

Congressmember Karen Bass

Congressmember Karen Bass was re-elected to her sixth term representing the 37th Congressional District in November 2020. Congressmember Bass serves on the House Committee on Foreign Affairs where she is the Chair of the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights and International Organizations. She also chairs the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime and Terrorism, where she is active in working to craft sound criminal justice reform policies. Upon arriving in Congress, Chairwoman Bass founded the bipartisan Congressional Caucus on Foster Youth.

Congressmember Bass served as the Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus in 2019 and 2020. During her tenure, the Congressional Black Caucus worked with the Congressional Hispanic, Asian Pacific Islander, and Native American Caucuses to demand a targeted response to the COVID-19 pandemic and initiate a national needs assessment for communities of color. She also introduced the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act - the most transformative piece of policing legislation to ever pass in a chamber of Congress.

Prior to her election to Congress, Chairwoman Bass served in the California State Assembly, where in 2008, she made history by becoming the first-ever African-American woman in U.S. history to serve as Speaker of any state legislature. Under her leadership, the State Assembly came together to address the financial emergency with legislation to help Californians affected by the economic crisis. For her action, she was one of four legislative leaders awarded the John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award in 2010.

In the early 1990s, she convened a small group of community organizers, both African-American and Latino, and founded Community Coalition, an organization to transform the social and economic conditions in South Los Angeles that foster addiction, crime, violence and poverty by building a community institution that involves thousands in creating, influencing and changing public policy. She worked as a Physician Assistant and as a clinical instructor at the USC Keck School of Medicine Physician Assistant Program.

Congressmember Bass grew up in the Venice/Fairfax area of Los Angeles, which is the same area she represents today in Congress. She is a graduate of Cal State Dominguez Hills, the University of Southern California's School of Medicine Physician Assistant Program, and the USC Masters Program in Social Work.

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