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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. He holds a PhD in sociology from the University of California, Berkeley.

**Marc Berman** was elected to the California State Assembly in November 2016 to represent the 24th district, which includes southern San Mateo County and northern Santa Clara County in the heart of Silicon Valley. He is the chair of the Assembly Select Committee on the Census and the Elections and Redistricting Committee. A lawyer by training, he previously served on the Palo Alto City Council and as development director at the Silicon Valley Education Foundation, a nonprofit focused on STEM education and closing the achievement gap. He was a leader on the city council on issues such as infrastructure improvements and financial transparency. Prior to his work in the nonprofit sector, he was an attorney with Latham & Watkins LLP and Merino Yebri, LLP. He has successfully represented pro bono clients seeking protection under the Violence Against Women Act and asylum in the United States due to political persecution. He graduated from Georgetown University with a degree in political science and earned his JD at the University of Southern California.

**María Blanco** is executive director of the University of California Immigrant Legal Services Center. Launched in November 2014, the center provides legal services to undocumented students on nine UC campuses. Before she assumed her current position, she was vice president of civic engagement at the California Community Foundation. Previously, she served as executive director of the Chief Justice Earl Warren Institute on Race, Ethnicity and Diversity at UC Berkeley Boalt Hall School of Law, and before that as executive director of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area. She was counsel for the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (1998–2003). Her undergraduate and law degrees are both from the University of California, Berkeley.

**Sarah Bohn** is director of research and a senior fellow at the Public Policy Institute of California, where she holds the John and Louise Bryson Chair in Policy Research. She is also a member of the PPIC Higher Education Center. As director of research, she works with PPIC staff to bring high-quality, nonpartisan research to important policy issues in California. Her own research focuses on the role of social safety net policy and education policy in alleviating poverty and enhancing economic mobility. Her other areas of expertise include immigration policy, the workforce skills gap, and California's economy. She holds a PhD in economics from the University of Maryland, College Park.

**Ditas Katague** is director of California Complete Count—Census 2020 for the State of California. She also serves as chair of the US Census Bureau's National Advisory Committee on Race, Ethnicities, and Other Populations. She previously served as director of Governor Schwarzenegger's Census 2010 project. In 2000, as chief

deputy campaign director for the governor's Census 2000 California Complete Count campaign, she led a groundbreaking multilingual, multimedia outreach effort that resulted in a mail-in return rate that outpaced the entire nation. She is an expert in multiethnic outreach and civic engagement. She most recently served as chief of staff to the California Public Utilities Commissioner Catherine Sandoval; in this role, she improved public participation and access to the energy and telecommunications utility rate and regulation process. Since 1998, she has served on the Sacramento advisory board for the Sol Price School of Public Policy at the University of Southern California.

**Alex Padilla** is the California secretary of state. He is focused on modernizing the office, increasing voter registration and participation, and strengthening voting rights. In 2016, he oversaw the state's general election. Working with statewide partners, he helped add upwards of one million registered voters to the rolls. More than 19.4 million Californians were registered and more than 14.6 million cast ballots on Election Day—both state records. To expand voting rights to more Californians, he sponsored legislation in 2015 to establish vote centers, expand early voting, and implement same-day conditional voter registration through the Voter's Choice Act. He also sponsored the New Motor Voter Act to register every eligible California citizen who goes to a DMV office to get a driver's license or renew one. He is automating and digitizing business functions within his office to make it easier to do business in California. He grew up in the San Fernando Valley, attended local public schools, and graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology with a degree in mechanical engineering.

**Karthick Ramakrishnan** is an adjunct fellow at the Public Policy Institute of California, professor of public policy and political science at UC Riverside, and founding director of the Center for Social Innovation. His research addresses civic participation, immigration policy, and the politics of race and ethnicity. He has published numerous articles, reports, and books, including *Framing Immigrants* and *The New Immigration Federalism*. He directs the National Asian American Survey and is founder of AAPIData.com, which publishes demographic data and policy research on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. He is a board member of the California Endowment and chair of the California Commission on APIA Affairs. He was recently named to the Frederick Douglass 200 and is currently writing a book on state citizenship in the United States. He holds a PhD in politics from Princeton University.

**Melina Sanchez** is the program officer for civic participation initiatives at the James Irvine Foundation. She brings more than a decade of experience to this position, including leadership roles in the foundation, nonprofit, and government sectors at the national, state, and local levels. Previously, she served as a civic engagement officer at the California Community Foundation in Los Angeles. She also served as policy chair of the LA Partnership for Early Childhood Funders' Collaborative and received the Emerging Practitioners in Philanthropy Award. Earlier in her career, she served as a legislative assistant for Los Angeles Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard, managing a broad portfolio of policy issues, including justice, civil rights, homeland security, and women and children's issues. A Los Angeles native, she earned her BA from Vanderbilt University. She completed an MPA with a focus on philanthropy at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, where she held a position on the editorial staff of the Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy.