

## Senator Ben Allen

California State Senator Ben Allen was elected in 2014 to represent the 26th Senate District, which consists of the Westside, Hollywood and coastal South Bay communities of Los Angeles County.

Ben serves as chair of the Senate Education Committee and the legislature's Joint Committee on the Arts. He is a member of the Senate Committees on Elections and Constitutional Amendments, Natural Resources and Water, and Transportation and Housing. He co-chairs the Environmental Caucus and is vice-chair of the Jewish Caucus.

Ben has authored several measures that have become law, including the groundbreaking bill to boost vaccination rates among schoolchildren and a landmark river protection bill. He authored laws that protect veterans from pension scams; improve the diagnosis, treatment and care for persons with Alzheimer's disease; strengthen the regulation of underground gas wells, and enable HIV-positive persons to donate life-saving organs to other HIV-positive persons.

While serving as chair of the Senate Elections and Constitutional Amendments Committee in 2015-16, he championed campaign reform and transparency issues. He authored a new law that will increase voter turnout and civic engagement by transforming how elections are conducted. This reform, which was praised by the Los Angeles Times editorial page, will allow people to vote in the 10 days preceding an election at conveniently-located vote centers. He also authored the bill that placed an initiative on the statewide ballot urging Congress to overturn the Citizens United ruling, and a measure that allows cities and counties to use binding independent redistricting commissions.

As chair of the Joint Committee on the Arts, Ben authored successful legislation that reinstated teaching credentials for Theatre and Dance educators. He is fighting for increased access to the arts in schools, especially in disadvantaged communities, and is working to keep entertainment industry jobs in California.

Ben coauthored the Senate's historic climate change legislation, which requires 50% of the state's energy to come from renewable sources, and doubles energy efficiency in buildings, by 2030. He authored bills to expand the state's efforts to combat climate change even further, including establishing the first standard to increase the use of renewable gas, and reducing toxic motor oil waste. He is leading the effort to end the use of harmful drift gillnets in commercial fishing off the coast that injure and kill endangered sea turtles and other marine life.

Ben received the Freshman Legislator of the Year award from the California School Boards Association, and was named Legislator of the Year by the County Superintendents' Educational Services Association, the Alzheimer's Association and Technet, an association of technology companies that includes Apple, Google and Microsoft.

Ben grew up in the 26th District. He is a former board member, and board President, of the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District, where he was a leader on issues of environmental sustainability, financial accountability, and community engagement. He helped pass a \$385 million bond measure which upgraded district facilities using environmental best practices and created good local jobs. During his tenure, the district enacted policies to provide all students with high-quality educational opportunities regardless of their background or means. He helped start the Los Angeles Spark Program, a nonprofit organization that connects at-risk middle school students with apprenticeships.

While in law school, Ben served as a voting member of the University of California Board of Regents, and was a judicial clerk with the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. As an attorney, he worked for the law firm of Richardson & Patel LLP, and previously was a litigator with Bryan Cave LLP.

Prior to his law career, Ben worked for the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, and then as communications director for Congressman Jose Serrano (D-NY). He is a senior fellow with the international human rights organization Humanity in Action, a member of the Pacific Council on International Policy, and a graduate of the Jewish Federation's New Leaders Project. He has a Bachelor of Arts degree from Harvard University, where he graduated magna cum laude in History; a Master of Philosophy degree from the University of Cambridge, and a Juris Doctorate from UC Berkeley. He is fluent in Spanish.

For three years prior to his election to the Senate, he was a lecturer at UCLA's Law School, where he taught education law and policy.