

# Congressional Hispanic Caucus

Members and bios

**August 11, 2017**

**Producer**

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## CHC leadership



Rep. Michelle Lujan Grisham  
Chair (D-NM)



Pete Aguilar  
Whip (D-CA)



Joaquin Castro  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice-Chair (D-TX)



Ruben Gallego,  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-Chair (D-AZ)

Sources: Congressional Hispanic Caucus: Membership, August 2017, National Journal Almanac, 2017.

# CHC members



Raúl Grijalva  
(D-AZ)



Linda Sánchez  
(D-CA)



Juan Vargas  
(D-CA)



Nanette Barragán  
(D-CA)



Raul Ruiz  
(D-CA)



Lucille Roybal-Allard  
(D-CA)



Salud Carbajal  
(D-CA)



Tony Cárdenas  
(D-CA)



Jim Costa  
(D-CA)



Lou Correa  
(D-CA)



Jimmy Gomez  
(D-CA)



Norma Torres  
(D-CA)



Grace Napolitano  
(D-CA)



Darren Soto  
(D-FL)



Luis Gutiérrez  
(D-IL)



Robert Menendez  
(D-NJ)



Albio Sires  
(D-NJ)



Ben Ray Luján  
(D-NM)



Catherine Cortez  
Masto (D-NV)



Norma Torres  
(D-NV)



Adriano Espaillat  
(D-NY)



José Serrano  
(D-NY)



Nydia Velázquez  
(D-NY)



Filemon Vela  
(D-TX)



Henry Cuellar  
(D-TX)



Vicente Gonzalez  
(D-TX)



Gregorio Sablan  
(D-CNMI)

Sources: Congressional Hispanic Caucus: Membership, August 2017, National Journal Almanac, 2017.

# CHC Leadership

**Chairs**



**Members**



# Rep. Michelle Lujan Grisham (Chair)



## Extended biography

Michelle Lujan Grisham was born in Los Alamos, the daughter of a dentist. Her uncle is Manuel Lujan Jr., a Republican politician from New Mexico who served in the US House of Representatives for twenty years and as the Secretary of the Interior from 1989 to 1993. Lujan Grisham's cousin, Ben Ray Lujan, represents New Mexico's 3rd congressional district in the US House. Lujan Grisham earned her bachelor and law degrees from the University of New Mexico. She was named the director of the State Bar of New Mexico's Lawyer Referral for the Elderly Program, providing services to seniors. In 1991, Grisham was appointed to be the director of the New Mexico State Agency on Aging. She served as director for 13 years in both Republican and Democratic administrations. After her husband's death in 2004, Grisham was appointed New Mexico's Secretary of Health. During her tenure, Grisham emphasized precautionary principles to combat medical mistakes. In 2008, Grisham unsuccessfully ran for New Mexico's 1st congressional district. Two years later, she became the commissioner of Bernalillo County. In 2012, Grisham ran again for the 1st congressional district. After winning a close primary, Grisham beat Republican opponent Janice Jones 59% to 41%. In the House, Grisham has advocated for protecting the elderly and supporting social safety nets like Medicare and Social Security. Grisham has advocated for CARE Corps to support family caregivers and meet the growing demand for assisting disabled and senior citizens. Grisham is the Chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. Lujan Grisham will run for Governor of New Mexico in 2018.

## Biography

Currently:  
Representative, NM-1<sup>st</sup>  
Elected: 2012

Education:  
U. of NM, B.A. 1981, J.D.  
1987

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Widow, 2 children

Contact: (202) 225-6316  
Cannon HOB Room 214  
Washington, DC 20515

## Stance on issues

- Strongly supports women's right to choose to have an abortion
- Strongly supports maintaining social safety net programs like Medicare and Social Security
- Supports balancing budget through higher taxes on wealthy and reducing public spending
- Supports the Affordable Care Act
- Strongly supports constitutional amendment overturning Citizens United decision

## Committees

Committee on Agriculture

Committee on Budget

## Election results

### 2016 General

Michelle Lujan Grisham (D)	Votes: 181,088	Percent: 65.1%
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Richard Priem (R)	Votes: 96,879	Percent: 34.9%
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Sources: National Journal Almanac, 2016; Ballotpedia, "Michelle Lujan Grisham," June 13, 2016.

# Rep. Pete Aguilar (Whip)



## Extended biography

Democrat Pete Aguilar's 2014 win over Republican Paul Chabot returned the 31st District seat to the Democrats. By the numbers alone, the district ought to be filled by a Democrat; the party had long won the seat by overwhelming margins. But the quirks of redistricting and a new, open primary gave the predominantly Hispanic district to the GOP in 2012. Aguilar was born in Fontana and grew up in nearby San Bernardino. He earned undergraduate degrees in government and business administration at the University of Redlands. In 2001, Gov. Gray Davis appointed Aguilar as deputy director of the Inland Empire Regional Office of the Governor. He subsequently became the office's interim director. In 2006, Aguilar was appointed to the Redlands City Council, making him the youngest council member in the city's 140-year history. He ran successfully for two more terms and was elected mayor in 2010 by his fellow council members. In 2012, four Democrats—including Aguilar—divided the vote for the representative seat, and two Republicans who sought the seat emerged at the top. Rep. Gary Miller(R) ultimately won the seat. In 2014, Aguilar again sought the post. In June, three Republicans faced off four Democrats. Chabot came in first on the GOP side, and Aguilar hung onto a 209-vote lead over Republican Leslie Gooch. Aguilar hammered Chabot for what he called his too-conservative views on education, immigration and health care. Aguilar won with 51% to Chabot's 49%. The 2016 election was a rematch, with Aguilar winning again, 56-44.

## Biography

Currently:  
Representative, CA-31  
Elected: 2014

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Education:  
University of Redlands, B.S,  
2001

.....

Religion: Roman Catholic

.....

Family: Married (Alisha), 2  
children

.....

Contact: (909) 890-4445  
Longworth House Office  
Building Room 1223  
Washington, DC 20515

## Stance on issues

- Supports Obamacare expansion
- Supports unrestricted abortion rights
- Supports same-sex marriage
- Opposes expansion of free trade
- Opposes privatization of social security
- Supports restricting guns
- Supports comprehensive immigration reform
- Supports green energy initiatives

## Committees

Committee on Agriculture

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Committee on Armed Services

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## Election results

2016 General		
Pete Aguilar (D)	Votes: 121,070	Percent: 56.1%
Paul Chabot (R)	Votes: 94,866	Percent: 43.9%

Sources: National Journal Almanac, 2016; Ballotpedia, 2016.

# Rep. Joaquin Castro (1<sup>st</sup> Vice-Chair)



## Extended biography

Democrat Joaquin Castro is a former Texas legislator who won his San Antonio-based seat in 2012. As a young, telegenic Hispanic politician, he vaulted into an unusually prominent position for a freshman along with his twin brother Julián, a former San Antonio mayor who became secretary of housing and urban development in 2014. His mother, Rosie Castro, was a Latina activist in the 1960s and 1970s, and she instilled a belief in civil rights and equality of opportunity in her sons. “We grew up believing that when government works right, it can help people,” Joaquin Castro told National Journal. In the House, Castro has been a reliable Democrat, particularly on economic issues. He has focused on education, introducing a bill in June 2014 to expand a pre-kindergarten program that his brother started in San Antonio. It would give cities a direct line to federal funds, bypassing state legislatures. “Local entities must have the ability to step up to the plate and pick up the slack where their state governments are failing,” he wrote in an op-ed column. He worked with a bipartisan group of lawmakers on another bill that month to authorize the U.S. Agency for International Development’s Global Development Lab to work on public-private partnerships to combat global poverty. When former governor Rick Perry announced he would send National Guard troops to the border, Castro accused Perry of “militarizing” the region and said he should instead be sending the Red Cross. He sent Perry, a potential 2016 presidential candidate, a subsequent letter accusing him of relying on crime statistics that he said had been “thoroughly debunked” and of using the situation for his personal gain.

## Biography

Currently:  
Rep., Texas (20)  
Elected: 2012

Education:  
Stanford U., B.A. 1996,  
Harvard U., J.D. 2000

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Married (Anna Flores), 2 children

Contact:  
(202) 225-3236  
1221 Longworth HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

## Stance on issues

- Supports affirmative action
- Supports same-sex marriage
- Opposes repealing the Affordable Care Act
- Opposes absolute right to gun ownership
- Supports prioritizing green energy

## Committees

Committee on Armed Services

Committee on Foreign Affairs

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence

## Election results

### 2016 General

Joaquin Castro (D)	Votes: 149,640	Percent: 79.7%
Jeffrey Blunt (L)	Votes: 29,055	Percent: 15.5%

Sources: National Journal Almanac, 2016; Ballotpedia, 2016.

