

THE CONSTITUENTS'

GUIDE TO CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

VOLUME 1 FALL 2017

con·stit·u·en·cy \kən-'stich-wən(t)-sē, -'sti-chə-\ *n*, *pl* -**cies** (1831) **1**
a : a body of citizens entitled to elect a representative (as to a legisla-
tive or executive position) **b** : the residents in an electoral district **c**
: an electoral district **2** **a** : a group or body that patronizes, sup-
ports, or offers representation <creating . . . a grass-roots ~ for con-
tinuing the project —Fred Reed> **b** : the people involved in or served
by an organization (as a business or institution) <regards its corporate
customers as its prime ~ —Andrew Hacker>

1 **con·stit·u·ent** \-wənt\ *n* [*F* *constituant*, fr. *MF*, fr. prp. of *constituer* to
constitute, fr. *L* *constituere*] (1622) **1** : one who authorizes another to
act as agent : PRINCIPAL **2** : a member of a constituency **3** : an essen-
tial part : COMPONENT, ELEMENT **4** : a structural unit of a definable
syntactic, semantic, or phonological category that consists of one or
more linguistic elements (as words, morphemes, or features) and that
can occur as a component of a larger construction **syn** see ELEMENT

2 **constituent** *adj* [*L* *constituent-*, *constituens*, prp. of *constituere*] (1660)
1 : serving to form, compose, or make up a unit or whole : COMPONENT
2 : having the power to create a government or frame or amend a con-
stitution <a ~ assembly> — **con·stit·u·ent·ly** *adv*

con-stit-u-en-cy \kən-'stich-wən(t)-sē, -'sti-chə-\ n, pl -cies (1831) **1** a : a body of citizens entitled to elect a representative (as to a legislative or executive position) **b** : the residents in an electoral district **c** : an electoral district **2** **a** : a group or body that patronizes, supports, or offers representation (creating . . . a grass-roots ~ for continuing the project —Fred Reed) **b** : the people involved in or served by an organization (as a business or institution) (regards its corporate customers as its prime ~ —Andrew Hacker)

con-stit-u-ent \-wənt\ n [F *constituant*, fr. MF, fr. prp. of *constituer* to constitute, fr. L *constituere*] (1622) **1** : one who authorizes another to act as agent : PRINCIPAL **2** : a member of a constituency **3** : an essential part : COMPONENT, ELEMENT **4** : a structural unit of a definable syntactic, semantic, or phonological category that consists of one or more linguistic elements (as words, morphemes, or features) and that can occur as a component of a larger construction *syn* see ELEMENT

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IN THIS GUIDE YOU WILL FIND OUT HOW TO:

- > Register to Vote
- > Check your registration status
- > Find your elected representatives
- > Get in touch with your Elected Officials and let them know what's important to you
- > Connect with organizations, resources and volunteer opportunities to make political change

ALSO INCLUDED:

- > Original interviews with elected officials and other civic leaders in our community
- > District maps and contact info. for Los Angeles City Council, CA State Legislature, U.S. Congress
- > Explanations of our elected offices and what they do
- > Resources to get more involved in civic life and politics on a regular basis

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VOLUME 1 FALL 2017

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*Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 10th ed., Merriam-Webster, 1997, p. 248

I love America more
than any other country
in this world, and,
exactly for this reason,
I insist on the right to
criticize her perpetually.

James A. Baldwin

THE CONSTITUENTS' MANIFESTO

WE BELIEVE that democracy works when we do.

WE BELIEVE that the time is now for concerned citizens to raise their voices and organize to create positive change.

WE KNOW that American democracy has always been shaped by its citizens, and that participation in civic life year-round is an act of patriotism and love of country.

WE CARE about the future of our nation. We believe in civil rights, human rights, and equal rights for all.

WE BELIEVE in the freedom of the press, freedom of expression, and freedom of assembly. We believe in lifting the less fortunate,, and that America is stronger when we help each other.

WE IMAGINE a country where civic participation is a regular way of life, and where that collective participation leads to a more thriving, inclusive democracy.

This is a critical time in America's history.

We believe taking action has never been more important.

Q & A

Laura Friedman, Assemblymember, 43rd District California State Assembly

Laura Friedman is a mother, a wife, and spent six years on Glendale, California's City Council, where she focused on supporting small businesses, job creation, non-profit organizations, the arts, and environmental sustainability. She was elected to the California State Assembly in November 2016.

Because she's a woman in politics and someone new to serving in the Assembly, we asked her questions about the state of our nation and what it takes to lead in 2017 and beyond.

Q: What's the number one thing ordinary citizens can do right now to be involved in politics?

LF: The number one thing that you can do is get to know your elected officials. Find out who represents you at the local level on your city council, your county supervisor, your state representatives in the Assembly and Senate, and your congressional representatives. There are plenty of websites that make the search easy. The next step is communicating with them. Believe it or not, we want to hear from you. Tell us about the issues you're passionate about, where you stand, and what you expect from us. It's easier than ever before. I hear from my constituents daily through social media, email, my website, phone calls, drop-ins to my office, and even through the fax. As I approach each vote, I want to know what my constituents think.

