

PARTICIPANTS

Toni G. 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, Atkins 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.

Born and raised in southwestern Virginia, Atkins moved to San Diego in 1985 to help care for her young nephew while her sister served in the US Navy. 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 10 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.

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. She was elected to PPIC's Board of Directors in 2010 and also serves on the board of the California Citizens Redistricting Commission. 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). She served on President Barack Obama's transition team. Her undergraduate and law degrees are both from the University of California, Berkeley.

Susan Talamantes Eggman represents California's 13th Assembly District, which includes Stockton, Tracy, Thornton and Mountain House, and western San Joaquin County. First elected in 2012, she chairs the Assembly Committee on Accountability and Administrative Review. She also serves on the committees on appropriations, business and professions, natural resources, and utilities and energy. She took a leave of absence as an associate professor of social work at California State University, Sacramento, to serve in the assembly. She has pushed for reforms that benefit both the environment and business and is dedicated to bridging the gap between the environmental and farming communities. Among many other legislative accomplishments, she authored 2015's End of Life Option Act, which allows terminally ill Californians to seek a physician's aid in dying. She served on the Assembly Water Working Group in 2014, eliminating funding for projects harmful to the Delta. She also authored a landmark bill to fund solar energy for renters and took concrete steps toward bringing a CSU campus to Stockton. Previously, she was the first Latina elected to Stockton's City Council. She also provided hospice care and worked as a mental health provider.

Eggman grew up on her family's small almond orchard and apiary in Turlock and joined the US Army out of high school. After serving four years as an Army medic, she earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from California State University, Stanislaus. She also holds a PhD and a master's in social work. A lifelong learner, she passed the Licensed Clinical Social Worker examination shortly after joining the assembly.

Jennifer Medina is a national *New York Times* correspondent based in Los Angeles. A native of Southern California, she has covered the region for several years, focusing on the uneven economic recovery, immigration, criminal justice and education. She has traveled from El Centro to the back roads of the Central Valley and written about "gentefication" in Boyle Heights and labor violations in Beverly Hills. Since joining the *Times* in 2002, she has also covered politics in New York and Connecticut and spent several years writing about New York City public schools. She graduated from the University of Southern California with a degree in print journalism and political science and speaks Spanish and Hebrew.

Becky Morgan served in the California State Senate from 1984 to 1993, focusing primarily on education, transportation, and taxation. She is currently president of the Morgan Family Foundation, which focuses on youth, education enhancement, the environment and its preservation, and stewardship of regions and organizations. She is the catalyst behind the California Stewardship Network, which brings together corporate, public, and civic leaders in 15 regions to address pressing economic, environmental, and community challenges. She cofounded the Northern Sierra Partnership, dedicated to conserving California's biodiverse lands, water, and resources. She is also the founder of Teen Success Inc., a nonprofit that helps young mothers and their children become educated, self-sufficient, valued members of society. She is the former president and CEO of Joint Venture: Silicon Valley (1993–98).

Morgan has held elected positions on the Santa Clara County Transit District (1981–84), the Santa Clara Board of Supervisors, and the Palo Alto Board of Education (1973–78). She also worked as a teacher and a bank officer with Bank of America. She holds an MBA from Stanford University and a BS from Cornell University.

Janet Nguyen represents California's 34th State Senate District, which includes parts of Los Angeles and Orange Counties. First elected in 2014, she is vice-chair of both the Health Committee and the Governance and Finance Committee and a member of the Human Services and Veterans Committees. She is the first Republican legislator to serve as vice-chair of the Joint Asian and Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus. She also serves on the Governor's Military Council and the State Allocation Board.

Prior to her election to the state senate, Nguyen served on the Orange County Board of Supervisors from 2007 to 2014. She was the first woman to represent the 1st Supervisorial District; she was also the first Asian American and the youngest supervisor elected in Orange County history. She previously served on the Garden Grove City Council—she was the first Asian American woman elected to the council and the first female council member in nearly 35 years.