# Rep. Ruben Gallego (2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-Chair)



## Extended biography

Democrat Ruben Gallego, a first-generation American, was the first in his family to go to college. He was elected in 2014 to represent Arizona's 7th District—and he did it without having to fend off a Republican opponent, beating Libertarian Joe Cobb. Gallego's biography is made for a political candidate, including a hardscrabble upbringing, a Harvard degree and military service in Iraq. It was his experience in Iraq and as a veteran, he has said, that led him to get involved in politics and to help veterans. Gallego was elected to the Arizona Senate in 2010, rising to the role of assistant minority leader in 2012. Gallego founded Citizens for Professional Law Enforcement, which has the goal of recalling Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio. When longtime Democratic Rep. Ed Pastor decided to retire, Gallego left the legislature to run. Since the ultra-blue district (it went 72 percent for President Obama in 2012) was considered a shoo-in for the Democratic candidate, the true contest for Gallego came in the August primary. His closest competition was Mary Rose Wilcox, who is also Hispanic and, as Maricopa County supervisor, had high name recognition. Gallego pledged to work on veterans' issues, education and income inequality.

## Biography

Currently:  
Rep., Arizona (7)  
Elected: 2014

Education:  
Harvard U., B.A.. 2004

Religion: Catholic

Family: Married (Kate)

Contact: (202) 225-4065  
1218 Longworth HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

## Stance on issues

- Opposes the display of the Confederate flag at national cemeteries
- Supports gun control
- Opposes SB 1070, the Arizona law requiring police officers in some circumstances to determine the immigration status of arrested or detained persons

## Committees

Committee on Armed Services

Committee on Natural Resources

## Election results

### 2016 General

Ruben Gallego (D)	Votes: 119,465	Percent: 75.2%
Eve Nunez (R)	Votes: 39,286	Percent: 24.7%

Sources: National Journal Almanac, 2016; Ballotpedia, 2016.

# CHC Membership

**Chairs**



**Members**

# Rep. Raúl Grijalva



## Extended biography

Raúl Grijalva is one of the House's most liberal members. He took over in 2015 as ranking Democrat on the Natural Resources Committee, which gives him a platform for his progressive environmental views. Grijalva grew up in Tucson, the son of a bracero, or guest worker, who emigrated from Mexico in 1945. He graduated from the University of Arizona and has lived in the city all of his life; he has deep roots in the immigrant community on the city's southwest side. In the House, Grijalva's voting record is strongly liberal. Much of his effort has been focused on immigration policy. Grijalva declined an opportunity in 2008 to serve on the lofty Ways and Means Committee because it would have meant giving up a Natural Resources subcommittee chairmanship. Grijalva was widely mentioned in 2008 as a possible nominee for interior secretary and was supported by several national Hispanic organizations and by then-Natural Resources Committee Chairman Nick Rahall (D-WV). But in December, Obama announced then-Sen. Ken Salazar, D-Colo., as his choice. In 2007, Grijalva joined 22 other Democrats in the move to impeach Vice President Dick Cheney. He was elected a year later as co-chair of the 75-member Progressive Caucus.

## Biography

Position Elected:  
Representative, AZ-3  
Elected: 2002

Education:  
U. Of Arizona, B.A. 1985

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Married (Ramona),  
3 children

Contact: (202) 225-2435  
LHOB Room 1511  
Washington, DC 20515

## Stance on issues

- Supports pro-choice legislation
- Supports reduced defense spending
- Opposes capital punishment
- Opposes mandatory minimum sentences for non-violent drug offenders
- Supports federal education standards
- Opposes Keystone XL pipeline
- Supports government funding for renewable energy
- Supports federal regulation of greenhouse gas emissions

## Committees

Committee on Natural Resources

Committee on Education & the Workforce

## Election results

### 2016 General

Raúl Grijalva (D)	Votes: 148,973	Percent: 98.6%
Write-in	Votes: 2,062	Percent: 1.4%

Sources: Ballotpedia, 2017; National Journal Research, 2017; Vote Smart, 2017; National Journal Almanac, 2017.



# Rep. Nanette Barragán



## Extended biography

Nanette Barragán was born on September 15, 1976 in Harbor City, California. She is the youngest of 11 siblings who were raised by immigrants from Mexico. She has a B.A. in political science from UCLA and a J.D. from USC. During the Clinton administration, Barragán worked in the Office of Public Liaison doing African-American outreach. In 1999, Barragán worked at the NAACP's Washington bureau on health policy. During college and until 2003, Barragán served as the executive director of the Gillian S. Fuller Foundation where she was in charge of funding worthy nonprofits focused on education, the environmental and youth programs. In 2003 she externed for Justice Carlos Moreno at the California Supreme Court and in 2004 for the Los Angeles Legal Aid Foundation. She then worked at the United States Attorney's office, Central District of California in the Organized Crime and Terror section. Barragán started working as a private practice lawyer with Latham & Watkins, LLP. While at that firm, she led an immigration asylum case spanning three years for a child and mother from Guatemala and withholding of removal was granted. She also provided pro bono assistance to victims of Hurricane Katrina. In 2012 Barragán took leave from her law firm to work on Obama's reelection campaign. She then ran for Hermosa Beach City Council where she helped balance the budget that resulted in surplus funds, approved funding for infrastructure in South Park and increased street paving budgets by 20%. In her 2016 campaign for Congress she received several major endorsements including Emily's List, the California League of Conservation Voters, many members of Congress, and the Latino Victory Project.

## Biography

Position Elected:  
Representative, CA-44  
Elected: 2016

Education:  
University of California Los Angeles, B.A.  
University of Southern California, J.D.

Religion: Catholic

Contact: (202) 225-8220  
LHOB Room 1320  
Washington, DC 20515

## Stance on issues

- Strongly favors investing in clean energy
- Favors college affordability measures
- Favors protecting Social Security and Medicare
- Favors closing tax loopholes and ending subsidies for toxic polluters
- Strongly opposes privatization of Social Security
- Opposes increasing the use of military force internationally

## Committees

Committee on Homeland Security

Committee on Natural Resources

## Election results

### 2016 General

Nanette Barragan (D)	Votes: 93,124	Percent: 52.2%
Isadore Hall (D)	Votes: 85,289	Percent: 47.8%

Sources: barraganforcongress.com; Ballotpedia, 2017; National Journal Almanac, 2017.

# Rep. Linda T. Sánchez



## Extended biography

Linda T. Sánchez is the Democratic Congressional representative for California's 38th district. Her sister, Loretta Sanchez, is also a representative, and they are the pair of sisters ever elected to Congress. Sánchez is the daughter of Mexican immigrant parents Ignacio Sánchez, a machinist, and Maria Macias, a bilingual education aide in an elementary school. Their parents met while trying to organize a union at a tire shop where they worked when they were young. Sánchez received her B.A. and J.D at University of California, Los Angeles. After graduating, Sánchez became a civil-rights lawyer and was executive secretary-treasurer of the Orange County Federation of Labor. In 2002, she ran for an open House seat. Sánchez tapped into her sister's fundraising network and name recognition to boost her presence in the crowded Democratic primary. Sánchez ended up winning the primary and went on to beat Republican Tim Escobar 55% to 41%. Sánchez has been a strong liberal Democrat in Congress supporting LGBTQ rights and benefits including a bill in 2012 to end the Social Security Administration's policy of denying benefits to same-sex couples. Sánchez is supportive of labor unions and ensuring trade deals are negotiated in such a manner that they do not undermine U.S. laborer's bargaining power. For this reason, Sánchez co-founded the House Trade Working Group.

## Biography

Currently:  
Representative, CA-38  
Elected: 2002

Education:  
U. of CA, B.A. 1991,  
U.C.L.A., J.D. 1995

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Married (James Sullivan) , 1 child ; 3 stepchildren

Contact: (202) 225-6676  
RHOB Room 2329  
Washington, DC 20515

## Stance on Issues

- Opposes the Trans-Pacific Partnership
- Supports the Affordable Care Act
- Supports the Iran nuclear deal
- Supports immigration reform with a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants currently in the US
- Supports raising taxes on higher income to pay for entitlement program
- Supports "Make It In America" Agenda

## Committees

House Ethics Committee (Ranking Member)

House Ways and Means Committee

House Select 2012 Terrorist Attack Benghazi Committee

## Election results

### 2016 General

Linda Sanchez (D)	Votes: 163,590	Percent: 70.1%
Ryan Downing (R)	Votes: 68,524	Percent: 29.5%

Sources: National Journal Almanac, 2016; Ballotpedia, "Linda Sanchez," April 22, 2016.