Q: What do you see as the number one issue critical to our nation's future right now?

LF: Our access to affordable, quality health care is repeatedly under attack, and the threat is real. The proposals put forward by Congressional Republicans and supported by President Trump would eliminate health care for tens of millions of Americans. That's something that we can't ignore.

However, the issues that keep me up at night are climate change and environmental degradation. These pose a real and immediate threat to life on earth. What could be more important? A lot of my work in Sacramento has to do with protecting the environment, climate change, clean energy, water resources, and habitat protection.

"Believe it or not,
we want to hear from you."

Q: The Women's March was a huge success — hundreds of thousands turned out and marched. What can women specifically do year-round to amplify their voices?

LF: Attending the Women's March was incredibly inspiring. To be surrounded by thousands of women of all ages, all united in our push for equality, was simply amazing. The fact that it was a global demonstration with millions marching was

beyond my expectations. We have to harness that power and that passion and keep up the commitment. Every time our rights are threatened, whether it be our right to comprehensive reproductive care, pay equity, or environmental justice, we need to speak up and show up.

This year the Affordable Care Act faced serious threats that would eliminate access to quality, affordable health care for millions of women and their families. The fact that the bill was stalled [twice] in the U.S. Senate is a testament to all of the calls, letters, e-mails, demonstrations, and protests. However, the fight isn't over. The moment we go quiet, when our representatives in Washington aren't held accountable, is when they'll be successful in cutting the programs and protections that we all rely upon.

Q: Fake news and the claim of fake news has become something that the President has shouted about quite a bit. How can citizens decipher the real from the unprofessional?

LF: Technology has made it incredibly easy to connect to information. It's also made it incredibly easy to spread misinformation and outright lies. If you're getting all of your news from social media, keep this in mind – skepticism is a virtue. It's important to dig a little deeper. Check out what the old stalwarts of print media are reporting. They're held to a higher ethical standard than an anonymous blogger, and we need their journalism now more than ever.

"Tell us about the issues you're passionate about, where you stand, and what you expect from us."

Q: What are the first 3 things you read each day to stay informed?

LF: The Los Angeles Times, the Sacramento Bee, and BBC News to get a global perspective. I'm also an NPR listener.



Q: California is in a good position to lead on progressive issues. Even though we are in a blue state, how can people here do more or help others around the country?

LF: You're right. California is leading the nation on a number of issues, from environmental protection to affordable health care. When the Trump Administration pulled out of the Paris Agreement on combating climate change, California joined with several other states and renewed our commitment to the agreement and asked world leaders to include us even if our leaders at the federal level stepped away. We have opportunities to help our fellow Americans in other states. We can form local phone banks to support candidates that share our values. We can continue to fight for what's right in Congress.

Q: What is your greatest hope for the next 4 years in our country?

LF: I hope that we can protect California and all of our residents from the threats to our environment, our health care, and our rights. I hope that we can demonstrate to the nation that we can embrace progressive values and maintain our rank as the 5th largest economy in the world.

I hope that we can use the next few years to unite behind political candidates that hold those same values. At the end of the day, I hope that we emerge at the end of the next four years with a renewed commitment to our shared future.

passive-

->active

--> The first step to becoming an active constituent is to make sure you are registered to vote <--

You can check your status here:
<https://voterstatus.sos.ca.gov/>

REQUIREMENTS TO VOTE IN CALIFORNIA

To register to vote you must be:

- > A United States citizen and a resident of California
- > 18 years old or older on Election Day
- > Not currently in state or federal prison or on parole for the conviction of a felony
- > Not currently found mentally incompetent to vote by a court

DID YOU KNOW that you can pre-register to vote before you're 18?

To pre-register to vote in California, you must:

- > Be 16 or 17 years old, and
- > Meet all of the other eligibility requirements to vote.
- > You will automatically be registered to vote on your 18th birthday if you have pre-registered.

Once you register, you may vote in all state and local elections. You will not need to register to vote again unless you change your name or change your political party preference.

More info about voting in LA County: www.lavote.net

There are two ways to register: by mail or online.

REGISTER BY MAIL

You can pick up a paper voter registration application at

- > Your county elections office - 12400 Imperial Hwy. Norwalk, CA 90650 // Hours M-F 8-5pm
- > Local public libraries
- > Any Department of Motor Vehicles office
- > Any U.S. post office
- > Request an application be mailed to you by calling the Secretary of State's toll-free Voter Hotline at:

(800) 345-VOTE (8683)

OR:

REGISTER ONLINE:

<http://registertovote.ca.gov/>

To register online you will need:

- > Your California driver license or California identification card number,
- > The last four digits of your Social Security Number and
- > Your date of birth.

