

**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION**

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# W-19a

## **LEGISLATIVE REPORT 2012 ELECTION—CALIFORNIA COASTAL DISTRICTS**

**DATE:** January 9, 2013

**TO:** California Coastal Commission and Interested Public Members

**FROM:** Charles Lester, Executive Director  
Sarah Christie, Legislative Director  
Michelle Jespersion, Federal Programs Manager

**RE:** 2012 Election Results in Coastal Districts

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This memo describes the results of the 2012 elections in California's coastal districts. The November 2012 General Election in California was the first statewide election to feel the full effect of two significant new electoral policies. The first of these, the "Top Two Candidates Open Primary Act," was approved by voters in 2010 (Proposition 14). Under the new system, all legislative, congressional and constitutional office candidates now appear on the same primary ballot, regardless of party affiliation. The two candidates receiving the most votes in the Primary advance to the General Election, regardless of party affiliation. The June 2012 primary was the first time voters utilized the new system, and the result was numerous intra-party competitions in the November election as described below.

The other significant new factor in this election was the newly drawn political districts. The boundaries of legislative and congressional seats were redrawn last year as part of the decennial redistricting process, whereby voting districts are reconfigured based on updated U.S. Census population data. Until 2011, these maps have been redrawn by the majority party in the Legislature, with an emphasis on party registration. In California, Democrats have had oversight of redistricting for decades. In 2011, California's legislative maps were drawn for the first time by an independent, non-partisan commission, the California Citizens Redistricting Commission (CCRC) without regard for party registration, a change also approved by voters through the initiative process in 2008 (Proposition 11) and amended in 2012 (Proposition 20).

This analysis takes a look at the 2012 General Election through a coastal lens. Specifically, this analysis will focus on how the election has changed California's coastal legislative districts. For the purpose of this analysis, "coastal districts" include all Congressional, State Senate and State Assembly districts that touch either the Pacific Ocean or a coastal bay, including the San

Francisco Bay. Although the Coastal Commission's jurisdiction does not include San Francisco Bay, the San Francisco Bay and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission is a partner with the Coastal Commission in the California Coastal Management Program (CCMP), and the two agencies often have common policy and legislative concerns.

## **GENERAL OUTCOMES**

Overall, the electoral outcome in 2012 favored Democrats, who picked up three seats in the Assembly (from 52 to 55) and four seats in the Senate (from 25 to 29) to win the Party's first full legislative supermajority since 1883. The effect of the new supermajority is that the Democrats now have the ability to raise taxes and place constitutional amendments on the ballot without any Republican votes. The extent to which the Democrats will exercise this capability is unknown. Following the election, the Governor reiterated his earlier campaign promise not to raise taxes without a popular vote. There is also some question whether the supermajority will hold in the wake of several special elections scheduled to take place in coming months to fill seats vacated by members elected to higher office or local posts, and then the ensuing vacancies in the wake of the "domino effect". Even if all the seats currently held by Democrats leaving for other elected offices remain in Democratic hands, the timing of those vacancies and the ensuing special elections are such that there will not be a stable supermajority in both houses until 2014.

2012 also favored Democrats within California's Congressional delegation, where the Democrats picked up four seats in the House (from 34 to 38) and retained both Democratic Senators. The Republican Party still maintains majority control of the House of Representatives for 2013, but incurred a loss of Republican seats (-7). The Senate remains under a Democratic majority with a net gain in Democratic seats (+1).

## **EFFECTS OF THE TOP-TWO PRIMARY**

The state's first Top-Two Primary in June produced seven Assembly races in the General election that featured two Republican opponents (AD 1, 5, 6, 23, 67, 72 and 76), eleven Assembly races that featured two Democratic candidates (AD 2, 10, 18, 19, 20, 39, 47, 50, 51, 59 and 62), and two Assembly races (AD 15 and AD 28) that pitted a Democrat against a minor third party candidate.