# Rep. Juan Vargas



## Extended biography

Democrat Juan Vargas captured the 51st District in 2012 to replace veteran Democratic Rep. Bob Filner, who retired to run for San Diego mayor. After college, Vargas studied with the Jesuits, working with the poor, orphans and refugees in El Salvador and elsewhere. Vargas then studied at Harvard, where he earned a law degree in 1991 alongside a student named Barack Obama. After law school, Vargas settled in San Diego, where he briefly worked at a large corporate law firm. Vargas was elected to the San Diego City Council in 1993. In 2000, he won election to the California Assembly, where he stayed for six years. In 2010, he won election to the state Senate, where Vargas took pro-union stances and advocated government support for children and the elderly. Vargas previously ran three unsuccessful campaigns for Congress against Filner in Democratic primaries, twice in the 1990s and again in 2006. Filner's retirement opened up an opportunity for Vargas, who easily won the primary with 46% of the vote. Political observers expected Vargas and fellow Latino Democrat Denise Moreno Ducheny to advance in California's new jungle primary, in which the top two finishers, regardless of party, compete in the general election. But Vargas paid attention to Republican Michael Crimmins and refused to participate in a debate unless Crimmins was included. Crimmins ultimately edged Ducheny 20% to 15%, and went on to face Vargas in the fall election, when his defeat was all but assured in the strongly Democratic district that is two-thirds Latino.

## Biography

Currently:  
Rep., CA (51)  
Elected: 2012

Education:  
U. of San Diego, B.A., 1983;  
Fordham U., M.A., 1987;  
Harvard U., J.D., 1991

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Married (Adrienne D'Ascoli), 2 children

Contact: (202) 225-8045  
1605 Longworth HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

## Stance on Issues

- Supports renewable energy investments, especially in solar energy
- Opposes the Iran nuclear deal
- Opposes the partial privatization of the Social Security
- Opposes the Trans-Pacific Partnership
- Supports same-sex marriage
- Supports comprehensive immigration reform

## Committees

Committee on Financial Services

## Election results

### 2016 General

Juan Vargas (D)	Votes: 145,162	Percent: 72.8%
Juan Hidalgo Jr. (R)	Votes: 54,362	Percent: 27.2%

Sources: National Journal Almanac, 2016; Ballotpedia, 2016.

# Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard



## Extended biography

Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard was the first Mexican-American woman elected to U.S. Congress. She is the daughter of Edward R. Roybal, who served in Congress for 30 years, and Lucille Beserra Roybal. Roybal-Allard was born and raised in Boyle Heights, California. Before coming to DC, she spent six years representing the 56th Assembly District of California. Roybal-Allard also served as the chair of the California Democratic Congressional Delegation in 1997 and 1998, and later became the first female chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus during the 106th Congress in 1999 and 2000. She is a House Democratic senior whip and serves in the Congressional Progressive Caucus, the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, and the Democratic Outreach and Engagement Task Force. From her position on the House Appropriations Committee, she has led federal projects that create jobs in her district including building a new federal courthouse in Central District of California, expanding the Metro Gold Line Lightrail, and repairing water and sewer systems. She also is working to rebuild the LA River. During the 113th Congress, Congresswoman Roybal-Allard put together a package of bills called the Immigration Fairness Agenda that prioritized the rights and dignity of individuals and families impacted by the current immigration system. She is an original co-author of the DREAM Act.

## Biography

Position Elected:  
Representative, CA-40  
Elected: Nov. 2009

Education:  
UCLA, B.A. 1965

Religion: Roman Catholic

Contact:  
Rayburn House Office  
Building  
Room 2083  
Washington, DC 20515

## Stance on issues

- Favors comprehensive immigration reform
- Favors labor unions
- Strongly favors legislation to improve the quality and affordability of health services for mothers and children
- Favors investments in clean and renewable energy

## Committees

House Appropriations Committee

House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee

House Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee

## Election results

### 2016 General

Lucille Roybal-Allard (D)	Votes: 82,789	Percent: 71.9%
Roman Gonzalez (R)	Votes: 32,404	Percent: 28.1%

Sources: New York Times Elections, 2016; "Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard," The Arena Politico.

# Rep. Raul Ruiz



## Extended biography

Democrat Raul Ruiz, an emergency room doctor, narrowly beat six-term incumbent Mary Bono Mack in a heated 2012 race for California's redrawn 36th District. Ruiz criticized the Republican's stance on Medicare and overcame attacks about his arrest during a Thanksgiving protest while a student at Harvard Medical School. The son of farmworkers, Ruiz was born and raised in the Coachella Valley. He dreamed of being a doctor from a young age. A family friend paid for Ruiz to apply to the University of California, Los Angeles, but he needed money for tuition. Ruiz went door-to-door in his hometown of Coachella with a handmade contract, asking neighbors and local businesses to contribute to his college fund in exchange for his future medical service to the community. He raised almost \$2,000. After graduating from UCLA, Ruiz went to Harvard Medical School. As a student, he spent almost a year in Chiapas, Mexico, through a health and social justice organization, Partners in Health. The experience influenced Ruiz's views on health care. "I came out of there realizing the tremendous nature of poverty and how real policies can actually affect human lives," he later told The Desert Sun newspaper. After graduating from Harvard with three degrees, Ruiz returned to the Coachella Valley and served in the emergency room of a nonprofit hospital. He returned to Chiapas in 2008 to work with the government on implementing health-policy changes for the region. Two years later, Ruiz ventured to Haiti to help with recovery efforts after the catastrophic earthquake there.

## Biography

Currently:  
Representative, CA-36  
Elected: 2012

Education: University of California (Los Angeles), B.S., 1994; Harvard University, M.D., M.P.P., 2001, M.P.H., 2007

Religion: Seventh-Day Adventist

Family: Married, 2 children

Contact: (202) 225-5330  
LHOB Room 1319  
Washington, DC 20515

## Stance on issues

- Supports investing in renewable energy
- Supports comprehensive immigration reform
- Supports abortion rights
- Supports LGBT rights, including the Employment Non-Discrimination Act
- Supports protecting Medicare and Social Security benefits

## Committees

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

Committee on Natural Resources

## Election results

### 2016 General

Raul Ruiz (D)	Votes: 117,904	Percent: 61.1%
Jeff Stone (R)	Votes: 75,106	Percent: 38.9%

Sources: National Journal Almanac, 2016; Associated Press, 2016; Ami Bera, Ballotpedia, 2016.

# Rep. Salud Carbajal



## Extended biography

Salud Carbajal was born in Mexico and moved to a small mining town in Arizona at the age of five. His father worked in a copper mine until it closed, at which point Salud and his family settled in Oxnard, Arizona. One of eight children, Carbajal was the first in his family to graduate from college, earning a bachelor's degree in Latin American and Iberian studies from the University of California at Santa Barbara and a master's degree in organizational management from Fielding University. Carbajal was a member of the United States Marine Corps Reserve for eight years, including two years of active duty during the Gulf War. Elected to the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors in 2004, Carbajal has worked to improve local schools, protect the environment and advocate for sustainable, clean energy sources. His prior roles have included chief of staff to previous First District County Supervisor Naomi Schwartz; program director in the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department; assistant executive director of Zone Seca; parent involvement coordinator for the Head Start Program; and program director for the City of Santa Barbara Lower Westside Recreation Program. He has also participated in several task forces and organizations, including President Obama's State, Local and Tribal Leaders Task Force on Climate Preparedness and Resilience; the EPA's Local Government Advisory Committee's Air, Climate, Energy Workshop; and the Santa Barbara County Joint Affordable Housing Task Force. Carbajal and his wife, Gina, have two children. Carbajal defeated his opponent in the race to represent California's 24th congressional district, Justin Fareed, in November 2016.

## Biography

Position Elected:  
Representative, CA-24  
Elected: 2016

Education:  
University of California at  
Santa Barbara, B.A.;  
Fielding University, M.A.