***** If you move,** you can update your California residence address by re-registering online or by submitting a paper voter registration application

Changing your address with the DMV will also update your voter registration, but it's always a good idea to double-check: <https://voterstatus.sos.ca.gov/>

Why it's important to update your address:

If you are registered in a different precinct from where you live, you may not be on the voter rolls at your local polling place. If that happens, don't panic! You have the right to cast a provisional ballot and your information will be updated for the next election.***

THE BASICS:

United States Congress

----> U.S. Senate - 100 total, 2 Senators per state

-----> U.S. House of Representatives - 435 total, 53 districts in CA

County Board of Supervisors

----> 5 Supervisor Districts per County, 58 Counties in CA

----> 5 Supervisors in L.A. County

CA State Legislature

----> CA State Senate - 40 total state districts

----> CA State Assembly - 80 total state districts

Los Angeles City Council

----> 15 City Districts

Find your reps and fill them in below
-----> neighborhood.info.lacity.org

Each of us in L.A. County is represented by:

2 U.S. Senators:

SENATOR DIANNE FEINSTEIN - (202) 224-3841

SENATOR KAMALA HARRIS - (202) 224-3553

1 U.S. Representative:

1 CA Senator:

1 County Supervisor:

1 CA Assemblymember:

1 City Councilmember:



U.S. SENATE

The United States Senate is one of two bodies of elected officials that pass and repeal federal (nationwide) legislation. Each state is represented by two US Senators; there are 100 Senators total. They serve six-year terms and elections are staggered, so that approximately one third of the seats are up for election every two years.

U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein

D.C. Office: 331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510 // (202) 224-3841
Los Angeles Office: 11111 Santa Monica Blvd., Suite 915
Los Angeles, CA 90025 // (310) 914-7300

U.S. Senator Kamala Harris

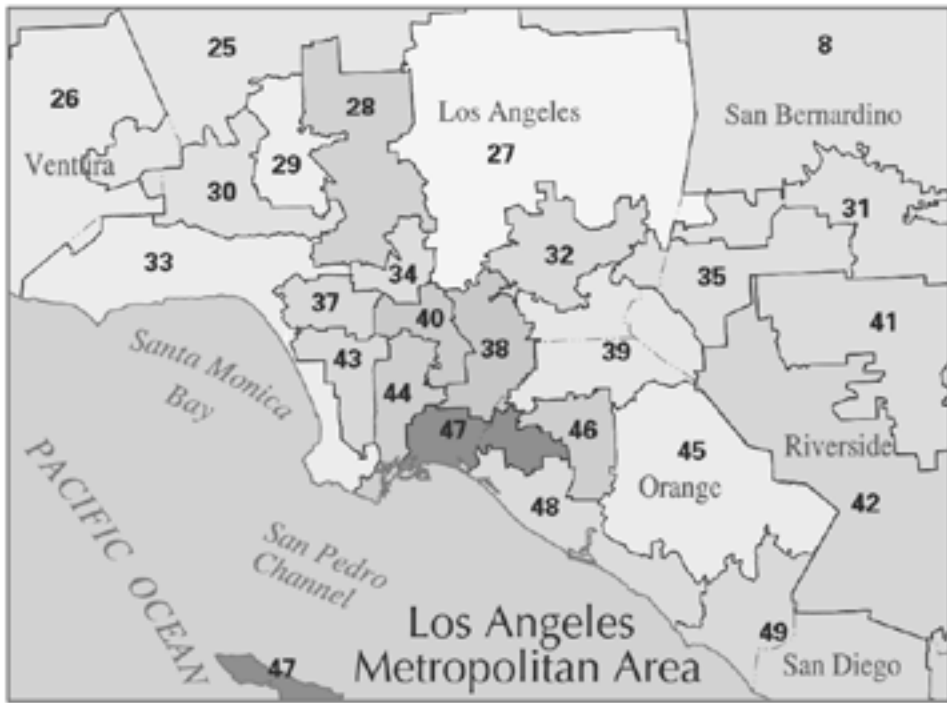
D.C. Office: 112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510 // (202) 224-3553
Los Angeles Office: 312 N. Spring St. Suite 1748
Los Angeles, CA 90012 // (213) 894 - 5000

Talk to your Senator about: *the environment, energy policy, immigration, trade policy, labor, women's rights, LGBTQ rights, drug policy, campaign finance reform, social security, veteran's affairs, health care, disaster response, gun safety, banking, agriculture, education, student loans, infrastructure, foreign affairs, diplomacy.*

Find out about legislation currently before the U.S. Senate and let your Senator know what you think: www.congress.gov

Your U.S. Senator works for you. You are their constituent.

U.S. SENATE



U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The United States House of Representatives is one of two bodies of elected officials that pass and repeal federal (nationwide) legislation, along with the U.S. Senate. Each state is represented by a number of U.S. Representatives based on the population of that state. There are 435 total Representatives, with 53 of them coming from California. They serve two-year terms and elections are held in all districts every two years.