In the Senate, two races (SD 13 and SD 15) put two Democrats against each other in the General, and two other races (SD 9 and SD 33) pitted a Democrat against a Peace and Freedom Party candidate. No Senate races featured two Republican candidates.

For the Congressional races, the Top-Two Primary system put two Democrats against each other in six races (D 15, 30, 35, 40, 43, and 44) and two Republicans against one another in two races (D 8 and 31). Third party candidates competed and lost against Democrats in Districts 13, 29 and 33; the Republican candidate also prevailed against a third party candidate in District 23.

It is logical that there were more Democrat vs. Democrat contests in the general election simply because California is a Democratic-majority state. However, the implications of this intra-party competition for state policy are uncertain.

## **EFFECTS OF REDISTRICTING**

The new Citizens Redistricting Commission maps turned some previously “safe seats” for both parties into more competitive ones. But while redistricting forced some incumbents from both parties to defend their previously safe seats, the Democrats were able to retain all of their incumbents against Republican challengers, while also adding four new members to their caucus. The result is more Democrats elected overall, and more coastal Democrats specifically. But the reconfigured districts have reduced the number of representatives from the more rural coastal areas in the north, increased the number of representatives from the more urban coastal areas, and reduced the geographic ratio of coastline to inland portions of the L.A. - based districts.

## **COASTAL OUTCOMES**

When drawing the new maps in 2011, one of the CCRC’s main areas of focus was uniting “communities of interest”. The CCRC included the coast as a community of interest. The result of this can be seen clearly in the new coastal Senate districts, which now are more “coastal” in configuration. The prior 2001 maps were criticized by some for disenfranchising coastal communities. For example, in the 2001 redistricting, Senate district boundaries in the North and Central coasts were reconfigured in ways that linked some coastal areas with inland communities. These pairings were seen by some as politically and demographically incompatible. The 2001 maps saw more Republicans elected to coastal districts, and caused some Democratic Assembly members to decline to run for what had previously been safe Democratic Senate seats.

The new 2011 maps increased the number of coastal Senate districts from 16 to 17 while the number of coastal Assembly districts, although reconfigured, remained constant at 26. After the 2012 election, the number of coastal Senate Democrats increased from 11 to 15. The number of coastal Assembly Democrats increased from 18 to 20. The number of coastal Republicans fell from 5 to 2 in the Senate, and from 8 to 6 in the Assembly.

At the Congressional level, the overall number of Congressional districts did not change (53), although the number of coastal Congressional districts fell from 25 to 23. After the election, the number of Democrats in coastal Congressional seats increased from 18 to 21. The number of coastal Republicans went from seven Representatives to two Representatives. As a result, the Congressional picture along the coast has gone from 72 percent Democratic representation to 91 percent.

In the State Legislature, six incumbent members who previously represented landlocked districts are now representing coastal districts. These include:

- Senator Marty Block (D-Lemon Grove) SD 39
- Senator Lou Correa (D-Santa Ana) SD 34
- Senator Lois Wolk (D-Davis) SD 3
- Assembly member Luis Alejo (D-Salinas) AD 30
- Assembly member Steven Bradford (D-Inglewood) AD 62
- Assembly member Jeff Gorell (R-Camarillo) AD 44

## **Senate:**

Senate Democrats made their most significant gains on the coast, where they now hold 15 of the 17 coastal seats. The number of Republican Senators representing coastal districts has declined from 5 out of 16 (or nearly 33%) to two out of 17 (less than 15%). The two Republican coastal Senators are Mimi Walters (R-Laguna Nigel) and Joel Anderson (R-San Diego). Their contiguous districts comprise 72-miles of coastline in Orange County and northern San Diego.

