

Senator John Laird

- **Age 76, Male, Married to John Flores**
- Senator Laird received his **Bachelor's degree with honors in Politics from the University of California, Santa Cruz.**
- **Democrat representing District 17**
- **District 17 covers Monterey Bay, Salinas, Santa Cruz, and San Luis Obispo** (note that the land between Salinas and SLO is also in District 17).



Non-Political Careers

- Executive Director of the Santa Cruz AIDS Project (1991-1994)
- Lecturer on environmental policy at UC Santa Cruz

Political Careers

- Senator Laird worked as a district staffer for United States Representative Jerome Waldie. In the summer of 1974, he also worked for Florida's Representative Bill Gunter.
- Santa Cruz City Councilman (1981-1990)
- Santa Cruz Mayor (1983-1988)
- Cabrillo College Board of Trustees Member (1994-2002)
- California State Assemblymember for District 27 (2002-2008)
- California Secretary for Natural Resources under Governor Jerry Brown (2011-2019)

Tenure & Electoral History

- Senator Laird is serving his second term in the California State Senate; he assumed office on December 7th, 2020
- In 2024, Senator Laird defeated Republican candidate Tony Viruetta with a voter turnout of around 65% (269,862 votes).

Key Issue Positions

- **Climate Change & Environmental Protection:** Focuses on wildfire mitigation, coastal protection, battery storage safety, and renewable energy infrastructure, drawing on his extensive background as Natural Resources Secretary.
- **LGBTQ+ Rights & Equality:** Longtime pioneer for LGBTQ+ representation, civil rights protections, and reproductive healthcare funding across state policy.
- **Public Education & Healthcare Access:** Advocates for budget allocations to support higher education systems (UC, CSU, community colleges) and expand universal healthcare access in coastal communities.

Campaign Finance & Prominent Donors

- Biggest campaign financiers include: SEIU, California State Council of Laborers, California Teachers Association, healthcare advocacy groups, and conservationist groups.

Ideological Profile

- **Economic: Progressive Democratic.** Favors state investments in green energy infrastructure, strong labor protections, higher education funding, and state-backed social safety net programs.
- **Social: Very Progressive.** A lifelong advocate for LGBTQ+ rights, racial equity, reproductive freedom, and expanded criminal justice reforms.
- **Environmental: Strongly Progressive / Conservationist.** Prioritizes aggressive climate adaptation policies, public land preservation, biodiversity protection, and strict safety regulations on energy projects.