

PARTICIPANTS

Toni Atkins is president pro tempore of the California State Senate. She is the first woman and the first openly LGBTQ leader of the legislature's upper house. After she was elected to represent California's 39th Senate District in 2016, she was appointed to the Rules Committee and to committees on transportation and housing, health, labor and industrial relations, and natural resources and water. Among the bills she has gotten passed and signed is SB 2, which created permanent funding for affordable housing. Before she was elected to the senate, she served in the assembly for six years. First elected in 2010, she became Speaker in 2014—the first San Diegan and the first lesbian to hold the position. Among her accomplishments, she is proudest of a major \$7.5 billion water bond, creation of the state's first Earned Income Tax Credit, and two on-time, balanced budgets. She began her public service career as an aide to San Diego city councilmember and LGBT trailblazer Christine Kehoe; in 2000, she was elected to replace Kehoe as the council's District 3 representative. During her eight-year tenure, she served as interim mayor of San Diego, providing steady leadership in a challenging and tumultuous time. She holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Emory and Henry College in Emory, Virginia.

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.