Identifying the location of the “new” seventeenth coastal Senate district is somewhat complicated. The three Senate seats north of San Francisco (SD 2, 3 and 4), have been collapsed into a single coastal district, SD 2, that stretches from the Oregon border to the Golden Gate, represented by Senator Noreen Evans (D-Santa Rosa).<sup>1</sup> But there are now more coastal seats in urban areas. In Los Angeles, existing coastal districts got “squeezed” into narrower configurations with fewer miles of coastline and more East/West orientations, which also made way for the new SD 34 which stretches from Santa Ana to Huntington Beach. In the Bay Area, SD 3 is a “new” coastal district (Wolk, D-Davis) which now includes Martinez and Vallejo as well as parts of Yolo, Solano and Sacramento Counties.

All of the newly elected coastal Senators are former Assembly members. Former Assembly member Hannah-Beth Jackson (D-Santa Barbara) is returning to Sacramento as the Senator from SD 19 after an 8-year hiatus, replacing Republican Senator Tony Strickland as the representative of Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties.

San Luis Obispo, Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties will be represented by Senator Bill Monning (D-Santa Cruz) in the new SD 17 which also includes portions of Santa Clara County. Senator Monning’s former Assembly District, AD 27, included the northern portion of his new Senate seat.

In Southern California, SD 38, previously a coastal district in San Diego County represented by Mark Wyland (R-Carlsbad), is now a completely inland district. The coastline in termed-out Republican Tom Harman’s district is now divided between two Democrats: Rod Wright in what is now the 35th District and Senator Lou Correa (D-Santa Ana) in SD 34. Senate District 39 is now represented by former Assembly member Marty Block (D-Lemon Grove). Senator Block’s former Assembly district was landlocked; his new Senate district includes San Diego, Point Loma and La Jolla. Senator Juan Vargas (D-San Diego) has been elected to Congress and his seat, SD 40, which includes Imperial Beach, will be the subject of a special election in 2013.

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<sup>1</sup> Because only odd-numbered Senate seats were up in the 2012 election, the voters in Del Norte and Marin Counties have never been able to vote for Senator Evans. Since members can only represent the areas which elected them, the northernmost and southernmost portions of SD 2 will not technically have an *elected* representative in the Senate until 2014. In this situation the Pro-tem assigns a Member and staff to the “orphan area” for purposes of constituent service. The same is true for the coastal portion of SD 34, which accounts for approximately 412,000 residents.

### **Assembly:**

Geographically, Assembly Democrats now represent the coast from the Oregon border through Monterey County. Republican Katcho Achadjian was re-elected to represent the 33<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District encompassing San Luis Obispo County, which is now the northern-most coastal legislative district with a GOP state representative. Republican Jeff Gorell was also re-elected to represent the newly drawn 44<sup>th</sup> District in southern Ventura County (formerly AD 37). His previous district was landlocked. The new AD 44, represented by Das Williams (D-Santa Barbara), also re-elected, includes some of the Ventura County coastline that had previously been the southern portion of AD 35.

While the number of Democrats in the Assembly increased by three, in reality, the Democrats effectively added five new Democratic members. The reason for this is that four formerly Democratic districts were collapsed into two, so the Democrats had essentially lost two of their members at the outset of the election. The five competitive Assembly Districts that can be viewed as “pick ups” for Democrats include AD 65, where Orange County Democrat Sharon Quirk-Silva edged out Republican incumbent Chris Norby; AD 32 where Democrat Rudy Salas prevailed in his race against Pedro Rios; AD 61 with Jose Medina winning against Bill Bailly; and one coastal district, AD 66 where Al Muratsuchi prevailed over Craig Huey. The closest race was in AD 36 where Democrat Steve Fox (D-Palmdale) trailed behind his opponent, Ron Smith until the last day of counting the provisional ballots. Smith has asked for a recount.

All five of Los Angeles’ coastal Assembly districts remain in Democratic hands, just as all four coastal districts in Orange County remain with Republicans. San Diego’s three coastal districts are represented by Republican Rocky Chavez (AD 76) and Democrats Toni Atkins (AD 78) and Ben Hueso (AD 80).

Ten of the 26 coastal Assembly members are freshmen. Nine of them come to the Assembly from some form of local government office. This is the first crop of Assembly members to serve under the new term limits of 12 years in a single house, creating the potential for these members to serve six 2-year terms in the Assembly, or until the year 2024.