U.S. Rep. Judy Chu – 27th District
2423 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515 // (202) 225-5464

U.S. Rep. Adam Schiff – 28th District
2372 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515 // (202) 225-4176

U.S. Rep. Tony Cárdenas – 29th District
1510 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515 // (202) 225-6131

U.S. Rep. Brad Sherman – 30th District
2181 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515 // (202) 225-5911

U.S. Rep. Grace Napolitano – 32nd District
1610 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515 // (202) 225-5256

U.S. Rep. Ted Lieu – 33rd District
236 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515 // (202) 225-3976

U.S. Rep. Jimmy Gomez – 34th District
1226 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515 // (202) 225-6235

U.S. Rep. Norma Torres – 35th District
1713 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515 // (202) 225-6161

US Rep. Karen Bass – 37th District
2241 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515 // (202) 225-7084

U.S. Rep. Ed Royce – 39th District
2310 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515 // (202) 225-4111

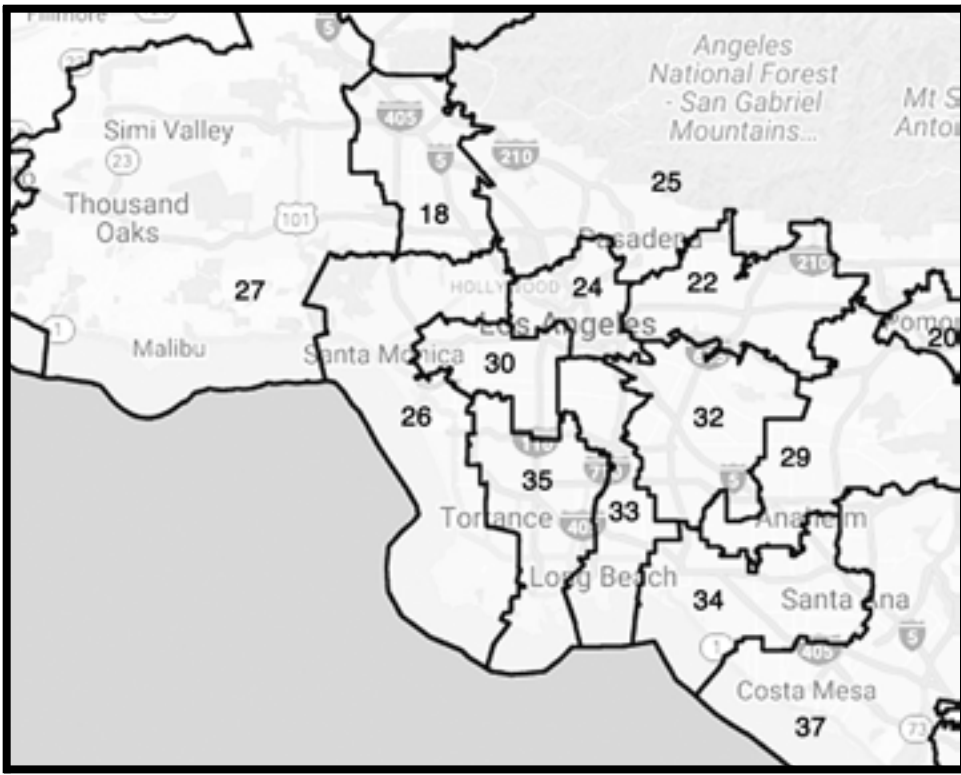
U.S. Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard – 40th District
2083 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515 // (202) 225-1766

U.S. Rep. Maxine Waters – 43th District
2221 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515 // (202) 225-2201

U.S. Rep. Nanette Barragán – 44th District
1320 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515 // 202-225-8220

Talk to your Rep about: *the environment, energy policy, immigration, trade policy, labor, social security, veteran’s affairs, health care, women’s rights, LGBTQ rights, drug policy, campaign finance reform, disaster response, gun safety, banking, agriculture, education, student loans, infrastructure, foreign affairs, diplomacy.*

Find out about legislation currently before the House and let your Rep know what you think: www.congress.gov



CA STATE SENATE

The State Senate is one of the two bodies of elected officials that pass and repeal statewide legislation, along with the California State Assembly.

There are 40 state senators who each represent a district in the state. The Senate meets in the California State Capitol, in Sacramento. State Senators serve four-year terms, and elections are held every two years, with one third up for re-election per election cycle.

Sen. Robert Hertzberg – 18th District
State Capitol, Room 4038
Sacramento, CA 95814 // (916) 651-4018

Sen. Kevin de León – 24th District
State Capitol, Room 205
Sacramento, CA 95814 // (916) 651-4024

Sen. Anthony Portantino – 25th District
State Capitol, Room 3086
Sacramento, CA 95814 // (916) 651-4025

Sen. Ben Allen – 26th District
State Capitol, Room 5072
Sacramento, CA 95814-4900 // (916) 651-4026

Sen. Henry I. Stern – 27th District
State Capitol, Room 3070
Sacramento, CA 95814 // (916) 651-4027

