

Speakers Biographies

LIZ ORTEGA, ASSEMBLYMEMBER, DISTRICT 20

A longtime labor and community leader, Assemblymember Liz Ortega has spent 20 years advocating for working families and healthy and safe communities across California. She represents Assembly District 20, which includes Hayward, San Leandro, Union City, portions of Dublin and Pleasanton, and the unincorporated communities of Ashland, Cherryland, Fairview, and San Lorenzo.

As Chair of the Assembly Labor and Employment Committee, Ortega is the voice for over 19 million workers in California. In addition, as Vice Chair of the California Legislative Latino Caucus, she also champions civil rights for Latinos and for all Californians.

Ortega grew up in Oakland, California, where her parents worked hard to contribute to their communities. Ortega had a passion for standing up for working people from a young age and built a career in the labor movement.

As the first Latina leader of the Alameda County Labor Council, Ortega brought together working people and community groups to win good wages, access to healthcare, and safe working conditions.

As a legislator, Ortega has focused on creating good jobs, expanding access to healthcare, and ensuring that every Californian who works hard can have a chance at a good life. Key achievements include:

- Provided California's high school students with instruction about their rights in the workplace as well as how to form a union.
- Secured low-cost Narcan to save thousands of lives from being lost to the Fentanyl crisis.
- Saved St. Rose Hospital, Hayward's only safety-net hospital and emergency room.
- Secured audit of Cal/OSHA, revealing significant issues with workplace safety enforcement.

As Chair of the Labor Committee, Ortega has focused on protecting employee rights, enforcing workplace safety laws, and cracking down on wage theft.

Ortega currently serves on the Assembly's Standing Committees on Budget, Insurance, and Privacy and Consumer Protection.

Her contributions to the community have been recognized with numerous awards, including the Fighting for Poverty Award from the California Association of Food Banks of Santa Cruz County. Ortega holds a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from the University of Phoenix.

TONY MILANO is the Executive Vice President and Chief Actuary for WCIRB. In 2005, he joined WCIRB as an actuarial researcher. From 2012 and up to his promotion to Chief Actuary in 2024, he led the Actuarial Services team, which included many of the core data collection, ratemaking and reporting functions. He now oversees the Actuarial Services, Actuarial Research and Data

Analytics teams, which includes responsibility for the WCIRB's Actuarial Committee and research agenda.

Mr. Milano is a Fellow of the Casualty Actuarial Society and a native of the California Bay Area. He is a recognized speaker in the industry and approaches issues with collaboration, strategic focus and a sense of humor.

JASON MARCUS is an applicant attorney with the law firm of Marcus & Pulley. He received his law degree from University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law and was admitted to the Bar in 2008. He has extensive experience in workers' compensation and is a certified specialist in workers' compensation per the State Bar of California Board of Legal Specialization. In addition to his law practice, he is heavily involved with the California Applicants' Attorneys Association. He is a past-president of CAAA and currently serves as the chair of CAAA's Legislative Committee.

GIDEON BAUM is the President of CWCI. He was hired by the Institute to assist in their research mission and was promoted to President in 2026. Prior to CWCI, Gideon worked as the Vice President of Policy at the California Hospital Association. Gideon also served as Staff Director for the Senate Committee on Labor, Public Employment and Retirement and served as a Committee Consultant with the State Senate for nearly 15 years.

Mr. Baum is a graduate of University of California at Los Angeles and University of Southern California.

ROBERT HARRISON, MD, MPH

Dr. Robert Harrison joined UCSF in 1984. He founded and directed UCSF Occupational Health Services for more than 15 years, and now is a senior attending physician. He has diagnosed and treated thousands of patients with work- and environmental-induced diseases and injuries. He also directs the worker tracking and investigation program for the California Department of Public Health.

Dr. Harrison received his B.A. from the University of Rochester and his M.D. from the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. He is board certified in both internal medicine and occupational medicine. He has served on the California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal/OSHA) Standards Board, and authored numerous publications in the area of occupational medicine. He is a clinical professor of medicine at UCSF.

LYN ASIO BOOZ is the Chief of the State of California Department of Industrial Relations Office of Self Insurance Plans (OSIP). She joined the Office of Self-Insurance Plans in July 2008 as the Northern California Audit Supervisor. Prior to that, she was an auditor for the DWC's Audit Unit from 2004 through 2008. She also worked for the Uninsured Benefit Trust Fund for 10 years.

She received an award for DWC. Outstanding Employee of the Year in 1998, and for UEF Employee of the Year in 2000.

**MARIZEN RAMIREZ, MPH, PhD, PROFESSOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL & OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND
ASSOCIATE DEAN OF FACULTY AFFAIRS AND INSTITUTIONAL EXCELLENCE**

With a strong academic background, she holds a Ph.D. in Epidemiology from the University of California at Los Angeles. Throughout her career, Marizen has held esteemed positions at multiple universities, including serving as academic and the Associate Dean for Research, as well as the Leon S. Robertson Professor of Injury Prevention, at the University of Minnesota's School of Public Health. She is recognized for her significant contributions to public health research, particularly in the field of injury prevention.

Dr. Ramirez received her B.A. from UC Berkeley, her M.P.H and Ph.D. from UCLA.