### **Congress:**

From a geographic perspective, the revised Congressional districts are not hugely different with respect to the coastal areas that are covered, save for a few areas. One of these is the former Congressional District 1, previously represented by Democratic Mike Thompson. District 1 is now mostly encompassed by Congressional District 2 and includes coastal areas from the California-Oregon border to the Golden Gate. Former State Assemblymember Jared Huffman (D-San Rafael) was elected to fill this seat. Former North Coast Congresswoman and long-time supporter of coastal protection, Lynn Woolsey has retired. Her area is now covered by Huffman’s District 2. Democrat Mike Thompson will stay in office representing Congressional District 5, which also includes San Francisco Bay.

Moving down the coast, the Bay Area coastal Congressional delegation remains much the same with the re-election of incumbents John Garamendi (D-3), Jerry McNerney (D-9), George Miller (D-11), Nancy Pelosi (D-12), Barbara Lee (D-13), Jackie Speier (D-14), Mike Honda (D-17), Anna Eshoo (D-18) and Zoe Lofgren (D-19). Most notably, however, is the loss of

incumbent and 40-year Congressman Pete Stark to Eric Swalwell in the District 15 race that pitted two Democrats against one another.

Long-time supporters of the coastal program Sam Farr (D-20) and Lois Capps (D-24) will also return to Congress. They are joined by Congressional new comer Julia Brownley (D-26), who replaces the retiring Republican Congressman Elton Gallegly. Prior to her election to Congress, Brownley served as a State Assembly member from 2006 – 2012. In addition to the geographic change in district coverage on the North Coast, former District 22 on the central coast has been consolidated along the coast as part of the new Congressional District 24 and no longer includes its extensive inland reach.

For Southern California, re-districting has consolidated Congressional district coverage along the coast into fewer districts. As a result, the loss of coastal Congressional districts can be seen most prominently here. The most significant change in representation for this area is the decline of Republican representation. Republican incumbents Dana Rohrabacher (R-48) and Darrell Issa (R-29) will return to Congress as the only two Republicans representing coastal California. On the Democratic side, incumbents Henry Waxman (D-33), Janice Hahn (D-44), and Susan Davis (D-53) will be joined by newly elected Democrats Alan Lowenthal (D-47), Juan Vargas (D-51) and Scott Peters (D-52).

Democratic Senator Dianne Feinstein was re-elected to a fourth term in 2012. As a result, the Senate picture for California remains the same with Senator Feinstein and Democratic Senator Barbara Boxer continuing to represent California.

### **Former Coastal Commissioners:**

Two former Coastal Commissioners, Mark Stone (D-Santa Cruz) and Richard Bloom (D-Santa Monica) have been elected to the Assembly. They join former Commissioners Katcho Achadjian, Ben Hueso, and Fran Pavley, all of whom served as locally elected officials on the Coastal Commission. Two former Coastal Commissioners have left the Senate. Former Commissioner Senator Chris Kehoe (D-San Diego) was termed out and former Commission Alternate Alan Lowenthal (D-Long Beach) has been elected to Congress. Representing the San Diego area in Congress will be Juan Vargas (D-51), former Commissioner and State Assemblyman, as well as former Coastal Commissioner, Scott Peters (D-52).

### **CONCLUSIONS**

To recap the 2012 coastal trends:

- More Democrats elected to both the Senate and the Assembly and to Congress
- More coastal Democrats in the Senate (from 11 to 15)
- More coastal Democrats in the Assembly (from 18 to 20)
- More coastal Democrats in Congress (from 18 to 21)
- Fewer coastal Republicans in Congress (from 7 to 2)

- Fewer coastal State Senators in the North Coast
- More coastal State Senators in the South Coast
- More urban coastal representation
- More locally-elected officials elected to the Legislature
- First crop of State legislators who could potentially serve until 2024

