

JOHN A. PÉREZ
SPEAKER EMERITUS
CHAIR, UC BOARD OF REGENTS

John A. Pérez, Speaker Emeritus of the California Assembly, was appointed to the University of California Board of Regents in November 2014 by Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr. In May 2019, John's colleagues on the Board of Regents elected him to serve as Chair.

As a UC Regent, John has been committed to working toward “a more perfect university.” As Chair, John is focusing on ensuring UC provides an elite education without elitist barriers that keep qualified students out, having the cost of education at UC be affordable, equitable, and predictable, empowering individual campuses and chancellors, building upon the university's model of shared governance, turning UC into the kind of employer the university encourages others to be, and making sure every cohort at UC better reflects the people of California.

As Board Chair, John assisted in creating five Regental working groups, including the Working Group on Innovation Transfer & Entrepreneurship, which is tasked with optimizing how UC moves discoveries from the laboratory to the marketplace, in addition to enhancing the monetization of UC's vast intellectual property assets.

Coming out of a Labor background, John took part in contract negotiations for UC with the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), who represent 16,000 patient care and 10,000 service workers at UC, and reached an agreement in one month after negotiations had been ongoing for over two years.

In September 2019, after UC President Janet Napolitano announced her retirement, John appointed a Special Committee to Consider the Selection of a President, the university's most diverse selection committee ever, to make recommendations to the Regents. John serves as an Ex-officio member of that committee.

In 2008 John was elected to the California Assembly, representing downtown Los Angeles and surrounding communities. In 2010, his peers elected him Speaker of the Assembly, making him the first openly LGBTQ person to serve in that position.

As Speaker, John had ultimate responsibility for the Assembly's 1,300 employees and \$156 million budget. He successfully passed legislation to ensure California's first-in-the-nation carbon cap and trade program to facilitate industry's reduction of emissions and fund job-creating infrastructure projects throughout California. John authored legislation establishing the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development and expanded the office's focus on international trade. He brought together a bipartisan majority to pass comprehensive Workers Compensation Reform that reduced costs for employers while greatly increasing speed of delivery and quality of care for injured workers and benefit increases for disabled workers.

John has been a strong advocate for targeted policies to provide job training and placement assistance for California's veterans, and, as Speaker, provided funding for these programs by cutting the Assembly's own operating budget. John partnered with the California National Guard on the Work for Warriors program, which has created relationships between the Guard and 900 employers. John authored Proposition 41, the Veterans Housing and Homeless Prevention Act, which repurposed unused bond funds to provide for multifamily housing and housing with supportive services for California veterans.

In response to the Great Recession and California's ongoing budget uncertainty, John crafted the *California Jobs Budget*, which balanced the budget and created a ten-billion dollar private-sector job creation fund. He authored legislation creating California's first-in-the-nation Health Benefits Exchange, Covered California, established the Middle-Class Scholarship to address affordability and accessibility of higher education, and brought together his colleagues to end California's era of chronic budget turmoil by working with Governor Brown and members of the Senate to eliminate the structural deficit that left California's budget imbalanced for more than a decade.

One of John's proudest accomplishments as Speaker was authoring the initiative creating California's Rainy Day Fund, with strict accountability, to help the state weather economic downturns and prevent the need for tax increases or draconian cuts to vital services. The fund, approved by California voters, has grown to record levels.

John grew up in the working-class communities of El Sereno and Highland Park. Prior to his election to the Assembly, John served on the board of directors of the Los Angeles Community Redevelopment Agency, the California League of Conservation Voters, and the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation.

John has been a longtime advocate on behalf of the LGBTQ Community. He has been especially active in the fight against HIV/AIDS. He has been a leader with AIDS Project Los Angeles and the Latino Coalition against AIDS. He has previously been appointed by both President Bill Clinton and President George W. Bush to serve on the President's Commission on HIV/AIDS.

John is also a longtime elected member of the Democratic National Committee.