

Pat Wiggins Early Accomplishments California State Assembly 1999-2004

SMART GROWTH

Founded the Smart Growth Caucus in the Legislature (1/3 of all legislators became members)

Prevented the Coastline of the Hearst Ranch from being subdivided

Enacted the most comprehensive state land use and infrastructure law in 30 years (AB 857, 2001)

Allowed zoning laws to reflect a view of the overall city rather than just a parcel (AB 1268, 2003)

ENVIRONMENT AND AGRICULTURAL PROTECTION

Provided funds to fight Sudden Oak Death Syndrome (AB 52, 2001)

Provided one million dollars for Russian River restoration projects

Stopped the attempt by Alaska Exports to take the water from our rivers in big bags and sell it elsewhere (AB 858, 2001)

Promoted incentives to provide solar energy for affordable housing (AB 2924, 2004)

Convinced the state bureaucracy to study ways to remove the old tires long used for erosion control in local farms without forcing those farms out of business

Provided funds to help schools provide safe drinking water

Provided funds to preserve agriculture and oak woodlands

Allowed replacement of vines destroyed by Pierce's disease without triggering a tax increase (AB 1242, 2001)

WORKING FAMILIES AND VETERANS

Got prevailing wages and benefits for (mostly minority) state janitors (AB 1357, 2001)

Provided healthcare benefits to retired state employees in danger of losing them (AB 2463, 2000)

Provided improved healthcare for Veterans (AB 699, 1999)

Protected jobs for those with Developmental disabilities (AB 649, 2003)

Set standards for wages and benefits in outsourcing contracts by state agencies (AB 2909, 2002)

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Provided property tax exemptions for certain kinds of low and moderate income housing (AB 1559, 1999)

Closed a loophole that allowed subsidized low income housing to be sold for other purposes (AB 2229, 2000)

Allowed Napa County to move some of its affordable housing into the cities (AB 2430, 2000)

Allowed Napa County Grape growers to tax themselves to provide farmworker housing (AB 1550, 2001)

OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Designated the trashing of an abortion clinic as a hate crime, so the clinic's insurance couldn't be canceled (AB 996, 2003)

Established the California School-to-Career Grant Program to help those students who don't go directly to college (AB 1873, 2000)

Made epinephrine auto-injectors available in schools to save the lives of children who go into anaphylactic shock (AB 559, 2001)

Saved the State's Hot Air Balloon Industry, by changing the requirement, unique to California, that they obtain the same insurance coverage as a major airline (AB 2430, 2004)

Insured that businesses are required to protect the personal financial information that is in their possession (AB 1950, 2004)

Provided an assortment of laws to protect people from identity theft

Senator Patricia Wiggins

2007-08 Record of Accomplishments

Awards

- 100% scorecard from the Sierra Club
- 100% scorecard from the California League of Conservation Voters
- 100% scorecard from the California Labor Federation
- 100% scorecard from Planned Parenthood
- 100% scorecard from the National Organization for Women, California Chapter
- 100% scorecard from the American Cancer Society
- 100% scorecard from the Consumer Federation of California
- Legislator of the Year, California State Sheriffs Association

Social Services & Healthcare

Universal Health Care

- Proudly once again co-authored and helped pass through the Legislature, SB 840, the single-payer, universal health care legislation authored by Senator Sheila Kuehl.

Protecting Seniors

- SB 623: Covers senior prescription medicine co-pays by requiring the state to cover the co-pays for seniors covered under the prescription drug plan under the federal Medicare Part D.
- SB 1599: Improves services for the disabled and elderly by allowing the most cost effective and beneficial public assistance for the disabled and elderly population, known as In-Home-Supportive Services (IHSS), to be purchased by consumers not financially eligible.

Protecting the mentally ill

- SB 568: protects the mentally ill by allowing county jails, following all protocols as a state hospital, to have diagnosed mentally ill patients involuntarily medicated when the inmate is a danger to themselves or others.
- SB 292: Protects seriously emotionally disturbed children by eliminating restrictions that prevent parents from choosing the best treatment for their seriously emotionally disturbed children.

Helping the developmentally disabled

- SB 1183: Expands medical services for the developmentally disabled by permitting the health care facilities and services at the Sonoma Developmental Center to be used by the developmentally disabled population not living at the home.

Helping recovering drug and alcohol abusers

- SB 992: Improves standards for sober living environments by establishing licensing and standards for facilities that serve and transitional homes for recovering alcohol and drug addicts and eliminates fraudulent and unsafe transitional homes.