The outcome of the election presents an opportunity to establish and strengthen relationships with previously inland legislators, whose new districts now include coastal areas and constituencies not previously represented. Their interest in coastal issues is likely to increase, and their staff will need to become more familiar with the basic principles of coastal management and the policies of the Coastal Act. In addition, many of the new Assembly members representing coastal districts, most of whom served in local government positions, no doubt have valuable backgrounds in coastal issues. Their local experiences will likely inform their statewide perspective as they consider legislation and represent broader constituencies in their new capacity. Early outreach and responsive feedback will be essential for building long-term understanding and support for California's Coastal Management Program.

At the Congressional level, the California delegation in the House of Representatives is slightly more Democratic with 38 of the 53 members versus 34 in 2012. It is difficult to assess what this means for coastal and more broadly environmental policies given that House Republicans are still in the majority. Continued Democratic control of the Senate and the White House for the next four years however, will likely shield against passage of any major legislative attacks on national environmental laws. The bigger question is how funding for national programs like the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) and more specifically, State CZMA Grants will fare given the debt ceiling and other fiscal challenges that must be addressed.

#### **Attachments:**

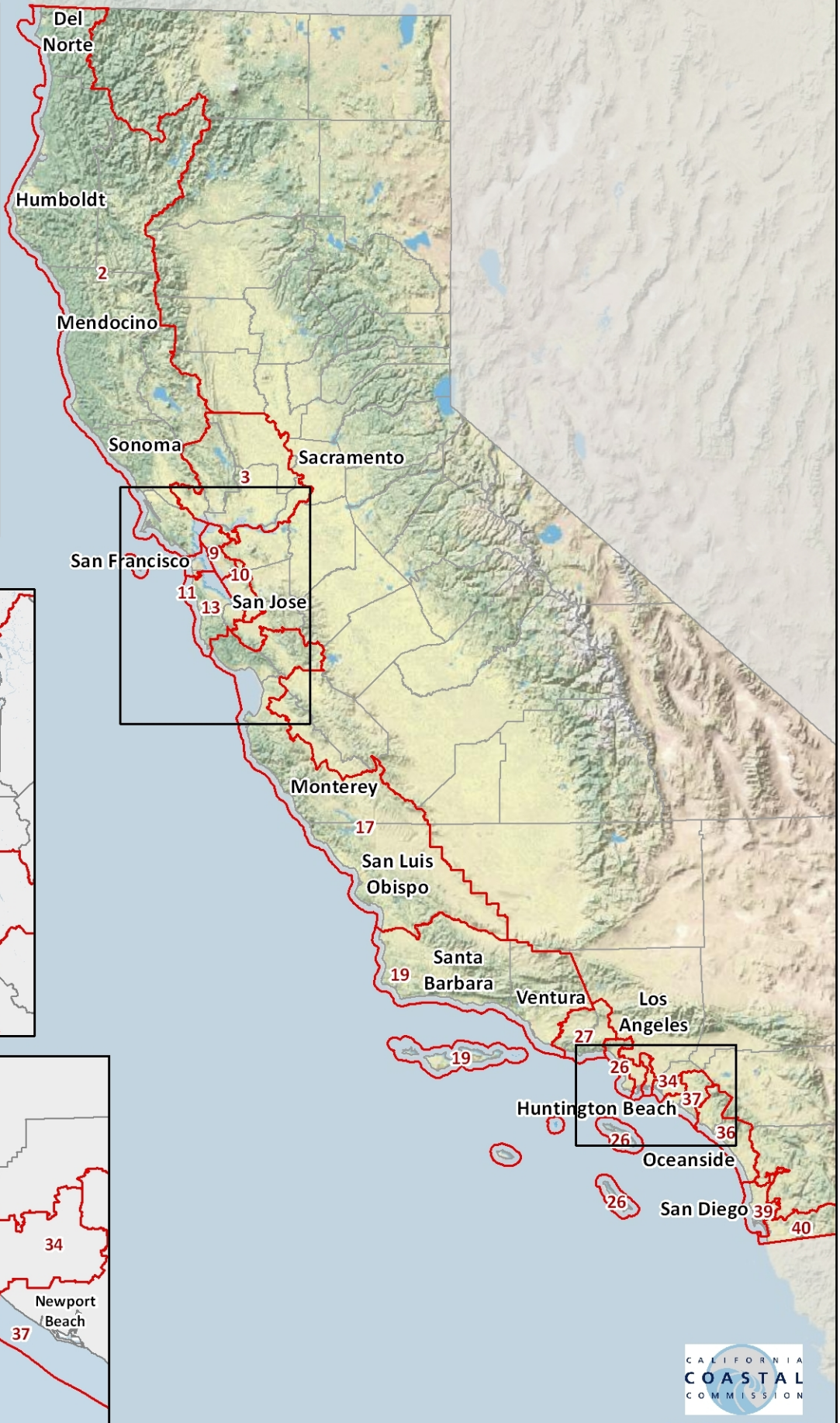
2012 Senate District Map  
 2012 Assembly District Map  
 2012 BCDC and Coastal Congressional District Map