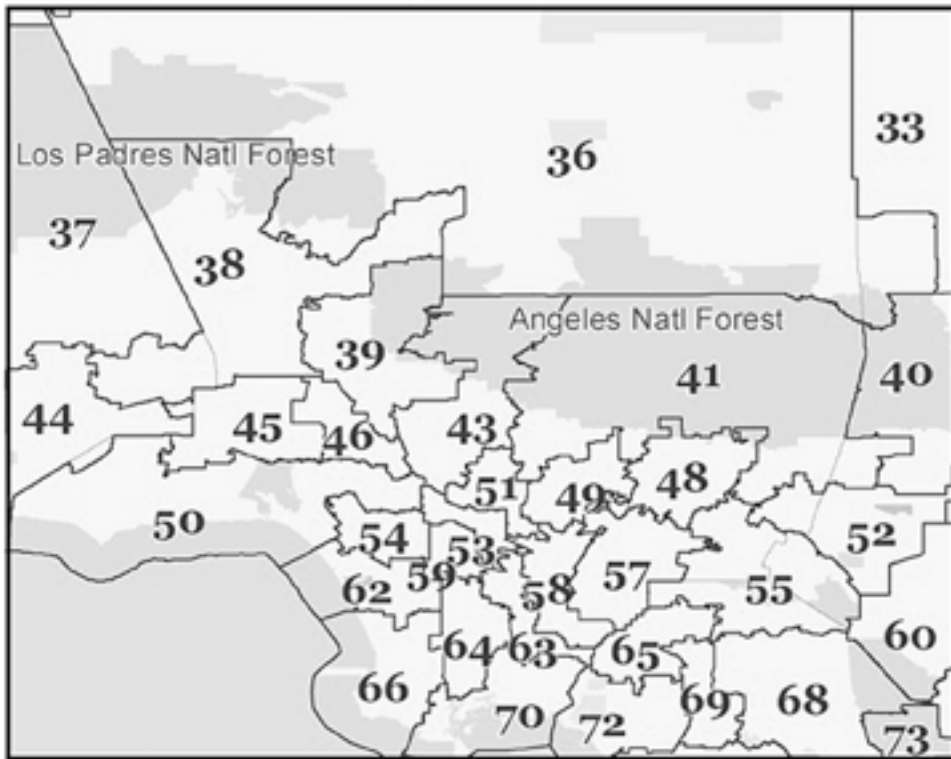
Sen. Holly Mitchell – 30th District
State Capitol, Room 5080
Sacramento, CA 95814 // (916) 651-4030

Sen. Ricardo Lara – 33rd District
State Capitol, Room 5050
Sacramento, CA 95814 // (916) 651-4033

Sen. Steven Bradford – 35th District
State Capitol, Room 2062
Sacramento, CA 95814 // (916) 651-4035

Talk to your State Senator about: *state laws, the use of state funds, state parks, coasts, highways, state cooperation with federal policy, immigration policy, state-run schools, combating climate change, environmental protections, health care policy, gun control.*

Find out about bills currently before the CA State Senate and let your Senator know what you think: www.openstates.org



CA STATE ASSEMBLY

The California State Assembly is one of two bodies of elected officials that pass and repeal statewide legislation along with the CA State Senate. It consists of 80 Assemblymembers who each represent a district in the state. Assemblymembers serve two-year terms, so elections for this position are held every two years.

39th District - Assemblymember Raul Bocanegra
 P.O. Box 942849
 Sacramento, CA 94249-0039 // (916) 319-2039

41st District - Assemblymember Chris Holden
 P.O. Box 942849
 Sacramento, CA 94249-0041 // (916) 319-2041

Assemblymember Laura Friedman - 43rd District
 P.O. Box 942849
 Sacramento, CA 94249-0043 // (916) 319-2043

Assemblymember Matthew Dababneh - 45th District
 P.O. Box 942849
 Sacramento, CA 94249-0045 // (916) 319-2045

Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian - 46th District
 P.O. Box 942849
 Sacramento, CA 94249-0046 // (916) 319-2046

Assemblymember Richard Bloom - 50th District
 P.O. Box 942849
 Sacramento, CA 94249-0050 // (916) 319-2050

51st District - Currently Vacant
 Special General Election to be held December 5, 2017

Assemblymember Miguel Santiago - 53rd District
 P.O. Box 942849
 Sacramento, CA 94249-0053 // (916) 319-2053

Assemblymember Sebastian Ridley-Thomas - 54th District
 P.O. Box 942849
 Sacramento, CA 94249-0054 // (916) 319-2054

Assemblymember Reginald Byron Jones-Sawyer, Sr. - 59th District
 P.O. Box 942849
 Sacramento, CA 94249-0059 // (916) 319-2059

Assemblymember Autumn Burke - 62nd District
 P.O. Box 942849
 Sacramento, CA 94249-0062 // (916) 319-2062

Assemblymember Mike Gipson - 64th District
 P.O. Box 942849
 Sacramento, CA 94249-0064 // (916) 319-2064

Talk to your Assemblymember about: *state laws, the use of state funds, state parks, coasts, highways, state cooperation with federal policy, immigration policy, state-run schools, combating climate change, environmental protections, health care policy, gun control.*

Find out about bills currently before the Assembly and let your Assemblymember know what you think: www.openstates.org



LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL

The Los Angeles City Council is the governing body that passes and repeals laws that apply to Los Angeles. Councilmembers also order elections, taxes and infrastructure, and create the budget for the city. It is made up of 15 elected members who each serve four-year terms. If you live in a city other than Los Angeles, look up your city council directory to find your representative.

