

Forum Speakers

Kristin Olsen - California Assembly Member

Kristin Olsen was elected to the California State Assembly in November 2010. She represents the 25th Assembly District, which includes the communities of Angels Camp, Chowchilla, Hughson, Mammoth Lakes, Mariposa, Modesto, Oakdale, Oakhurst, Riverbank, Sonora, and Waterford.

Olsen has been appointed to serve as a member of the Assembly Insurance, Agriculture and Water, Parks & Wildlife committees and the Joint Sunset Review committee. She is also the Vice Chair of the Arts, Entertainment, Sports, Tourism and Internet Media committee.

Olsen has a passion for the businesses, communities and people of California's Central Valley and foothill communities. Born, raised, and now raising her own family in Modesto, Olsen is a committed and respected leader with a reputation for reform and hard work.

Olsen holds steadfast to her conservative principles including low taxes, attracting stable, good paying jobs to California and creating an environment that will allow businesses to thrive. Olsen also believes wholeheartedly in the principles of local control; keeping tax revenues working at the local level to provide the best schools, police and fire response, roads, parks, and other quality of life services citizens deserve.

First elected to the Modesto City Council in 2005 and re-elected in 2009, Olsen is a conservative lawmaker who understands the importance of stimulating business investment without the burdens of government-imposed taxes. Olsen voted against and defeated the ordinance that would have imposed a new fee on applications for business licenses. Olsen also partnered with business leaders in Modesto's manufacturing industry to establish an Economic Capacity Bank, helping to bring new business and create new jobs in Modesto.

As a Councilmember, Olsen chaired the Economic Development Committee and served on the City-County Liaison Committee. She previously served as Vice Chair of the Finance Committee and as a member of the Safety & Communities Committee. In addition to her work as a Councilmember, Olsen was the Assistant Vice President for Communications & Public Affairs at California State University, Stanislaus where she directed the University's marketing and communications programs.

Dr. Jim Riggs

Jim Riggs has an extensive background in community college leadership and instruction. He is currently the Professor of Community College Education at CSU Stanislaus where he teaches full-time in the University's Doctorate of Educational Leadership program, and supervises research in the areas of community college leadership and student success. Prior to joining the faculty at CSU Stanislaus, he served as the president of Columbia College, in Sonora, California from 1997 to 2007. Other leadership posts include serving as Vice President of Education and Student Services at Lincoln Land Community College, Springfield, Illinois; Executive Dean of the Clear Lake Campus of Yuba College; Dean of Instruction/Extended Education, Merced College; and Director of the Kachemak Campus of the University of Alaska. He began his career as a music and humanities instructor at Wenatchee Valley

College in Washington State. He also taught doctoral courses at the University of the Pacific and Sacramento State University, and has published articles on issues related to community college leadership.

Dr. Riggs obtained a doctorate in Higher Education Leadership and Curriculum from the University of Southern California and holds Masters and Bachelors degrees in music. He has been active in numerous educational civic and cultural organizations during his 30 year career in education.

Judy Heiman

Ms. Heiman is an analyst with the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO). The LAO provides non partisan fiscal and policy advice to the Legislature. The LAO is known for its fiscal and programmatic expertise and nonpartisan analyses of the state budget. Ms. Heiman specializes in higher education and her assignment includes the California State University system. Ms. Heiman earned her MBA from University of California, Berkeley.

Edward Krigbaum

Mr. Krigbaum is the author of the book *Relentless: The Socialist Attack on American Freedom*. Research for the book covered a time span of some 25 years, and included independent study in the area of Economics including studying Keynes, Galbraith, Samuelson, Friedman and Ludwig von Mises. Mr. Krigbaum is a graduate of Modesto High School, Modesto Junior College and San Jose State University.

Background Information

California State Assembly

Source: Wikipedia

The California State Assembly is the lower house of the California State Legislature. There are 80 members in the Assembly, representing an approximately equal number of constituents, with each district having a population of at least 420,000. Due to the state's large population and relatively small legislature, the Assembly has the largest population per representative ratio of any state legislature lower house and second largest of any legislative lower house in the United States; only the federal U.S. House of Representatives has a larger ratio. Since a ballot initiative in 1990, members of the Assembly are restricted by term limits, confining them to three two-year terms (six years).

Legislative Analyst Office

Source: LAO Website

The Legislative Analyst's Office has been providing fiscal and policy advice to the Legislature for more than 70 years. It is known for its fiscal and programmatic expertise and nonpartisan analyses of the state budget. The office serves as the "eyes and ears" for the Legislature to ensure that the executive branch is implementing legislative policy in a cost efficient and effective manner.

The LAO is overseen by the Joint Legislative Budget Committee (JLBC), a 16-member bipartisan committee. The office currently has a staff of 43 analysts and approximately 13 support staff. The analytical staff is divided into nine subject areas: Criminal Justice, State Finance, K-12 Education, Higher Education, Health, Environmental and Natural Resources, Social Services and Labor, General Government (including Local Government and Infrastructure), and Transportation, Business, and Housing.

Higher Education in California

Source- UC Santa Barbara Website

California’s public education options begin with state-funded pre-schools, continue with elementary and secondary schools, and culminate in colleges and universities (also referred to as post-secondary or higher education institutions). California has three public systems of higher education: (1) the California Community College system, (2) the California State University system, and (3) the University of California system. The chart below gives you a quick overview of each system

California’s system of Higher Education

System	Degrees Awarded	Admission
California Community College (CCC)	Certificates, 2-year Associate of Arts (AA) degrees	Open admission
California State University (CSU)	4-year baccalaureate degrees including Bachelor of Arts (BA) and Bachelor of Science (BS) degrees, graduate degrees including Master’s degrees (MA) and Joint Doctoral Programs (with UC) including Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degrees	Admits top 33.3% of California high school graduating class
University of California (UC)	4-year baccalaureate degrees, graduate degrees including Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degrees and professional degrees such as those in medicine (MD), law (JD), and veterinary science (DVM)	Admits top 12.5% of California’s high school graduating class