

Biography

U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer

A forceful advocate for families, children, consumers, the environment and her State of California, Barbara Boxer became a United States Senator in January 1993 after 10 years of service in the House of Representatives and six years on the Marin County Board of Supervisors. In November 2010, she was reelected to her fourth term in the Senate.



A national leader on environmental protection, Senator Boxer is the first woman to chair the U.S. Senate's Committee on Environment and Public Works (EPW). She is a powerful advocate for clean air and water and has been leading efforts in the Senate to craft a 21st century transportation policy for the United States.

Senator Boxer also chairs the Senate Select Committee on Ethics, making her the only sitting Senator to chair two Senate committees. She is a senior member of the Senate Commerce Committee and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, where she chairs the first subcommittee ever to focus on global women's issues.

Senator Boxer is also a member of the Democratic leadership in the Senate, serving as the Chief Deputy Whip since 2005.

As Chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee, she secured passage of the Water Resources Development Act, which authorized \$1.3 billion for 54 flood control, ecosystem restoration and navigation projects in California. The bill had languished for six years until she led the fight to pass it and override a veto by President George W. Bush.

In 2010, Senator Boxer led the bipartisan effort in the Senate to extend the Highway Trust Fund, which helped protect 1 million jobs in transportation nationwide.

Senator Boxer has won numerous awards for her efforts to create a cleaner, healthier environment and for her dedicated work to address the threats of climate change. She has fought to remove arsenic from drinking water and authored an amendment ensuring that drinking water standards protect children. She has led efforts in Congress to protect California's coast from offshore oil drilling and fought to end the unethical use of human subjects in pesticide testing by federal agencies.

A champion of quality public education, Senator Boxer wrote landmark legislation establishing the first-ever federal funding for afterschool programs. Her law now covers 1.7 million children. She continues to work to expand afterschool programs nationwide as chair of the Senate Afterschool Caucus.

To ensure that generations of Californians will be able to enjoy our natural heritage, Senator Boxer wrote laws designating more than 1 million acres of California wilderness. Boxer also authored the California Missions Preservation Act to protect and restore California's 21 historic missions, and led the effort in the Senate to create the Manzanar National Historic Site.

To protect children from dangerous toys, Boxer authored a provision in the 2008 Consumer Product Safety Commission Law requiring children's products sold over the Internet to list cautionary warnings in their advertisements. She has also led efforts to protect children from lead and other dangerous chemicals.

Senator Boxer is a champion of airline passengers' rights, and her legislation with Senator Olympia Snowe (R-ME) to protect passengers from being stuck on planes for hours without food, water or access to restrooms became the centerpiece of Department of Transportation rules that have reduced tarmac delays nationwide.

In 2010, she founded the Senate Military Family Caucus to help address the challenges faced by families of U.S. service members who sacrifice so much for our country. She worked to establish the West Coast Combat Care Center in San Diego to ensure that severely wounded service members in the West have access to the highest quality care. She also helped create the Defense Task Force on Mental Health and secured millions in federal funding to improve medical care for severely burned soldiers.

A strong proponent of life-saving medical research, Senator Boxer wrote bipartisan legislation to accelerate America's contribution to combat global HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis.

A leading defender of a woman's right to choose, Senator Boxer helped lead the floor fight for passage of the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act. She continues to lead efforts to stop extremists in Congress from attacking women's health and a woman's right to privacy.

In 2010, she wrote a measure to end taxpayer bailouts of Wall Street by ensuring that financial firms – not taxpayers – will pay all the costs of liquidating failing Wall Street firms. She also co-wrote legislation to increase lending to small businesses through community banks.

Senator Boxer has worked to revitalize the economy by supporting targeted tax cuts, a permanent Research and Development tax credit, accelerated depreciation of new business equipment, and tax credits for broadband investments focused on rural and underserved areas. She co-authored the bipartisan "Invest in the USA Act of 2004," which provided tax incentives for U.S. companies to bring overseas profits back home to create jobs and spur economic growth.

To help homeowners, Senator Boxer wrote a measure requiring that homeowners be alerted within 30 days if their lender sells or transfers their home mortgage loan. She wrote a bipartisan measure to ensure that banks cannot act as real estate brokers to prevent conflicts of interest.

In response to the September 11th attacks, Senator Boxer wrote the law requiring that air marshals be on board high-risk flights and the law allowing airline pilots with special training to carry guns in the cockpit.

She is the author of the Syria Accountability Act, which strengthened sanctions against Syria over the country's support for terrorism. She also wrote a bipartisan measure to ensure that POWs who died in captivity would be eligible to receive the Purple Heart.

Senator Boxer joined colleagues to pass the 1994 Crime Bill, which led to the lowest crime rate in 25 years. She has worked to fund anti-gang programs, pass the Violence Against Women Law (VAWA), and the Community Policy "COPS" Program. Her bill to prevent the criminal use of personal information obtained through motor vehicle records was signed into law and upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court. She has authored the Violence Against Children Act, based on the successful Violence Against Women Act.

Senator Barbara Boxer met her husband of 48 years, Stewart Boxer, at Brooklyn College. The couple moved to California in 1965 to raise their two children, Doug and Nicole. They have been blessed with four grandchildren—Zachary, Zain, Sawyer and Reyna.