPIC's Board of Directors in 2007 and became board chair in 2013. She has advised a wide range of clients, including large corporations, labor unions, nonprofits, and political candidates. She has also worked on statewide initiative campaigns focused on gaming, housing, education, local government, campaign finance, and energy. Prior to forming Lucas Public Affairs in 2006, she was deputy chief of staff for strategic planning and initiatives for Governor Schwarzenegger and chief of staff to Maria Shriver. Previously, she was the global and public affairs practice leader for Porter Novelli and CEO of the Nelson Communications Group, a California public affairs agency acquired by Porter Novelli in 2000. She was also deputy press secretary for Governor Deukmejian, deputy treasurer for Tom Hayes, and California press secretary for President George H.W. Bush. She serves on the PPIC Statewide Survey Advisory Committee and on the boards of the California Chamber of Commerce, the College Futures Foundation, Maria Shriver's A Woman's Nation Foundation, and the Scripps Institute of Oceanography. She is a graduate of the University of Southern California's School of Journalism.

**Mike Madrid** is a principal at GrassrootsLab, a public affairs firm that works with private, public, and nonprofit agencies, as well as local governments. Over the past two decades he has developed a keen insight into the characteristics of winning campaigns. He served as the press secretary for the California Assembly Republican leader and as the political director for the California Republican Party. He was also public affairs director for the League of California Cities. In 2013, he was appointed to the National Board of Directors of the American Association of Political Consultants. He is a nationally recognized expert on Latino voting trends. The thesis on Latino voters that he completed at Georgetown University laid the groundwork for his pioneering work on Latino outreach strategies in California, Texas, Florida, and nationwide.

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**Bruce McPherson** represents the 5th District on the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors. Elected in 2012, he serves the San Lorenzo Valley communities of Felton, Ben Lomond, Brookdale, Boulder Creek, Lompico, Zayante, Las Cumbres, Mount Hermon, most of Scotts Valley, a small part of Santa Cruz, and Paradise Park. He has a long and distinguished record of serving Santa Cruz County. He was elected to two terms in both the California State Assembly (1993–96) and the California State Senate (1996–2004). Following the resignation of California's secretary of state in early 2005, he was unanimously confirmed to serve in that office. His career began as a reporter at his family newspaper, the *Sentinel*; he later became editor. Throughout the years, he has worked closely with Second Harvest Food Bank, the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County, the Cabrillo College 50th Anniversary Scholarship Committee, United Way, the Tannery Arts Center, Ecology Action, the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Exploration Center, American Red Cross, and many other nonprofit agencies.

**John Myers** is senior editor of KQED's new California Politics and Government Desk. A veteran of almost two decades of political coverage, he served nine years as the statehouse bureau chief for KQED Public Radio and the *California Report*, and most recently as political editor for the Sacramento ABC-TV affiliate, News10 (KXTV). He was the moderator of the only 2014 gubernatorial debate and was recently named by the *Washington Post* as one of the nation's most influential statehouse reporters. He holds degrees from Duke University and the University of California, Berkeley.

**Alex Padilla** is California's secretary of state. He is focused on modernizing the office, increasing voter registration and participation, and strengthening voting rights. Before he was inaugurated in January 2015, he represented the San Fernando Valley region of Los Angeles in the California State Senate. As a senator he had a diverse legislative record. He chaired the Senate Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Communications, shepherding legislation to combat climate change. He also authored laws that addressed childhood obesity, the college transfer process, and K-12 funding. He began his career in public service by winning a seat on the Los Angeles City Council, and later served three terms as council president. He currently serves as president of the National Association of Latino Elected Officials (NALEO), and was the first Latino to serve as president of the California League of Cities. He graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology with a degree in mechanical engineering, and now serves on the MIT Board of Trustees.

**Sebastian Ridley-Thomas** represents California's 54th Assembly District, which includes the Los Angeles County communities of Century City, Culver City, Westwood, Mar Vista, Palms, Baldwin Hills, Windsor Hills, Ladera Heights, View Park, Crenshaw, Leimert Park, Mid City, and West Los Angeles. He chairs the Assembly Elections and Redistricting Committee and serves on Appropriations; Health; Labor and Employment; and Public Employees, Retirement, and Social Security. He also chairs the Assembly Select Committee on Mental and Behavioral Health. His legislative priorities include job creation, access to high-quality education, and access to healthcare and mental health services. Before he was elected in 2013, he served as public policy director for state senator Curren Price, advising him on economic development, transportation, housing, public safety, and local government issues. He was also a legislative consultant to the Senate Select Committee on Procurement, working to ensure that small business owners in underserved communities received their fair share of state contracts, and served as political director for the nine-member California Legislative Black Caucus. He holds a BA from Morehouse College, where he majored in sociology. He trained in mediation and conflict resolution at the University of California, Davis, Extension and California State University, Dominguez Hills.