Religion: Catholic

Family: Married (Gina), 2  
children

Contact: (202) 225-3601  
CHOB Room 212  
Washington, DC 20515

## Stance on issues

- Strongly favors prioritizing green energy
- Strongly opposes privatizing Social Security and replacing Medicare with a voucher system
- Strongly supports efforts to make college more affordable
- Favors raising the minimum wage

## Committees

Committee on the Budget

Committee on Armed Services

## Election results

### 2016 General

Salud Carbajal (D)	Votes: 166,034	Percent: 53.4%
Justin Fareed (R)	Votes: 144,780	Percent: 46.6%

Sources: Ballotpedia, 2016; Chris Meagher, "Can Salud Carbajal really be everything to everyone?" Santa Barbara Independent, March 27, 2008; National Journal Almanac, 2017.



# Rep. Tony Cárdenas



## Extended biography

Democrat Tony Cárdenas is the first Latino congressman to represent Southern California's San Fernando Valley. The former Los Angeles City Council member was elected in 2012 from a new, heavily Latino 29th District. As the youngest of 11 children of Mexican immigrant parents, Cárdenas was born and raised in the Valley city of Pacoima. His father was a self-employed gardener who would take young Cárdenas and his brothers to work with him. He earned a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from the University of California, Santa Barbara in 1986. He returned home to Pacoima to live with his parents and sold life insurance for a year, then worked selling real estate for five years before opening his own brokerage firm in the San Fernando Valley. During that time, the Valley had become more Latino—but, he observed, political representation did not mirror that change. One day, a friend suggested that he run for political office. He did, and in 1996 became the first Latino to represent the Valley in the state's 39th Assembly District. In 2003, Cárdenas won a seat on the Los Angeles City Council representing the Sixth District, where he has continued to work on gang prevention. He also was active in creating opportunities for minority-owned businesses to compete for the city's bond underwriting work. And he pushed for policies to fight human trafficking and prevent the mistreatment of animals. When he decided to run for Congress, Cárdenas was a strong favorite among Democrats.

## Biography

Currently:  
Representative, CA-29  
Elected: 2012

Education:  
UC Santa Barbara, B.A.,  
1986

Religion: Christian church

Family: Married (Norma), 3  
children

Contact: (202) 225-6131  
Longworth Office 1510  
Washington, DC 20515

## Stance on issues

- Supports a woman's right to choose
- Supports government funding of development of renewable energy
- Supports the federal regulation of greenhouse gas emissions
- Supports the Affordable Care Act
- Supports same-sex marriage
- Supports increased gun control measures
- Opposes mandatory minimum sentences for non-violent offenders

## Committees

Committee on Energy & Commerce

## Election results

### 2016 General

Tony Cárdenas (D)	Votes: 128,407	Percent: 74.7%
Richard Alarcon (D)	Votes: 43,417	Percent: 25.3%

Sources: National Journal Almanac, 2017. Ballotpedia 2017.

# Rep. Jim Costa



## Extended biography

Democrat Jim Costa, elected in 2004, is a third-generation farmer who concentrates on the agricultural issues that affect his district's rural residents, often trying to find a middle ground between production and resource protection. He is among the California delegation's most conservative Democrats but takes his party's side on most big issues. Born in Fresno, he was raised on his family's dairy farm. He is the grandson of Portuguese immigrants who settled in the San Joaquin Valley near the turn of the 20th century. In 1978, Costa was elected to the state Assembly, where he was known as a moderate Democrat. In 2002, after he was forced to retire that year because of term limits, Costa founded a consulting firm. Two years later, when Democratic Rep. Cal Dooley retired after 14 years, Costa entered the race and started off with solid name recognition—his former state Senate district covered the entire congressional district, which was then the 20th District. But Costa's lengthy legislative record didn't readily lend itself to the "liberal" label. In a relatively low turnout event, Costa won 53%-47%. In the House, Costa got seats on the Agriculture and the Natural Resources committees, both important to the Valley. When Costa bucks his party, it tends to be on the fiscal issues that bring out his conservative impulses. He was one of just 22 House Democrats to support a failed proposal in March 2012 to adopt the Simpson-Bowles commission's budget, which imposed politically painful spending reductions to balance the budget.

## Biography

Currently:  
Representative, CA-16  
Elected: 2004

Education:  
CA State U. Fresno, B.A.  
1974

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Single

Contact: (202) 225-3341  
2081 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

## Stance on issues

- Advocate for a high-speed rail system that would go up and down California
- Supported a stronger screening process for refugees from Iraq and Syria who apply for admission into the U.S.

## Committees

Committee on Agriculture

Committee on Natural Resources

## Election results

### 2016 General

Jim Costa (D)	Votes: 72,111	Percent: 57.8%
Johnny Tacherra (R)	Votes: 52,570	Percent: 42.2%

Sources: National Journal Almanac, 2016; NY Times, 2017.

# Rep. Lou Correa



## Extended biography

Lou Correa was born on January 24, 1958 and grew up in Anaheim, California. He holds degrees in Economics from California State University, Fullerton, and a J.D. and MBA from UCLA. Prior to serving in the California State Legislature, he was an investment banker and a real estate broker. Correa served on the California State Assembly for three terms, and then two years on the Orange County Board of Supervisors, representing the state's 1st district. In 2006 and again in 2010, Lou was elected to the California State Senate, representing the 34th District. As a state senator, Correa worked on issues related to public safety, mental health, the affordability of higher education and tax equity. Prior to being elected to Congress, Correa served on the Board of the Orange County Family Justice Center, the Orange County Board of the Gang Reduction Intervention Partnership (G.R.I.P.), and the Garden Grove Boys and Girls Club, and he is also a commissioner of the California High Speed Rail Authority. When Loretta Sanchez (D) announced that she would run for California's open Senate seat, Correa decided to run for her old seat. Correa defeated fellow Democrat Bao Nguyen in the general election.

## Biography

Position Elected:  
Representative, CA-46  
Elected: 2016

Education:  
California State U., B.A.  
UCLA, MBA; J.D.

Religion: Catholic

Family: Married (Dr. Esther Reynoso), 4 children

Contact: (202) 225-2965  
LHOB Room 1039  
Washington, DC 20515

## Stance on issues

- Supports the Affordable Care Act
- Supports raising the minimum wage
- Supports a woman's right to choose
- In favor of federal background checks for online and private gun sales
- In favor of legislation allowing transgender students to identify with the gender of their choice

## Committees

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

Committee on Homeland Security

## Election results

### 2016 General

Lou Correa (D) Votes: 115,248 Percent: 70.0%

Bao Nguyen (D) Votes: 49,345 Percent: 30.0%

Sources: National Journal Almanac, 2017; Ballotpedia, 2017; LouCorrea.com; VoteSmart.org, 2016, Martin Wisckol, "House candidates take a stand on social issues... or not," The Orange County Register, April 8, 2016.

# Rep. Jimmy Gomez



## Extended biography

Jimmy Gomez was born and raised in Southern California and is the youngest of six children. His parents and four of his siblings immigrated to California from Mexico in the early 1970s. His mother and father often worked multiple jobs. Gomez was elected to the California State Assembly in 2012 and reelected in 2014 and most recently in 2016 with over 86 percent of the vote to represent California's 51st Assembly District, which includes Northeast Los Angeles and unincorporated East Los Angeles. In the Assembly, Gomez has been a national champion for paid family leave. He authored and passed legislation, Assembly Bill 908, the nation's most progressive expansion of paid family leave that President Obama hailed as a model for Congress. After graduating from high school, Gomez worked at a fast-food restaurant and a local superstore. After months of working both jobs, he then enrolled in community college and ultimately transferred to UCLA, where he graduated magna cum laude. He later earned a master's in Public Policy from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

## Biography

Currently:  
Representative, CA-34  
Elected: June 6, 2017

Education:  
UCLA, B.A.; Harvard  
University, M.P.P.