Talk to your councilmember about: *city development plans, public transportation, roads, bike lanes, affordable housing, homeless services and initiatives, policing, city jails, parks, community centers, traffic, parking, schools, small business support.* City Council meets regularly on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday in the John Ferraro Council Chamber, Room 340, City Hall at 10:00am. **Meetings are open to the public. Listen live:** (213) 621-CITY

Councilmember Gil Cedillo - District 1
200 N. Spring Street, Room 460
Los Angeles, CA 90012 // (213)473-7001*
* see note about address format -->

Councilmember Paul Krekorian - District 2
Room 435 // (818) 755-7676

Councilmember Bob Blumenfield - District 3
Room 415 // (213) 473-7003

Councilmember David Ryu - District 4
Room 425 // (323) 957-6415

Councilmember Paul Koretz - District 5
Room 440 // (213) 473-7005

Councilmember Nury Martinez - District 6
Room 470 // (213) 473-7006

Councilmember Monica Rodriguez - District 7
Room 455 // (213) 473-7007

Councilmember Marqueece Harris-Dawson - District 8
Room 450 // (213) 473-7008

Councilmember Curren D. Price, Jr. - District 9
Room 420 // (213) 473-7009

Councilmember Herb J. Wesson, Jr. - District 10
City Council President
Room 430 // (213) 473-7010

Councilmember Mike Bonin - District 11
Room 475 // (213)-473-7011

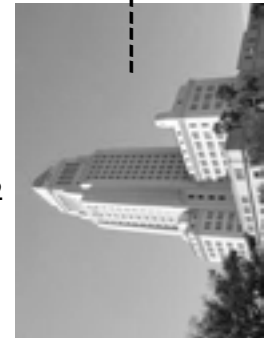
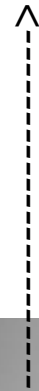
Councilmember Mitchell Englander - District 12
Room 405 // (213) 473-7012

Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell - District 13
Room 480 // (213) 473-7013

Councilmember José Huizar - District 14
Room 465 // (213) 473-7014

Councilmember Joe Buscaino - District 15
Room 410 // (213)-473-7015

* All Councilmembers' mailing addresses are at 200 N. Spring and follow the format 200 N. Spring St. Room # _____ Los Angeles, CA 90012



LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL

MORE ELECTED OFFICIALS:

WHAT ARE THE PRESIDENT and VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES?

The President of the United States of America is the highest elected official in the nation. The President directs the executive branch of the federal government and is commander-in-chief of the United States Armed Forces. The President signs or vetoes legislation that passes both chambers of the U.S. Congress. The Vice President is elected along with the President on the same ticket, and serves as the President of the Senate. The Vice President is second in the line of succession in the event of a vacancy in the Presidency. They may both be reached at the White House.

The White House
Office of the President
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500 // 202-456-1111

WHAT IS THE GOVERNOR?

The Governor is the highest elected official in the state. Like the President at the national level, the Governor either signs or vetoes the bills that pass both houses of the State Legislature (i.e. the State Senate and State Assembly). The Governor is commander-in-chief of the CA National Guard and CA State Military Reserve, submits the state budget and is responsible for ensuring that state laws are followed. Governors serve four-year terms, with a maximum of two terms. (Fun fact: California is one of 22 states that has never elected a woman to serve as Governor.)

Governor Jerry Brown
c/o State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814 // (916) 445-2841

WHAT IS THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR?

The Lieutenant Governor is elected by popular vote independently of the Governor, not as a running mate. Technically, when the Governor is out of the state, he or she has the right to perform all of the Governor's duties, including signing bills into law. Normally, though, they stick with an informal agreement to simply perform basic duties while the Governor is away. The Lieutenant Governor is also the President of the State Senate. 26 of the last 31 years in California, the Lieutenant has been of a different party than the Governor.

Lieutenant Governor Gavin Newsom
State Capitol, Suite 1114
Sacramento, CA 95814 // (916) 445-8994

WHAT IS THE MAYOR?

The Mayor of the City of Los Angeles is the official head and chief executive officer of Los Angeles, California. The mayor is elected for a four-year term and limited to serving no more than two terms. Under the California Constitution, all judicial, school, county, and city offices, including those of chartered cities, are nonpartisan. The 42nd and current Mayor is Eric Garcetti.

Mayor Eric Garcetti
200 N. Spring St.
Los Angeles, CA 90012 // (213) 978-0600

WHAT IS THE LA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS?

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors is the governing body that passes and repeals laws that apply to Los Angeles County. Each County in California is divided into five districts, with one Supervisor elected per district. Supervisors serve four-year terms.

The regular meetings of the L.A. County Board of Supervisors are held every Tuesday at 9:30 a.m., except on Tuesdays following a Monday holiday, then they begin at 1:00 p.m.

