

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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California Coastal Commission elects its first openly LGBT chair

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Photos available upon request

CALABASAS, Calif. _ The California Coastal Commission this week unanimously elected its first ever openly LGBT Chair.

The 12-member Commission elected Chula Vista City Councilman Steve Padilla as Chair and attorney Donne Brownsey as Vice Chair to lead board for the next year. Padilla called it “an honor” to serve as Chair of the state’s powerful coastal protection agency, which regulates development along 1,271 miles of coastline.

“California’s coast is a national treasure because we’ve fought to protect it from polluters, out of control development and harmful policies from Washington,” he said. “I’m committed to continuing to defend our beaches, bays and shorelines by maintaining California’s global leadership on the climate crisis, enforcing strong clean air and water laws, and ensuring every community can access and enjoy California’s beautiful coastline for generations to come.”

A San Diego native and former mayor of Chula Vista, Padilla was appointed to the Coastal Commission by Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon in 2017. He also served on the Commission from 2005 to 2007. His priorities include addressing the effects of climate change, expanding public access, opposing federal offshore oil drilling and environmental justice.

Fort Bragg resident Brownsey also said she was “honored to serve the Commission and the public as Vice Chair.”

“Public access for everyone to our coast is my top priority as well as addressing the myriad of issues presented by sea level rise,” she said.

Brownsey was senior vice president of Sacramento Advocates Inc., a lobbying firm, from 2004 to 2015. She also founded Government Solutions Inc., where she worked from 1993 to 2004. She was the chief legislative consultant for former President pro Tempore State Senator David Roberti (D-Los Angeles) from 1985 to 1993.

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