Family: Married (Mary)

Contact: (202) 225-6235  
1226 Longworth HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

## Stance on issues

- Supports pro-choice legislation
- Supports tax increases across brackets to help balance the budget
- Opposes mandatory minimum sentences
- Supports government funding of renewable energy sources
- Supports the federal regulation of greenhouse gas emissions

## Committees

Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials

Labor and Employment

Water, Parks and Wildlife

## Election results

### 2016 General

Candidate	Votes	Percent
Jimmy Gomez (D)	19,761	60.1%
Robert Ahn (D)	13,108	39.9%

# Rep. Norma Torres



## Extended biography

Democrat Norma Torres, a state lawmaker deeply involved in health care expansion and immigration debates, defeated fellow Democrat Christina Gagnier in 2014 to succeed retiring Rep. Gloria Negrete McLeod. Torres was born in Guatemala but came to the U.S. at age 5, when her parents sent her to live with relatives in Whittier, Calif., so that she would be safe from that country's civil war. After college, her interest in community safety led to work as a 911 dispatcher in Pomona, where she developed a deeper interest in public service. Torres became involved in broader community issues, especially union organizing and immigrants' rights. She was elected to the Pomona City Council in 2000 and won the mayoral seat in 2006. The following year, when she returned for the first time to her hometown in Guatemala, she was treated like a celebrity. In 2008, her rise continued as she won a seat in the state Assembly. Torres's next big opening came in a 2013 special election, after Negrete McLeod gave up her state Senate seat to run for the House. She introduced two bills to increase diversity on the state board overseeing health care expansion, following a rollout period that many critics said underserved Latinos. She co-authored a successful measure that transferred \$3 million in existing funds to help unaccompanied minors fleeing Central America. She has also pushed three bills cracking down on public corruption, one of which has become law. In February 2014, Torres ran for Negrete McLeod's open House seat and won with 63% of the vote.

## Biography

Currently:  
Representative, CA-35  
Elected: 2014

Education:  
National Labor College,  
B.A., 2012

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Married, 3 children

Contact: (202) 225-6161  
CHOB Room 516  
Washington, DC 20515

## Stance on Issues

- Strongly favors expanding Obamacare
- Strongly opposes absolute right to gun ownership
- Strongly favors a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants
- Strongly favors legalization of marijuana

## Committees

Committee on Natural Resources

Committee on Homeland Security

## Election results

### 2016 General

Norma Torres (D) Votes: 124,044 Percent: 72.4%

Tyler Fischella (R) Votes: 47,309 Percent: 27.6%

Sources: National Journal Almanac, 2016; Ballotpedia, 2016.

# Rep. Grace Napolitano



## Biography

Currently:  
Representative, CA-32  
Elected: 1998

.....

Education:  
Cerritos College, Texas  
Southmost College

.....

Religion: Roman Catholic

.....

Family: Married, 5 children

.....

Contact: (202) 225-5256  
LHOB Room 1610  
Washington, DC 20515

## Extended biography

Grace Napolitano, a Democrat first elected in 1998, is known for her fiercely liberal politics. She concentrates on issues affecting lower-income Hispanics in her Southern California district, including jobs, water scarcity, and mental health. Napolitano grew up in the lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas, married at age 18, and eventually had five children. When she was 23, the family moved to California. She got a job as a secretary at Ford Motor Co. and stayed for 22 years. After her first husband died, she married Frank Napolitano, and in 1980, they started a pizzeria. She served on the Norwalk City Council from 1986 to 1992, and also served one term as mayor, becoming the first Latino to do so. In 1992, she was elected to the California Assembly. She ran for Rep. Esteban Torres’ seat in 1998, winning the primary by 618 votes and easily winning the general. Napolitano is a former chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and has been more consensus-oriented on immigration legislation than some members. As a member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, she has focused on rail safety. When Democrats took majority control in 2007, she became the chairman of the Natural Resources Committee’s Water and Power Subcommittee. During California’s severe drought in 2009 and 2010, she held hearings to examine possible long-term solutions. Napolitano is also involved in issues related to the mentally ill, an interest sparked by a report that one in three Hispanic girls contemplates suicide. She has not been seriously challenged for reelection.

## Stance on issues

- Strongly favors expanding Obamacare
- Strongly opposes absolute right to gun ownership
- Strongly favors a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants
- Strongly opposes privatizing Social Security
- Strongly favors prioritization of green energy

## Committees

- Committee on Natural Resources
- .....
- Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
- .....

## Election results

2016 General		
Grace Napolitano (D)	Votes: 114,926	Percent: 61.6%
Roger Hernandez (D)	Votes: 71,720	Percent: 38.4%

Sources: National Journal Almanac, 2016; Ballotpedia, 2016.



# Rep. Darren Soto



## Extended biography

Darren Soto was born in 1978 in Ringwood, New Jersey to a Puerto Rican father and an Italian-American mother. He worked for Prudential Insurance in finance from 1998 to 2001 while attending Rutgers University, graduating with a bachelor's in economics in 2000 and receiving his law degree from George Washington University in 2004. Soto practiced as a commercial and civil rights attorney in Central Florida prior to serving as a state representative from 2007 until 2012. After redistricting in 2012, Soto ran for state senator in the newly created 14th district and won the general election with over 70% of the vote. In his first term as state senator, Soto passed legislation expediting the time for immigrant children receiving deferred action to acquire a driver's license, which was vetoed by Governor Rick Scott, sparking statewide protests. Soto also played an integral role in reducing the statute of limitations from five years to one year for banks to collect foreclosure debt. In 2014, he passed historic legislation giving Florida Supreme Court authority to admit immigrant lawyers into the Florida Bar. In 2015, he was instrumental in securing \$11.9 million in funding for Valencia College's Poinciana campus, \$20 million to restore the Kissimmee River and proposing legislation to ban fracking in Florida. He is the first Puerto Rican from Florida elected to Congress.

## Biography

Position Elected:  
Representative, FL-9  
Elected: 2016

Education:  
Rutgers University, B.A.  
2000; George Washington  
University, J.D. 2004

Religion: Catholic

Family: Married (Amanda)

Contact: (202) 225-9889  
LHOB Room 1429  
Washington, DC 20515

## Stance on Issues

- Strongly favors stricter gun regulations
- Strongly favors abortion rights
- Opposes privatization of Social Security
- Supports banning fracking on public lands
- Opposes the Trans-Pacific Partnership
- Strongly favors prioritizing green energy
- Supports protections against LGBT discrimination in employment, housing and education
- Strongly favors pathway to citizenship

## Committees

Committee on Natural Resources

Committee on Agriculture

## Election results

### 2016 General

Darren Soto (D)	Votes: 195,311	Percent: 57.5%
Wayne Liebnitzky (R)	Votes: 144,450	Percent: 42.5%

Sources: Ballotpedia, 2017; National Journal Research, 2017.

# Rep. Luis Gutiérrez



## Extended biography

Luis Gutiérrez, a Democrat elected in 1992 and the first Hispanic member of Congress from Illinois, has for years been the House's most vocal advocate for comprehensive immigration reform, which he likens to the civil rights struggle. Gutiérrez is of Puerto Rican descent and grew up in Chicago. As a student at Northeastern Illinois University in the 1970s, he joined a protest over the lack of basic English classes for students from other countries, which ended up with the protesters taking over an administration building. Gutiérrez worked as a teacher for two years in Puerto Rico after college. When he returned to Chicago, he worked as a cab driver and social worker. In the House, Gutiérrez has staked out liberal positions, and is known for his feisty, blunt style. Gutiérrez has traveled the country appearing at rallies and other events—occasionally getting arrested—in his quest for a bill that gives illegal immigrants a potential path to citizenship. In the 113th Congress (2013-14), Gutiérrez again played a leading role on immigration. Gutiérrez has weighed in on Puerto Rican issues. He stoutly opposed the Democratic leadership's bill mandating a referendum on the current commonwealth status in Puerto Rico, and, if that were rejected, giving Puerto Rican voters a choice between the current status and independence. "This bill is not the product of consensus. It does not provide for true self-determination. The two-step process in the bill is designed to craft an artificial majority for statehood," he argued. The House passed the bill in April 2010, but it died in the Senate.

## Biography

Currently:  
Rep., Illinois (4)  
Elected: 1992

Education:  
NE IL U., B.A. 1975

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Married (Soraida Aracho), 2 children; 1 grandchild

Contact: (202) 225-8203  
Rayburn House 2408  
Washington, DC 20515

## Stance on issues

- Opposes Congressional pay raises
- Supports higher FDIC charges for big banks and lower fees for community banks
- Strongly supports path to citizenship
- Strongly favors comprehensive immigration reform
- Strongly opposes expanding free trade
- Strongly favors economic stimulus
- Strongly favors higher taxes on the wealthy
- Strongly favors green energy

## Committees

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence

Committee on Judiciary

## Election results

### 2016 General

Luis Gutiérrez (incumbent)	Votes: 171,297	Percent: 171,297
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Sources: National Journal Almanac, 2016; Ballotpedia 2016.

