

## 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.

**Leslie Berestein Rojas** is the immigration and emerging communities reporter at KPCC public radio. She has been with KPCC since 2010. She reports on immigration and immigrants, including how federal immigration policies and politics play out in southern California and how generations of immigrants and their descendants continue to shape the region. She launched KPCC's Multi-American immigration blog in partnership with NPR and served as its main reporter and editor for five years. Before joining KPCC, she reported on immigration along the US–Mexico border for the *San Diego Union-Tribune*. She has also reported for *Time*, *People*, the *Orange County Register*, and the *Los Angeles Times*. Her reporting has taken her to Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean. She was born in Cuba and raised on the eastside of Los Angeles.

**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.

**Sarah Bohn** is a research fellow at the Public Policy Institute of California and the PPIC Higher Education Center. A labor economist, she focuses on how policy affects individual and family economic well-being, with particular attention to low-income and vulnerable populations. Her recent research focuses on social safety net policy and job training through public career technical education. She has published research on poverty, income inequality, the workforce skills gap, California's community colleges, and the labor market impact of immigration policy. She holds a PhD in economics from the University of Maryland, College Park.

**John Dobard** is the associate director of political voice at the Advancement Project California. He leads advocacy efforts to make governments more participatory and representative of the communities they serve. Previously, he served as Advancement Project California's manager of strategic initiatives. In that capacity, he co-created the political voice program and worked with coalitions across the state to secure equitable electoral systems through the California Voting Rights Act. He also oversaw several key organization-wide initiatives, including an initiative to urge the Los Angeles Unified School District to adopt a student-need index to guide allocation of Local Control Funding Formula dollars. He earned a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of California, Los Angeles, and a master's degree and doctorate in political science from the University of Chicago.

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**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 advisory board for the Sol Price School of Public Policy at the University of Southern California.

**Donna Lucas** is founder and CEO of Lucas Public Affairs, a California-based strategic consulting, public affairs, and communications firm. She has served on the PPIC Statewide Survey Advisory Committee since 1998 and on PPIC’s board of directors since 2007. Over the course of her career, she has provided strategic counsel to large corporate clients, labor unions, nonprofits, and political candidates. She has served as a deputy chief of staff for strategic planning and initiatives for Governor Schwarzenegger and chief of staff to First Lady Maria Shriver. Previously, she was the global and public affairs practice leader for Porter Novelli and CEO of the Nelson Communications Group. She also served as deputy press secretary for Governor George Deukmejian, deputy treasurer for Tom Hayes, and California press secretary for President George H. W. Bush. Currently, she serves 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.

**John H. Thompson** is executive director of the Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics (COPAFS). COPAFS represents over 300,000 individual researchers, educators, public health professionals, civic groups, and businesses that rely on the quality and accessibility of statistics that can only be effectively collected by the federal government. He served as the 24th director of the US Census Bureau from August 2013 through June 2017. As director, he oversaw preparations for the 2020 Census and presided over more than 100 other censuses and surveys, which measure America’s people, places, and economy, and provide the basis for crucial economic indicators. Prior to that, he was president and CEO of NORC, previously known as the National Opinion Research Center, at the University of Chicago. From 1975 to 2002, he had a distinguished career at the Census Bureau. He is an elected fellow of the American Statistical Association and past chair of the association’s Social Statistics Section and Committee on Fellows. He served as a member of the Committee on National Statistics at the National Academy of Sciences. He holds a bachelor’s degree and a master’s degree in mathematics from Virginia Tech.