To listen to live Board meetings by phone, call (877) 873-8017. Learn more about the Board and livestream meetings visit: <http://bos.lacounty.gov/>

Find your Supervisor: neighborhoodinfo.lacity.org/

District 1 - Supervisor Hilda Solis // (213) 974-4111
District 2 - Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas // (213) 974-2222
District 3 - Supervisor Sheila Kuehl // (213) 974-3333
District 4 - Supervisor Janice Hahn // (213) 974-4444
District 5 - Supervisor Kathryn Barger // (213) 974-5555

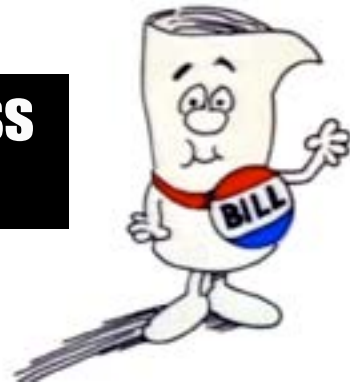
WHAT IS THE LAUSD BOARD OF EDUCATION?

Los Angeles Unified School District is governed by a seven-member Board of Education, which appoints a superintendent, who runs the daily operations of the district. Members of the board are elected directly by voters from separate districts that encompass communities that the LAUSD serves. The district's current superintendent is Michelle King. Find your Board Member: <http://neighborhoodinfo.lacity.org/>

BOARD OF EDUCATION
333 South Beaudry Avenue, 24th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90017 // 213-241-6389

The Legislative Process

--> How a Bill Becomes a Law



Federal Law

For a bill to become a federal law, it must pass the U.S Senate and the House of Representatives and signed into law by the President of the United States.

Any member of Congress (which includes the House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate) can propose a bill. It is given a number and referred to the relevant policy committees. debated, and eventually may be voted on. If it passes the chamber (House or Senate) where it originated, it repeats the same process in the other chamber. If it passes both chambers, it is sent to the President, who signs it, lets it pass without signature, or vetoes it.

State Law

For a bill to become a California state law, it must pass the California Senate, California State Assembly, and be signed into law by the Governor of California.

New laws are proposed by individuals or groups of people and authored by a member of either the CA Senate or the CA Assembly. Once the language of the bill is written by the the Legislative Counsel, it is given a number and then sent to relevant policy committees for review. If it passes in both houses - the CA Senate and the CA Assembly - it is then signed, passed without signing, or vetoed by the Governor.

**FIND OUT MORE ABOUT CURRENT CALIFORNIA
LEGISLATION: OPENSTATES.ORG**

BRIEF GLOSSARY OF TERMS//

Amendment - Formal proposal to change the language of a bill after it has been introduced.

Appropriation - The amount of money made available for expenditure by a specific entity from a specific source such as the General Fund, Environmental License Plate Fund, etc., The Committee on Appropriations regulates spending legislation.

Bill - A proposed law, or piece of legislation, introduced during a session for consideration by the Legislature, and identified numerically in order of presentation.

Hearing - A committee meeting convened for the purpose of gathering information on a specific subject or considering specific legislative measures.

Held in committee - When a bill fails to get sufficient votes to pass out of committee, it is held in committee.

Held under submission - An action taken by Committee to show that the author and/or committee want to either discuss the bill further or make revisions, but no motion is made for the bill to progress out of committee.

House - Refers to either the Senate (Upper) or the Assembly (Lower) in California. Note: In the U.S. Congress, the comparable term used is Chamber - Upper Chamber being the Senate, Lower Chamber being the House of Representatives.

Joint Resolution - A resolution expressing an opinion about an issue pertaining to the federal government; forwarded to the U.S. Congress.

Reading - Presentation of a bill before the house by reading the title thereof. A bill is either in first, second, or third reading until it is passed by both houses. CA Legislature only.

Session - The period during which the Legislature meets.

Sponsor - The legislator, private individual, or group who developed a piece of legislation and advocates its passage.

Suspense file - A bill or set of bills, with a fiscal impact, set aside in Appropriations Committee by a majority of Members present and voting. These bills may be heard at a later hearing.

FOR MORE visit <http://leginfo.ca.gov/glossary.html>

Q & A

The League of Women Voters

The League of Women Voters is a national organization, founded in 1920, six months before the passage of the 19th Amendment which gave women the right to vote in the United States.

The organization was created to help millions of women carry out their responsibilities as voters.

We spoke with Los Angeles chapter Executive Director Marilu Guevara and Vice President of Development Crissi Avila. They explained how more women can wield their voting power to make a difference at the ballot box.

Q: The League was founded right before the 19th Amendment passed, which gave women the right to vote, after a 72-year-long struggle for women who wanted a voice. Was there ever an election with close to 100% participation by women?

MG: The League of Women Voters of Los Angeles is coming up on its 100th year anniversary and its mission of education on public policy and engagement resonates more than ever.

Since its inception, it has faced challenges of voter apathy, partisanship, and misinformation. Despite this, its legacy of nonpartisanship has assured that it stays above the fray of partisan party politics and has assured its longevity. Today, many people seek our unbiased voter guides, ballot measure speakers, and volunteer opportunities. While there has never been 100% participation in an election by women, we continue to work towards informed participation by both men and women.