# Sen. Robert Menendez



## Extended biography

Robert Menendez, New Jersey's senior senator, was appointed by Democratic Gov. Jon Corzine in January 2006, and won election to a full term 10 months later. Ambitious and hard-driving, he is admired—if not warmly regarded—for his strategic savvy and prodigious fundraising. He serves as top Democrat on the Foreign Relations Committee after having been its chairman. He was elected to the school board in 1974, at age 20. Menendez was elected mayor in 1986, and elected to the Assembly in 1987 and Senate in 1991; he served both as mayor and legislator, which had been a common practice in New Jersey, until his 1992 election to Congress. In the House, he was a strong supporter of anti-Fidel Castro legislation. After Sen. Jon Corzine was elected governor, he appointed Menendez to his Senate seat in January 2006. In the Senate, Menendez became Foreign Affairs' chairman in February 2013. Before claiming the Foreign Relations gavel, Menendez had spent his Senate career at the center of numerous big issues. He took part in bipartisan discussions aimed at coming up with a comprehensive immigration bill, but walked out in May 2007. When immigration suddenly became a front-burner issue during the 2012 election season, Menendez became part of a bipartisan group of eight senators that secretly crafted a comprehensive reform proposal. In the 2008 election season, Menendez was the deputy director of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, taking over the chairmanship in 2010, and relinquishing the position in 2012.

## Biography

Currently:  
Senator, NJ  
Appointed: 2006

Education:  
St. Peter's Col. B.A. '76,  
Rutgers Law Schl. J.D. '79

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Divorced (Jane),  
2 children

Contact: (202) 224-4744  
Hart Senate Office 528  
Washington, DC 20510

## Stance on issues

- Supports Obamacare expansion
- Opposes absolute right to gun ownership
- Supports unrestricted abortion rights
- Favors higher taxes on the wealthy
- Supports green energy initiatives
- Supports same-sex marriage
- Favors stricter punishment to reduce crime
- Supports marijuana legalization

## Committees

Committee on Foreign Relations

Committee on Banking, Housing & Urban Affairs

Committee on Finance

## Election results

### 2016 General

Robert Menendez (D)    Votes: 1,985,783    Percent: 58.0%

Joe Kyrillos (R)    Votes: 1,329,405    Percent: 39.0%

Sources: National Journal Almanac, 2016; Ballotpedia, 2016.

# Rep. Albio Sires



## Extended biography

Democrat Albio Sires (SEAR-eez), replaced Democrat Robert Menendez after he was appointed to the Senate in January 2006. Like Menendez, Sires is a Cuban-American who has long been a political player in New Jersey's Hudson County, and he concentrates on issues important to that area—improving roads and bridges, as well as taking a tough stance against Cuba's Castro regime. On his fourth try, he was elected mayor of West New York as a Republican in 1995, and held that post until 2006. He switched parties in 1999 and, with the support of party leaders, defeated a veteran Democratic incumbent in the primary to win a state House seat (dual office-holding was then a common practice in New Jersey). With support from newly elected Democratic Gov. Jim McGreevey in 2002, he became speaker of the Assembly. After newly elected Democratic Gov. Jon Corzine appointed Menendez to replace him in the U.S. Senate, Sires became the front-runner for the House seat. Sires won the primary against Joe Vas 72%-28%. In the general election, Republicans nominated John Guarini, who lost 78%-19%. Sires succeeded Menendez as the only Cuban-American House member from a state other than Florida (Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas joined that group in 2013). Sires has been reelected since then. In the House, Sires has a liberal voting record, ranking in the middle of the pack among New Jersey's House Democrats. In the 2010 election, Sires was one of the vice chairs of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, in charge of member participation and outreach.

## Biography

Currently:  
Rep., NJ (8)  
Elected: 2006

Education:  
St. Peter's Col., B.A. 1974  
Middlebury Col., M.A., 1985

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Married (Adrienne),  
1 stepchild

Contact: (202) 225-7919  
2342 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

## Stance on Issues

- Supports affordable housing
- Supports sanctions on Cuba
- Supports high penalties for identity theft
- Supports legislation to revitalize urban parks

## Committees

Committee on Foreign Affairs

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

## Election results

### 2016 General

Albio Sires (D)	Votes: 134,733	Percent: 77.0%
Agha Khan (R)	Votes: 32,337	Percent: 18.5%

Sources: National Journal Almanac, 2016. Ballotpedia 2016.

# Rep. Ben Ray Luján



## Extended biography

A seventh-generation New Mexican, Ben Ray Luján is the son of Ben Luján, a former state House speaker and legendary figure in state politics who died in 2012. The younger Luján has sometimes been criticized for ascending on the strength of his family connections, and he has sought to distinguish himself by focusing on complex topics important to the state, especially energy and technology. He joined the Congressional Progressive Caucus, but unlike some of its members, has steered clear of partisan rhetoric and concentrated on state-specific matters. Luján combined his caucus and whip duties in early 2013 by joining the effort to pass comprehensive immigration reform. He secured a seat on the Energy and Commerce Committee in 2013, giving him a more prominent perch from which to work on two of his pet causes: alternative energy and Los Alamos National Laboratory's non-nuclear weapons scientific research. He would like to see more federal funding move directly to the labs instead of through the Energy Department's National Nuclear Security Administration. He unsuccessfully tried to amend the fiscal 2013 energy and water spending bill to redirect \$21.9 million from the NASA administrator's office to defense cleanup work at the national laboratories.

## Biography

Currently:  
Representative, NM-3  
Elected: 2005

Education:  
NM Highlands U., B.B.A.  
2007

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Single

Contact: (202) 225-6190  
RHOB Room 2231  
Washington, DC 20515

## Stance on issues

- Supports immigration reform
- Opposes the absolute right to gun ownership
- Supports same-sex marriage
- Opposes vouchers for school choice
- Supports Obamacare
- Supports clean energy
- Opposes privatizing social security

## Committees

Committee on Energy and Commerce

## Election results

### 2016 General

Ben Ray Luján (D)	Votes: 170,612	Percent: 62.4%
Michael H. Romero (R)	Votes: 102,730	Percent: 37.6%

Sources: National Journal Almanac, 2017; Ballotpedia, 2017.

# Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto



## Extended biography

Catherine Cortez Masto was born in Las Vegas, Nevada of half Italian, half Mexican descent. Her father served as Clark County Commissioner and as an attorney for the county. Cortez Masto would follow in her father's footsteps, pursuing first an undergraduate degree in business administration before getting her law degree from Gonzaga University. She joined the U.S. District Court, District of Nevada in 1991 before moving to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit in 1994. In addition to these positions, Cortez Masto served as the chief of staff to former Nevada Democratic Governor Bob Miller, while also serving as an assistant to the United States attorney general. Both of those positions ended in 2002, at which point she began work as an assistant county manager for Clark County on issues relating to juvenile detention alternatives and child services. After receiving more votes than any other statewide candidate, Cortez Masto became Nevada's attorney general in 2007. Throughout her tenure as attorney general, Cortez Masto focused on issues related to combatting meth manufacturing and sale, neglect of the elderly, and strengthening laws against sex trafficking and violence against women. Cortez Masto could not run for a third term in 2014 due to lifetime term limits on the attorney general position. She was elected to the U.S. Senate in November 2016, defeating Republican challenger Joe Heck.

## Biography

Position Elected:  
Senator, NV  
Elected: 2016

Education:  
University of Nevada-Reno,  
B.S. 1986;  
Gonzaga University, J.D.  
1990

Religion: Catholic

Family: Married (Paul)

Contact: (202) 224-3542  
RSOB Room 204  
Washington, DC 20510

## Stance on issues

- Supports investing in the clean energy industry
- Supports ending tax inversions for corporations
- Opposes privatizing Social Security
- Supports a pathway to citizenship for illegal immigrants
- Supports equal pay for equal work legislation

## Committees

Committee on Indian Affairs  
.....  
Special Committee on Aging  
.....  
Committee on Rules & Administration  
.....  
Committee on Energy & Natural Resources  
.....  
Committee on Banking, Housing & Urban Affairs  
.....  
Committee on Commerce, Science & Transportation

## Election results

### 2016 General

Catherine Cortez Masto (D)	Votes: 521,994	Percent: 47.1%
Joe Heck (R)	Votes: 495,079	Percent: 44.7%

Sources: Ballotpedia, 2017; National Journal Almanac, 2017.