Healthcare and social services funding

- SB 933: Fulfills state fiscal promises by providing the appropriate reimbursement rates from the state to Partnership Health Plan of California to better serve Medi-Cal recipients in Solano, Lake, Mendocino, and Marin counties. Without Partnership Health Plan of California, thousands of Medi-Cal patients would not be able to find health care in their areas.
- SB 1699: Reduces construction costs for Sonoma Valley Hospital by allowing the hospital to utilize design-build construction in the development of their new hospital. As a result, the hospital would save \$30 million in construction costs.
- With the assistance of Assemblywoman Patty Berg, worked with the California Rural Caucus to acquire \$22 million from the Federal Communications Commission for the California Telehealth Network to improve rural healthcare through the expansion of telemedicine technology.
- SB 772: Helps funding capabilities for Lyme disease eradication by making improvements to the Lyme Disease Advisory Committee to update efforts to prevent the occurrence of Lyme Disease which has been on the rise in northern California.
- SB 157: Aides social service non-profits by eliminating petty legal restrictions for non-profits that can pour or sell wine at fundraisers.

- SB 108: Aids social service non-profits by expanding the type of nonprofits by that can pour or sell wine at fundraisers.

Workers Compensation

- SB 557: Expands the role of audiologists by allowing them to serve as medical examiners for the evaluation for medical and legal issues in workers' compensation cases.

Environment

Protecting open space

- SB 1431: Permits the Department of Parks and Recreation to purchase land easements around state parks in order to increase open space and to create buffer zones around pristine wildlife areas.
- SB 678: Protects Skyline Park in Napa by allowing the Napa County to purchase the 850 acre Skyline Park in Napa and keep it a park for all to enjoy to prevent the state from selling the land to be developed.
- SB 701: Provides protection to forest land by authorizing the state to use federal funds to acquire private forestland in an effort to save precious forests from development. Through this program more than 6,200 acres in Humboldt, Sonoma, Santa Cruz, and San Diego counties has been preserved.
- Saved the Williams Act funding in the budget to protect open space and farm land from being developed. Let the effort to keep the Williamson Act funding in the state budget for two years in a row.
- Led the fight to keep our state parks open. Was the first Senator to openly oppose the Governor's proposal to close California's state parks to close the state's budget deficit.
- Helped secure \$80,000 from the California Coastal Commission to Berryessa Trails and Conservation, a nonprofit devoted to protecting natural resources.

Protecting our water

- SB 562: Provided \$5.3 million for coastal salmon and fishery restoration projects to preserve and improve their habitat

- SB 1690: Protects our crab fishery by creating an industry taskforce to make recommendations to the Legislature on how to best regulate the crab industry to prevent fishery depletion like that of the salmon industry.
- SB 1627: Protects our bays by providing more training and accountability for those responsible for guiding oil tankers through our waters to prevent future disasters like the Cosco Busan oil spill in San Francisco Bay.
- Chaired the Legislature's Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture and organized a special hearing with the state's leading scientific experts on salmon declines in California. The testimony and evidence from the hearing will be used to help guide any future water bonds considered by the Legislature.

Promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency

- SB 1460: Expands solar energy to low-income housings by allowing apartment complexes and other multi-unit residential dwellings to qualify for subsidies and rebates for solar energy installation.
- SB 1512: Makes solar energy a viable option for agriculture by eliminating cumbersome and often costly regulations that prevent many agricultural businesses from participating in California's existing solar rebate programs.
- SB 1557: Improves the state's environmental goals and planning priorities by building upon the landmark state planning and environmental guidelines (Wiggins, AB 857, 2002), adds reducing vehicle miles traveled a priority in all state planning guidelines.
- SB 1645: Improves planning guidelines for local governments by Adding climate change and energy elements to model general plans that cities and counties can use when developing their general plans.

Recycling and reducing waste in our landfills

- SB 1016: Landmark legislation that eliminates bureaucracy and improves the ability of local governments to improve recycling and redirect waste from our landfills.
- SB 697: Increases the use of composting on our state highways by ensuring CalTrans uses composting rather than other non-environmentally friendly materials to prevent erosion on highway projects.
- SB 735: Reuses concrete and asphalt waste by requiring CalTrans to use recycled concrete and asphalt materials in road repairs and new road construction to reduce waste in our landfills.

Environmental Cleanup

- Made significant progress in cleaning up the more than eighty rusting WWII ships sitting in Suisun Bay. By coordinating with various federal, state, and local agencies, ship dismantlers and environmental and civic organizations the dismantling and cleanup of the ships is now more imminent than ever before.
- SB 861: Cleans up old rails lines in Mendocino County by requiring the North Coast Railroad Authority to use \$5.5 million of already allocated transportation funds for their court mandated environmental cleanup.