# California Coastal Senate Districts, 2012

## SENATORS

Noreen Evans (D) 2  
 Lois Wolk (D) 3  
 Loni Hancock (D) 9  
 Ellen Corbett (D) 10  
 Mark Leno (D) 11  
 Jerry Hill (D) 13  
 Bill Monning (D) 17  
 Hannah-Beth Jackson (D) 19  
 Ted Lieu (D) 26  
 Fran Pavley (D) 27  
 Ricardo Lara (D) 33  
 Lou Correa (D) 34  
 Roderick Wright (D) 35  
 Joel Anderson (R) 36  
 Mimi Walters (R) 37  
 Marty Block (D) 39  
 Juan Vargas (D) 40





# California Coastal Assembly Districts, 2012

## ASSEMBLY MEMBERS

Wesley Chesbro (D) 2  
 Marc Levine (D) 10  
 Susan Bonilla (D) 14  
 Nancy Skinner (D) 15  
 Tom Ammiano (D) 17  
 Rob Bonta (D) 18  
 Phil Ting (D) 19  
 Bill Quirk (D) 20  
 Kevin Mullin (D) 22  
 Richard Gordon (D) 24  
 Bob Wieckowski (D) 25  
 Mark Stone (D) 29  
 Luis Alejo (D) 30  
 Katcho Achadjian (R) 35  
 Das Williams (D) 37  
 Jeff Gorell (R) 44  
 Richard Bloom (D) 50  
 Steven Bradford (D) 62  
 Al Muratsuchi (D) 66  
 Bonnie Lowenthal (D) 70  
 Travis Allen (R) 72  
 Diane Harkey (R) 73  
 Allan Mansoor (R) 74  
 Rocky Chavez (R) 76  
 Toni Atkins (D) 78  
 Ben Hueso (D) 80





# BCDC and Coastal Congressional Districts - 2012

## CONGRESSIONAL MEMBERS

Jared Huffman (D) 2  
 John Garamendi (D) 3  
 Mike Thompson (D) 5  
 Jerry McNerney (D) 9  
 George Miller (D) 11  
 Nancy Pelosi (D) 12  
 Barbara Lee (D) 13  
 Jackie Speier (D) 14  
 Eric Swalwell (D) 15  
 Mike Honda (D) 17  
 Anna Eshoo (D) 18  
 Zoe Lofgren (D) 19  
 Sam Farr (D) 20  
 Lois Capps (D) 24  
 Julia Brownley (D) 26  
 Henry A. Waxman (D) 33  
 Janice Hahn (D) 44  
 Alan Lowenthal (D) 47  
 Dana Rohrabacher (R) 48  
 Darrell Issa (R) 49  
 Juan Vargas (D) 51  
 Scott Peters (D) 52  
 Susan Davis (D) 53

