



LOS ANGELES AREA  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



# ENERGY, WATER & ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

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## ENERGY, WATER & ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY COUNCIL

June 3, 2020

10AM-11:30PM

1. WELCOME-
2. SPEAKERS (Climate Goals and Recovery)
  - **State Senator Ben Allen (SD 26)**

Senator Ben Allen, who represents the Westside of Los Angeles, Hollywood, and costal South Bay communities, joins us to discuss climate goals and economic recovery post COVID-19. The current budget short fall puts the climate catalyst fund proposed in the January Budget on hold. As a member of the Natural Resources and Water, and Transportation committees, Senator Allen will discuss the role energy and sustainability policy may plan in our economic recovery.

    - Q&A
3. UPCOMING EVENTS
  - Mid-Year Economic Briefing (6/10)
  - Innovation and Technology Council (6/16)
  - Accenture's Pancakes and Politics (6/26)
  - Transportation and Goods Movement Council (7/7)
  - Government and Fiscal Affairs Council (7/21)



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**Honorable Ben Allen**  
California State Senator

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

Ben serves as chair of the Senate Environmental Quality Committee and the legislature's Joint Committee on the Arts. He is a member of the Senate Committees on Natural Resources and Water, Governmental Organization, and Transportation. He is chair of the Select Committee on Aerospace and Defense, is chair of the Legislative Jewish Caucus and co-chair of the Environmental Caucus. He served as chair of the Education Committee from 2017-2019 and as chair of the Senate Elections and Constitutional Amendments Committee from 2015-2016.

Ben has authored several measures that have become law, including the groundbreaking bill to boost vaccination rates among schoolchildren, a first in the nation public lands protection bill, and a bill to assist cities with financing transportation and affordable housing development. 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.

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 as a member of the California Film Commission, 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 successfully lead 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. He also authored a bill that reauthorized the state's off-highway vehicular recreation program, but in a far more sustainable way than it had existed before, earning the support of both the environmental and recreational communities. "If only Congress could work out such compromises," wrote the Sacramento Bee editorial board about the bill.



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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, an Aspen Institute-Rodel Fellow, a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, 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 Masters degree in Latin American Studies from the University of Cambridge, and a Juris Doctor degree 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. He and his wife Melanie, an attorney, have one child.