

CA COUNCIL OF ASLA LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



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Greetings to members, practitioners, and sponsors. The last part of the year continues to usher in big changes in the legislative space.

[The California Council of the American Society of Landscape Architects \(CCASLA\)](#) continues to be busy representing you in Sacramento each legislative session. The CCASLA board is made of two representatives from each of the four California chapters. We also rely on the very capable lobbyist team Jason Ikerd and Bridget McGowan from Edelstein Gilbert Robson & Smith, LLC (EGRS) for bill tracking and council.

Each year board leadership rotates among the four chapters, and I am very pleased to announce that **ASLA San Diego will lead the CCASLA board in the upcoming legislative session.** In fact, the San Diego region is well represented with Jon Wreschinsky as LATC chairman and Tracy Hollingworth as CCASLA's executive director. DJ Taylor (DeLorenzo Intl.) has moved into his tenure as President and State Director, and I serve as the Vice-President. This is my first year and first term, so I'm ramping up and dusting off my advocacy hat to monitor legislation and facilitate outreach.

The result of November's election has had a substantial impact to the state legislative body. The great resignation seen in the job sector has also included the state body politic. Over a quarter of the state assembly opted not to run or where termed out of office. This shift has

the Capitol legislature welcoming one of the largest freshman classes of lawmakers in recent memory. New representatives will make up over 25% of the body with Democrats continuing to expand their super-majority in Sacramento.

This fact will probably stay the political course and leave policy and legislative momentums little changed. The legislators were sworn in on December 5th, and very soon thereafter, a flurry of bills were filled before the winter recess. We are beginning to track bills and are keenly observing emerging policies that affect our industry, professions, and businesses. Recently introduced bills reflect a variety of measures dealing with climate resiliency, coastal development rules, and carbon mitigation. EGRS's staff will continue to assist CCASLA in focusing our efforts supporting and advocating for legislation affecting landscape architects in California. The new legislative session will begin in earnest when they reconvene on January 4, 2023.

With many new lawmakers in Sacramento, there was little change to the status quo in San Diego County, with one exception. District 38 State Senator and former Encinitas Mayor Catherine Blakespear replaces the termed-out Pat Bates. Senator Bates was a reliable voice supporting most of our industry causes and agenda. I'm certain building advocacy with Senator Blakespear will be a straightforward task for the chapter.

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Nonetheless, this recent election has renewed a call to advance our professional mission and redouble our efforts cultivating grass-roots relationships. **ASLA San Diego has fostered advocacy relationships with State Assemblymember, Tasha Boerner Horvath, and Congressmen Mike Levin and Scott Peters. Encinitas Councilwoman, Joy Lyndes, FASLA is a chapter member and past Director of CCASLA.**

Beyond the coast and North County, the chapter has recognized there are other local advocates in government we need to reach out to. We need to have legislators aware of our industry and how far the breadth of our collective expertise stretches in the protection of public health, safety, and welfare.

CCASLA and the San Diego chapter needs your help. We need your help to continue to stress the value of landscape architects with local, state and national elected officials, and by extension, the agencies that we deal with that often create regulations that complicate or impede our ability to help our clients.

Grassroot advocacy starts in our own backyard. Building a legislative relationship starts with contacting your elected representative. I urge all members to take time to contact your State representative and member Congress to make an introduction with an email or meeting local office staffers to have our profession of landscape architecture known and understood.

Opportunities may develop through local civic or charitable organizations, political functions, town hall meetings, or by requesting a meeting. This contact can evolve quickly into relationships that permit discussion of licensure, public policy issues, and other concerns. Please know this does not need to be a solo effort. CCASLA and the Chapter are here to assist and encourage your volunteerism. Past and present board members have experience meeting with legislative staff and advocating at local, state, and federal levels to educate them regarding the wide range of areas that landscape architects practice and the value they provide society in addressing climate change and resiliency to protect our communities during droughts, fire events and other natural disasters.

Starting that first legislative relationship to facilitate understanding is the first step in building up to the 'Policy Ask' when the time is right. Our chapter has always been recognized as an innovator and we intend to meet continued challenges that arise with potential to affect our industry.

Now is the time to be sure our voices are heard, that we have a seat at the decision table, and in the process educate our elected officials. Please visit CCASLA at cc-asla.org to learn more on advocacy and identify your legislator. The Chapter will be ramping up efforts to foster new relationships and renew old acquaintances. Please contact [me](#) or [DJ Taylor](#) to lend your voice to this outreach.