Q: How bad is voter turnout these days, and what needs to happen to get more people in general to want to vote?

CA: That is the million dollar question! Turnout was about 12% in March (local L.A. elections), but about 60% in November 2016 (presidential election). We are finding that registering voters is only the first step. Many register and then never bother to vote. We need programs and outreach to communities typically ignored to get them involved in the democratic process. Once they realize they can be effective, they are more inclined to vote. This is one strategy.

"We only had 12% voter turnout in LA (in March). That means about 10% of the population decided what's going to pass... Doesn't that worry you?"

MG: The average turnout for a local election hovers around 11%. We find that people who understand the ballot measures and who know the candidates are more likely to vote. The League works to create awareness and promote education around voting issues and the voting process. Registering to vote is the easiest thing to do, it is much harder to get educated and cast an educated vote.

Q: Why should people vote in every election, not just the Presidential ones? .

CA: Because only a handful of people make decisions that affect ALL our lives.

What's currently going on with our housing shortage, horrible traffic, etc. all needs to be solved by local officials. We had only about 12% voter turnout in L.A. (in March's local elections). That means about 10% of the population of L.A. County decided what's going to pass. That's not representative democracy by any stretch. And that's registered voters - not even eligible voters. Doesn't that worry you?

For more context think of it this way: 58% of eligible voters voted in the Presidential election. That means that 30% voted in our current president. Whether you like the President or not isn't the worry. The distressing fact is that only 30% of our country decided who our current President would be. Shouldn't it be at least 51%?

Q: If a voter wants to do their own research on candidates in a race, do you have any suggestions on where they should be looking for research and information on candidates?

CA: We have our Voter's Edge website <http://votersedge.org/ca> which has all the candidates listed. You can also read the candidates' websites and see who endorses them. That is key.

Also many are rated with various groups; go to <https://votesmart.org/> and put in your zip code. Click on ratings and it will give you a list of how a variety of groups rate a particular candidate.

"Whether you like the President or not isn't the worry. The distressing fact is that only 30% of our country decided who our current President would be."



Q: What specific volunteer and participation opportunities does the League offer?

CA: We have a variety of volunteer activities on-going that we are working on including the following:

- Being part of the speaker's bureau — you go out and speak to different groups about the propositions/referendums on the ballot.
- Debates – moderating and working at candidate forums
- Voter registration drives
- You can start up your own unit (or club) with our support and decide what local issues you want to work on. We have started up one at Mount Saint Mary's College and another eastside unit that are working on homelessness. We also have about 5 other units that meet regularly.
- Homelessness and Community Policing are two areas that we are working on specifically.
- YES (Youth Empowered Solutions) Committee will start meeting this fall — we do outreach to youth to get people involved politically and recently did a drive to register 3,000+ students at Compton Unified School District in partnership with other groups.
- Another volunteer is starting up social events to get more college students involved in our outreach, so planning fundraisers/social events is another element.
- We are open to other ideas!

Ready to step up your civic engagement?

Here are some organizations with resources to help:

Indivisible

A group of former congressional staffers created a Google Doc, called The Indivisible Guide, an easy to follow compilation of tactics you can use to get the attention of your elected officials. Since the beginning of the year, thousands of groups have formed and registered on their website. You can read the guide, join a group, or create your own at www.indivisible.org

Resistance School

A group of graduate students at Harvard created a curriculum of trainings which provide skills and information on grassroots organizing for political change. You can participate in the live-stream of their second session of trainings as they are released throughout October and November, and watch the first session at www.resistanceschool.com

Swing Left

A small group of friends decided to build an organization focused on winning house seats in districts where the last election was won by a narrow margin. You will learn about your closest swing district and tangible ways you can help flip the district when you sign up at www.swingleft.org

Sister District

Five women founded this group to focus the energy of volunteers in deeply blue places to channel it to help win down-ballot races in critical state races where Democratic control hangs in the balance. You will be connected with a local team, matched with a strategically important race and given specific actions to take to help win, when you join them at www.sisterdistrict.com

--> Do you have questions <--

about our local, state or federal institutions and how they work?

Email us! theconstituentsla@gmail.com

We are looking for ideas and topics to address in our the next issue.

**Learn more about us,
our projects and how to get
involved by visiting:
www.theconstituentsla.com**

ABOUT US

We are a group of concerned women who met and came together after the November 2016 U.S. presidential election. We are artists, teachers, journalists, political organizers, small business owners, parents, and generally people who care about our communities and our country.

We felt after the U.S. presidential election that it was a critical time to take action. Beyond voting, we wanted to be involved in civic life and politics year-round. So, we formed our group, The Constituents, and started to create civic-minded projects that are meant to be accessible and helpful to residents of Los Angeles.

We realize that democracy is a living, breathing thing. It depends on each of us participating to make it work and to create change.

We wanted our voices to be heard, and we hope to inspire others to make their own voices heard too.