

Deal Makers & Deal Breakers: An Update on California's Health Care Reform Efforts

Speaker Biographies

Greg Lucas

Greg Lucas has been a California political writer and satirist for more than 20 years. He's leveled his bipartisan wit and humor at Republicans and Democrats – and, not infrequently, himself.

Greg has spoken to educators, business leaders and numerous trade associations about the good, bad, and ugly of California politics. He has also counseled companies in improving their writing and communications.

During 19 years covering the state Capitol for the San Francisco Chronicle, Greg wrote nearly 3,000 articles on everything from presidential politics to the introduction of prune burgers in school cafeterias.

Greg has written about gambling, transportation, health care, growth, education, and nearly every DBI – Dull But Important – issue that has confronted public policy-makers over the past two decades. His most challenging job, however, was ride operator on Pirates of the Caribbean at Disneyland.

He has a Bachelor's degree in Communications from Stanford University and a Masters degree in Professional Writing – as opposed to amateurish writing – from the University of Southern California. But he has never let academics stand in the way of his education.

Ana Matosantos

Ana Matosantos joined Governor Schwarzenegger's office in January 2007. As deputy legislative secretary, Ms. Matosantos' portfolio covers veteran affairs, health, and human services. Since joining the governor's office, she has worked closely with stakeholders, legislators, and others to develop legislation that will comprehensively reform California's health care system.

Prior to joining the governor's office Ms. Matosantos worked at the California Health and Human Services Agency beginning in August 2004. There, she advised agency secretary Kim Belshé on issues involving the Department of Health Services relating to public health, including obesity prevention, chronic disease management, and emergency preparedness. As assistant secretary, Ms. Matosantos played a key role in planning and developing the governor's recent Summit on Health, Nutrition and Obesity, as well as the administration's overall obesity prevention agenda. In addition, she secured commitments from some of the nation's leading businesses to take action to make California healthier.

Previously, Ms. Matosantos worked for the California Legislature, serving as a consultant to the Senate Budget Committee and Senate Committee on Health and Human Services.

Ms. Matosantos received her BA in political science and feminist studies from Stanford University.

Jean Ross

Jean Ross joined the California Budget Project (CBP) as its first executive director in 1995. The CBP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization established to promote a better understanding of state fiscal and economic policy issues and their impact on low and middle income Californians.

Her prior professional experience includes serving as principal consultant to the Assembly Revenue and Taxation Committee; senior consultant to the Assembly Human Services Committee, where she staffed the California Legislature's Joint Select Committee on the Changing Family; and assistant research director of the Service Employees International Union in Washington, DC, where she was responsible for coordinating the union's research on tax, budget, and employment policy issues.

Ms. Ross serves on the board of the Washington, DC-based Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy; the advisory board of the Tax Policy Center, a joint project of the Urban Institute and Brookings Institution; the advisory committee of California's Franchise Tax Board; the technical advisory committee of California's Economic Strategy Panel; and the board of the California Tax Reform Association.

Ms. Ross has a bachelor's degree from the University of California, Santa Cruz and a master's degree in City and Regional Planning, with a concentration in Regional Economics, from the University of California, Berkeley. Ms. Ross was selected as a Senior Fellow of the University of California, Los Angeles' School of Public Policy and Social Research in 2000-01.

Sumi Sousa

Sumi Sousa serves as the health care advisor to Assembly Speaker Fabian Núñez and oversees all health legislation and budget issues on his behalf in the California State Assembly.

In 1999, she was appointed executive director of the California Health Facilities Financing Authority by State Treasurer Philip Angelides. During her four years in that role, Ms. Sousa spearheaded innovative loan and grant programs to assist California's safety net providers in expanding their services to the state's uninsured and underserved populations.

Throughout her career, Ms. Sousa has concentrated primarily in health policy and state and local finance. She previously served as special assistant to San Francisco Mayor Willie L. Brown, Jr., handling the health and human service budgets for the City and County of San Francisco. She worked as a legislative staff person to the California State Assembly and California State Senate from 1991 – 1996, serving on the staffs of Assemblymember Phillip Isenberg, Senator Herschel Rosenthal, and the Assembly Committee on Revenue and Taxation.

Ms. Sousa is a member of the steering committee for the California Health Policy Forum.

Darrell Steinberg

Darrell Steinberg was elected on November 7, 2006, to the California State Senate, representing the 6th District, which includes the capital city of Sacramento, parts of Elk Grove and Citrus Heights. He chairs the Natural Resources and Water Committee, and also serves on the judiciary, health, environmental quality, and budget and fiscal review committees. He's also a member of Budget Subcommittee No. 2 on Resources and chairs the Senate Select Committee on High School Graduation. In addition, Steinberg is a Senate appointee to the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (chair), Wildlife Conservation Board, California Ocean Protection Council, and Legislative Blue Ribbon Commission on Autism (chair).

Prior to his election to the State Senate, Steinberg served three terms representing the 9th District of the State Assembly, which includes most of the capital city of Sacramento. During his tenure in the Assembly, Steinberg chaired the budget, appropriations, judiciary, and labor and employment committees. He also served as chair of the Select Committee on High Priority Schools and as a member of the housing and local government committees. He is the author and co-proponent of Proposition 63, which became the Mental Health Services Act, as well as some 70 additional laws covering a wide range of vital public policy issues.

Prior to his election to the State Assembly in 1998, Steinberg served on the Sacramento City Council. He also served as an employee rights attorney for the California State Employees Association for 10 years before working as an Administrative Law Judge and mediator.

Born in San Francisco, Steinberg earned a BA in economics at UCLA and a JD from UC Davis Law School.