# Rep. Ruben Kihuen



## Extended biography

Ruben Kihuen was born on April 25, 1980 in Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico. He moved to the United States when he was eight years old. Kihuen's father was a labor worker in Orange County, California before the family moved to Las Vegas in the 1990s when he became a middle school science teacher. Kihuen graduated from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas with a bachelor of science in education. In high school and college he volunteered for the campaigns of Senator Harry Reid, Virginia Governor Mark Warner, and Houston Mayor Lee Brown. As of 2011, Kihuen was enrolled in the master of public administration degree at the University of Oklahoma. In 2002 Kihuen became a deputy field director for the Nevada Democratic Party then served as regional representative to Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid. He also worked as a student recruiter and academic advisor for the College of Southern Nevada. He was first elected to the State Assembly in 2006 and served two terms before running for Nevada Senate in 2010. In 2013 he served as the state's majority whip for the Democrats in the Senate. In 2016, Kihuen defeated Republican first term incumbent Crescent Hardy for the House seat representing Nevada's 4th congressional district. Kihuen was also the only 2016 House recruit to speak at the Democratic National Convention.

## Biography

Position Elected:  
Representative, NV-4  
Elected: 2016

Education:  
University of Nevada, B.S.,  
2004;  
University of Oklahoma

Religion: Catholic

Contact: (202) 225-9894  
CHOB Room 313  
Washington, DC 20515

## Stance on issues

- Strongly favors free college education
- Strongly favors raising the minimum wage
- Supports a pathway to citizenship for undocumented residents
- Opposes the repeal of the ACA

## Committees

Committee on Financial Services

## Election results

### 2016 General

Ruben Kihuen (D)	Votes: 128,985	Percent: 48.5%
Crescent Hardy (R)	Votes: 118,328	Percent: 44.5%

Sources: rubenforcongress.com; Ballotpedia, 2017; National Journal Almanac, 2017; Lindsey McPherson, "Democrat Ruben Kihuen unseats Crescent Hardy in Nevada's 4th district," Roll Call, Nov. 9, 2016.

# Rep. Adriano Espaillat



## Extended biography

Adriano Espaillat was born on September 27, 1954 in Santiago, Dominican Republic. He graduated from Bishop Dubois High School in New York City in 1974 and Queens College with a B.S. in political science in 1978. After graduating, Espaillat completed postgraduate courses in public administration at New York University and the Rutgers University Leadership for Urban Executives Institute. Early in his public service career, Espaillat was involved in legal affairs, serving as a court services coordinator at the NYC Criminal Justice Agency and becoming a certified resolution mediator for the Washington Heights Inwood Conflict Resolutions and Medication Center. In the 1990s, he served on Community Planning Board 12, as director of the Washington Heights Victims Services Community Office, and as director of Project Right Start, a national initiative designed to combat substance abuse by educating parents of pre-K kids. In 1996, Espaillat ran for New York State Assembly and defeated 16-year incumbent John Murtaugh, making him the first Dominican-American elected to a state legislature. In 2002, he was elected chair of the New York State Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic and Asian Legislative Caucus. In 2010, he ran for New York State Senate and defeated Assemblyman Guillermo Linares. After incumbent Charles Rangel decided not to run for reelection, Espaillat filed to run for Congress where he beat eight Democratic challengers with 36% of the vote. He later went on to win the general election, beating Republican nominee Tony Evans with a vote of 89% to 7%.

## Biography

Position Elected:  
Representative, NY-13  
Elected: 2016

Education:  
Queens University, B.S.,  
1978

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Married (Mathera  
Madera), 2 children

Contact: (202) 225-4365  
LHOB Room 1630  
Washington, DC 20515

## Stance on issues

- Favors expanding Obamacare
- Strongly favors prioritizing green energy
- Strongly opposes vouchers for school choice
- Strongly opposes privatized Social Security
- Favors strong regulation of the fracking industry at the federal level

## Committees

Committee on Small Business

Committee on Education & the Workforce

Committee on Foreign Affairs

## Election results

### 2016 General

Adriano Espaillat (D)	Votes: 207,194	Percent: 88.8%
Tony Evans (R)	Votes: 16,089	Percent: 6.9%
Daniel Rivera (G)	Votes: 8,248	Percent: 3.5%

Sources: Adriano Espaillat, "Adriano Espaillat," 2016; New York Senate, "About Adriano Espaillat," 2016; Ballotpedia, "Adriano Espaillat," 2017; National Journal Almanac, 2017.

# Rep. José Serrano



## Extended biography

Democrat José Serrano, who won his seat in a 1990 special election, is known for his jesting about everything from Republicans to his thick mustache. But he gets serious in going against his party when he considers it important for his district—among the country’s poorest—or his native Puerto Rico. A native of Mayagüez, Puerto Rico, he grew up in the Mill Brook project in Mott Haven. After serving in the Army, he worked at a bank and as a school administrator. Serrano moved up while other Bronx politicians fell by the wayside because of corruption. He was elected to the New York Assembly in 1974 and chaired its Education Committee. In 1985, he ran for Bronx borough president, bucking the Democratic organization, and nearly won. Then in January 1990, U.S. Rep. Robert García of the South Bronx resigned and paved the way for Serrano’s election to the House. Serrano once described himself as being “to the left of the left,” and he has one of the most liberal voting records in the House. He has long championed legislation to repeal the 22nd Amendment to allow presidents to serve more than two terms in office. As a senior member of the Appropriations Committee, he focuses on bringing as much federal money as he can to his economically struggling district. He chaired its Financial Services Subcommittee when the Democrats controlled Congress and is now its ranking Democrat.

## Biography

Currently:  
Rep., NY (15)  
Elected: 1990

Education:  
Lehman Col., B.A., 1961

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Divorced (Mary Staucet), 5 children

Contact: (202) 225-4361  
2354 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

## Stance on Issues

- Opposed the bailout for the financial industry
- Supported cleaning up the Bronx River
- Supports a two-step process on Puerto Rico’s status, and applauded the territory’s vote to become a state
- Supports Latino immigrants

## Committees

Committee on Appropriations

## Election results

### 2016 General

José Serrano (D)	Votes: 165,688	Percent: 95.3%
Alejandro Vega (R)	Votes: 6,129	Percent: 3.5%

Sources: National Journal Almanac, 2016. Ballotpedia 2016.

# Rep. Nydia Velázquez



## Extended biography

Nydia Velázquez, elected in 1992, is the ranking Democrat on the Small Business Committee and the first Puerto Rican woman elected to Congress. Her nickname is "La Luchadora" -- "The Fighter." She grew up in Puerto Rico as one of nine children of sugarcane field workers. Although her father never finished elementary school, he was a political leader in her hometown of Yabucoa and inspired her to pursue politics as a career. She studied political science at the University of Puerto Rico and taught there in the 1970s. After graduate school in New York City, she went to work for Rep. Edolphus Towns of New York. In 1983, she became the first Hispanic woman to be elected to the New York City Council. When the 12th District was created in 1992, Velázquez was a major contender in the Democratic primary but had to overcome Rep. Stephen Solarz, who had decided to run in the new district rather than in the Manhattan-dominated 8th or in the 9th District, where incumbent Democrat Charles Schumer had a heavy advantage. Velázquez beat Solarz 34% to 28%. She won in November with 77% of the vote. In the House, Velázquez has a solidly liberal voting record, with occasional pro-business votes on economic issues. As the panel's chairman in March 2009, she praised the Obama administration for requiring the nation's largest banks to report monthly on how much lending they do to small businesses.

## Biography

Currently:  
Representative, NY-7  
Elected: 1992

Education:  
U. of PR, B.A. 1974;  
N.Y.U., M.A. 1976

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Divorced

Contact: (202) 225-2361  
RHOB Room 2302  
Washington, DC 20515

## Stance on Issues

- She has been a leading voice on issues related to Puerto Rico, including the debate on changing the commonwealth's status
- Dedicated to comprehensive immigration reform
- Committed to helping small businesses recover from the recession

## Committees

House Committee on Small Business

House Committee on Financial Services

## Election results

### 2016 General

Nydia Velázquez (D)	Votes: 172,146	Percent: 90.8%
Jose Luis Fernandez (R)	Votes: 17,478	Percent: 9.2%

Sources: National Journal Almanac, 2016; Ballotpedia, 2016.