Honoring an environmental hero

- SCR 113: Renames a large redwood forest the Fritz Redwood Memorial Grove in honor of Emanuel Fritz a former professor at UC Berkeley who in 1923 saved a grove of the oldest redwood trees in Mendocino County.

Labor

Protecting pensions

- SB 579: Protects injured firefighter by conforming California law with federal law that enables a firefighter that retires with a disability to still receive the tax exemption provided by the federal Pension Protection Act of 2006.
- SB 581: Takes care of volunteer firefighters by allowing them to continue an employee funded stipend program for those volunteer firefighters who have 10 years of volunteer service
- SB 580: Improves retiree health care benefits by allowing Public Employee Retirement System (PERS) members to have an HMO option if they decide to move to another state.
- SB 695: Protects retiree health care benefits by fixing a tragic loophole so that Public Employment Retirement System members who retire with health benefits but take another PERS job don't lose their health benefits forever.

- SB 608: Protects death benefits for spouses of judges by fixing a loophole in law that jeopardized the death benefits for spouses of judges.
- SB 1123: Maintains public pensions by establishing a bipartisan advisory panel to provide local governments with impartial information to assist in better understanding the costs and benefits of public pensions.
- SB 1376: Protects death benefits for teachers by fixing a loophole in law where the retirement benefits of a teacher who dies while awaiting a determination to retire on a disability is not provided to a teacher's spouse.

Improving salaries

- Jointly authored AB 3043 with my colleague, Assemblyman Ed Hernandez, that provides pay equity for nurses who work at state hospitals so that they are compensated at the same level as nurses in state prisons.
- SB 695: Increases the salaries of game wardens to that of other similar law enforcement personnel so that the state can continue to recruit and retain the workforce needed to keep our parks and clean and safe.

Preserving summer employment in Lake County

- SB 319: Permits the continued long standing tradition where high school students in Lake County gain work experience during the summer in agricultural packing plants.

Memorializing a fallen CalTrans Worker

- SCR 90: Designates a portion of Highway 101 in honor of Daniel Broeske, a CalTrans worker who was struck by a car and killed while working on Highway 101.

Consumer Protection

Mortgage crisis

- Co-authored SB 1123 with Senator Don Perata which establishes early intervention and assistance procedures between lenders and home owners in an effort to stem the tide of foreclosures.
- Co-authored SB 1055 with Senator Mike Machado to prevent home owners involved in a foreclosure process from being taxed on any debt forgiveness on a loan. Typically banks forgive or percentage of the loan in the foreclosure process, unfortunately, when this happens, the owner who is going to lose their home also receives a tax bill for the forgiven loan amount.

Telecommunications

- SB 780: Keeps rural phone rates affordable by extending an existing law about to expire that subsidizes rural phone companies and thereby keeps rates down for consumers in rural or underserved areas where there is no telephone competition.
- SB 1149: Provides \$10 million annually to rural areas of California that currently lacking telephone service including emergency telephone service. This bill was authored to assist in emergency situations such as the drowning deaths in recent years on north coast beaches where emergency personnel could not be reached because no telecommunications services were available.

Automotive repair

- SB 1167: Provides for better consumer choice when making auto repairs by ending the unfair practice where consumers are forced by insurance companies to take their cars to the insurance company's preferred auto repair shop rather than a trusted shop of their choice. This practice has not only hurt consumers but has put many trusted local auto repair shops out of business.

Gasoline purchases

- SB 623: Requires price disclosures at gasoline pumps by preventing gas stations from charging a higher price than the price listed at the pump when paying by credit card instead of cash - a practice on the rise around the state.

Food standards

- SB 634: Creates the first in the nation olive oil standards based on existing International standards and prevents olive oil manufacturers from falsely labeling and selling olive oil as "virgin olive oil" a practice being done by some unscrupulous foreign olive oil manufacturers.

Wine & Agriculture

- SB 556: Helps stop the spread of the Light Brown Apple Moth by creating an advisory task force made up of agricultural producers to help the Department of Food and Agriculture stop the spread of the moth.

- SJR 22: Protects wine consumers and honest wine makers by asking Congress to preserve the wine labeling rule that requires all wines with “Calistoga” on the label be made with 85% grapes from the Calistoga appellation.
- SB 607: Protects small family winemakers by allowing them to produce up to 200 gallons of wine for personal consumption without an alcohol license.
- SB 607: Protects “mom and pop” winemaking competitions by eliminating antiquated law so that county fairs around the state can continue to have home winemaker competitions.