# Rep. Filemon Vela



## Extended biography

Democrat Filemon Vela won the 34th District House seat in part on the strength of his illustrious political family. Brownsville's federal courthouse bears the name of his late father, a U.S. district judge for more than two decades, and his mother was the city's first elected woman mayor. Vela was born in Harlingen, at the southern tip of Texas, and raised in nearby Brownsville. After receiving a bachelor's degree from Georgetown University and a law degree from the University of Texas, he returned to Brownsville to practice law. As a civil attorney, Vela represented school districts seeking restitution for shoddy construction by independent contractors. In one case, he recovered money spent by the district on a poorly built facility; in another, he won recompense for a malfunctioning air-quality control system. He was a civil attorney for 25 years. When Vela launched his campaign, some political observers were surprised by the "D" next to his name. His wife is a Republican justice on the Texas Court of Appeals, and Vela acknowledged that he has at times backed GOP office-seekers. But he aligned himself with the Democratic agenda, calling for "a realistic and fair way" to deal with illegal immigration, protection of Medicare and Social Security benefits, and tax cuts for small businesses as an incentive to hire workers. Vela is considered a moderate left of center voter within the Democratic party and was reelected easily in 2016.

## Biography

Currently:  
Representative, TX-34  
Elected: 2012

Education:  
Georgetown U., B.A., 1985  
U. of Texas, J.D., 1987

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Married

Contact: (202) 225-9901  
Cannon House Office 437  
Washington, DC 20515

## Stance on Issues

- Supports tax cuts for small businesses to encourage hiring more workers
- Supports government funding for the development of renewable energy
- Opposes the federal regulation of greenhouse gas emissions
- Opposes gun-control legislation
- Opposes the repealing of Obamacare
- Favors a pathway to citizenship for illegal immigrants
- Favors higher taxes on the wealthy

## Committees

Committee on Agriculture

Committee on Homeland Security

## Election results

### 2016 General

Filemon Vela (D)	Votes: 104,638	Percent: 62.7%
Rey Gonzalez Jr. (R)	Votes: 62,323	Percent: 37.3%

Sources: National Journal Almanac, 2016. Ballotpedia 2016.

# Rep. Henry Cuellar



## Extended biography

Henry Cuellar, elected in 2004, is one of the most conservative Hispanic Democrats, with a voting record putting him near the center of the House as a whole. But he has shown enough loyalty to his party to win a coveted seat on the Appropriations Committee in 2013. Cuellar (KWAY-ar) was the oldest of eight children of migrant workers who had only elementary school educations. He graduated from Georgetown University and the University of Texas law school, and he later got a Ph.D. in government from UT. From his base in Laredo, he served in the Texas House from 1986 to 2000, where he helped to author the Texas Grant college aid program. In 2001, Republican Gov. Rick Perry appointed him secretary of State even though he is a Democrat. Cuellar resigned in 2002 to run against veteran Republican Rep. Henry Bonilla in the old 23rd District. He got a big boost from a Bonilla gaffe; Bonilla claimed he didn't need Laredo to win, and in response, the Webb County Republican chairman endorsed Cuellar. Cuellar attacked Bonilla for his votes against funding for the State Children's Health Insurance Program, the Family and Medical Leave Act, and Pell grants. In the House, Cuellar was the ninth most conservative Democrat in 2012, according to National Journal's annual rankings. He is a member of the rapidly shrinking Blue Dog Coalition of Democratic fiscal conservatives and was one of just 22 Democrats to support a failed amendment for a fiscal 2013 budget based on the recommendations of the Simpson-Bowles deficit reduction commission.

## Biography

Currently:  
Representative, TX-28  
Elected: 2004

Education:  
Georgetown U., B.S., 1976  
U. of Texas, J.D., 1981,  
Ph.D., 1998  
Texas A & M, M.A., 1982

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Married, 2 children

Contact: (202) 225-1640  
Rayburn House Office 2209  
Washington, DC 20515

## Stance on issues

- Opposed the Dodd-Frank financial overhaul
- Strongly favors a pathway to citizenship for illegal immigrants
- Supports pro-life legislation
- Supports the government funding of renewable energy
- Opposes the repeal of the Affordable Care Act
- Supports second amendment rights

## Committees

Committee on Appropriations

## Election results

### 2016 General

Henry Cuellar (D)	Votes: 122,086	Percent: 66.2%
Zeffen Hardin (R)	Votes: 57,740	Percent: 31.3%

Sources: National Journal Almanac, 2016. Ballotpedia 2016.



# Rep. Vicente Gonzalez



## Extended biography

Vicente Gonzalez was born to a military family in Corpus Christi, Texas. His mother stressed the importance of education, which motivated Gonzalez to go back to school and get his GED. Afterwards, Gonzalez attended community college classes and eventually earned his B.A. at Embry Riddle Aeronautical University at Corpus Christi Naval Air Station. Soon after receiving his B.A., Gonzalez continued to heed his mother's advice, pursuing a law degree at Texas A&M. While in law school, Gonzalez interned in a Congressional office to learn more about government. After graduating from law school, Gonzalez founded his own law firm, V. Gonzalez and Associates P.C. The firm focuses on business litigation, catastrophic accidents and property damage. Gonzalez has taken on several major cases including helping South Texas school districts recover millions of dollars from contractors who misspent bond money. Gonzalez announced his candidacy for Texas's 15th congressional district in November 2015 after Rep. Rubén Hinojosa (D) announced he was retiring. Gonzalez faced off against Edinburg School Board Member Juan "Sonny" Palacios, Jr in the Democratic primary. Gonzalez largely self-financed his campaign so he would not have to accept corporate contributions. Even though his campaign was self-financed, he outspent his rival substantially. He won the Democratic primary with 66% of the vote, and he went on to defeat Tim Westley in the general election.

## Biography

Position Elected:  
Representative, TX-15  
Elected: 2016

Education:  
Embry Riddle Aeronautical  
University, B.A., 1992;  
Texas A&M University, J.D.,  
1996

Religion: Catholic

Family: Married (Lorena  
Saenz)

Contact: (202) 225-2531  
CHOB Room 113  
Washington, DC 20515

## Stance on issues

- Supports Obamacare but wants to reform it to expand access and contain costs
- Strongly opposes privatized Social Security
- Supports paying for the first two years of higher education
- Strongly supports military spending
- Supports paid family and maternity leave

## Committees

Committee on Financial Services

## Election results

### 2016 General

Vicente Gonzalez (D)	Votes: 101,712	Percent: 57.3%
Tim Westley (R)	Votes: 66,877	Percent: 37.7%

Sources: Ballotpedia, 2017; vicengonzalesforcongress.com; National Journal Almanac, 2017.

# Rep. Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan



## Extended biography

Gregorio Sablan, the first delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, was elected in 2008. His grandfather was the first elected mayor of Saipan, Sablan's hometown, and his uncle was the city's longest-serving mayor. At age 11, he moved to Micronesia to attend boarding school, the only ethnic Chamorro there. He attended the University of Guam and the University of California, Berkeley, but did not obtain a degree. Afterward, he worked for Democratic Gov. Carlos Camacho and served in the legislature from 1982 to 1986. Sablan also worked in D.C. for Hawaii Democratic Sen. Daniel Inouye before returning to Saipan to work for Democratic Gov. Froilan Tenorio. Later, he was appointed executive director of the Commonwealth Election Commission. In 2008, Congress voted to give the CNMI a non-voting delegate in Congress. Sablan ran as an independent against eight candidates, beating his closest opponent by 357 votes. Sablan has been reelected by increasingly wide margins. Sablan has had some legislative successes; in 2011, the House unanimously passed his bill giving the CNMI ownership of submerged lands three miles out to sea, and in 2012, he successfully amended the defense authorization bill, requiring that the CNMI's and other territories' flags be displayed when military units display state flags. In 2013, he became the ranking Democrat on the Natural Resources subcommittee with jurisdiction over insular affairs. He seeks to extend U.S. voting protections to the territories and has urged the Census Bureau to include the territories in its Census of Governments, which it hasn't done since 1982.

## Biography

Currently: Rep.,  
Commonwealth of Northern  
Mariana Islands (Ind.)  
Elected: Nov. 2008

Education: U of Guam, U of  
HI, Manoa (no degree)

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Married (Andrea  
C.), 6 children

(202) 225-2646  
RHOB Rm. 2411  
Washington D.C., 20515

## Stance on issues

- Seeks inclusion or improvement of allocations to the CNMI, particularly in energy grants
- Supports developing education infrastructure
- Supports greater federal funding for healthcare

## Committees

Natural Resources Committee

Veterans' Affairs Committee

Committee on Education and the Workforce

## Election results

### 2016 General

Gregorio Sablan  
(Incumbent)

Votes: 10,605

Percent: 100%

Sources: Ballotpedia, 2017; National Journal Almanac, 2017.