Education

Career Technical Education

SB 1442: Eliminates restrictions on career technical education by allowing schools to incorporate career technical education in afterschool, weekend, and summer school instruction.

School safety

Co-authored SB 1475 (signed into law in 1999) with former Senator Nell Soto and shepherded the bill through the Assembly that created the Safe Routes to Schools program which provides funds to local governments to ensure schools have safe pedestrian access for children. In 2007 and 2008 the following agencies in the 2nd Senate District received more than \$2.5 million as a result of this law:

- City of Santa Rosa, ***\$250,000***
- City of Sebastopol, ***\$326,769***
- Napa County Office of Education, ***\$499,000***
- Napa County (Adventist Elementary School), ***\$40,000***
- Lake County Office of Education (Lakeport Elementary, Terrace Heights Elementary, Terrace Middle School, Clear Lake High School), ***\$499,860***
- City of Arcata (Coastal Grove Charter School, Sunset Elementary, Laurel Tree Elementary, Saint Mary’s Elementary), ***\$372,150***
- Humboldt County (Freshwater School District, Garfield School District, Eagle Prairie Elementary (Monument School), ***\$707,850***
- Sonoma County (Windsor High School), ***\$62,550***
- City of Healdsburg (Healdsburg Junior High and Healdsburg Elementary), ***\$895,960***
- Sonoma County (Burbank Elementary), \$656,460
- City of Vallejo (Steffan Manor Elementary), \$130,460
- City of Windsor (Windsor High), \$62,550

School accountability

- SB 662: Prevents conflicts of interest for school district board members by making the county board of education, because of their education policy expertise, responsible for conflicts of interest on school district boards rather than the county supervisors.

Small Businesses

Eliminating overregulation

SB 911: Keeps the hot air balloon industry afloat by protecting operators from unnecessarily high insurance rates that would have put hot air balloon operators out of business.

SB 773: Saves our north coast cattle industry by allowing standard cattle trailers to be used on Highway 1 and therefore allows the north coast cattle ranchers to stay competitive with cattle ranchers in other areas of the state and country.

Financial relief

SJR 4: Saves our salmon industry by urging Congress to pass the salmon relief bill to provide \$60 million in relief for commercial salmon fishermen and the related industries due to the failure of the 2006 salmon fishing season.

Transportation & Local Government

Highway improvements

- In tandem with Assemblywoman Lois Wolk, brought numerous safety changes in record time to Highway 12 near Rio Vista. The major change being a barrier in the most dangerous sections of Highway 12 known as “blood alley”.

Public transportation

- SB 1093: Improves commuter ferry service by protecting Vallejo’s current ferry service and ferry terminal development projects and maximizes the ability to use state transportation funds to sustain and expand commuter ferry service.

Public safety

- Coordinated the multi-county effort to bring financial relief to the preserve the Coast Life Support District which provides life support services on the remote Mendocino and Sonoma coast from Irish Beach to Fort Ross.

Local elections

- SB 813: Eliminates additional local runoff general elections if one of the candidates on the ballot dies during the campaign. The runoff elections should only apply in primary elections. This fixes a problem that occurred in a race for district attorney in Mendocino County which ended up costing the county thousands of dollars.

Tribal Protection

- SB 106: Protects one of the poorest tribes in California by ratifying the compact for the Yurok tribe in north eastern Humboldt County to operate 99 gaming machines on their reservation.

Veterans

Improving our Yountville Veterans Home

- Requested and succeeded in having the Joint Legislative Audit Committee direct the California State Auditor to inspect the Yountville Veterans Home. Upon completion of the inspection, the auditor found the home needed to make major improvements to its health care services as well as major improvements to its compliance with the American Disability Act requirements.
- SB 560: Protects the blind and visually impaired veterans by improving services and accommodations for blind and visually impaired residents at the Yountville Veterans' Home.

Improving medical services for veterans

- SB 565: Improves medical services for veterans at the Yountville Veterans Home by requiring the Yountville Veterans Home to have a hospital administrator so that the hospital has a manager with medical expertise in the same fashion as every other hospital in California.

Committee Chair history:

Smart Growth Caucus, 2000-2004

Assembly Local Government, 2000-2002

Assembly Banking and Finance, 2003-2004

Assembly Select Committee on Wine, 2000-2004

Assembly Select Committee on Workforce Development 2001-2004

Senate Public Employment Retirement and Social Security, 2007-2008

Senate Local Government, 2009-

Senate Select Committee on California Wine, 2007-

Joint Legislative Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture, 2007-