



Senator Mark DeSaulnier (DE-SOWN-YEA) was elected to the Senate in November 2008, representing the 7th District, which includes most of Contra Costa County. DeSaulnier is Chair of the Senate Labor and Industrial Relations Committee, Chair of the Senate Budget Subcommittee #4, responsible for State Administration, General Government and Judicial, and is a member of the Appropriations, Health and Housing and Transportation Committees.

Prior to his election to the Senate with 67 percent of the vote, DeSaulnier served the Bay Area for 25 years as a Mayor, Supervisor, and State Assemblyman. In each office and at every level, DeSaulnier has fought for the issues that matter most to the Bay Area: affordable health care; economic security for working families and small business owners; living wages and fair labor practices; and environmental policies that improve transportation and enhance quality of life.

DeSaulnier has addressed local and regional issues on the California Air Resources Board, the Association of Bay Area Governments, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, as a Concord Planning Commission, and as a member of the University of California Toxic Substances Research and Teaching Program Advisory Committee.

Economic Security

DeSaulnier has fought hard for the rights and representation of working people. He led a number of negotiations in Contra Costa County resulting in fair wages, benefits and a safe workplace for healthcare workers, refinery workers, and machinists. He cast the decisive vote to rebuild the Contra Costa Regional Medical Center, saving 1,000 jobs, and led the campaign to keep Wal-Mart out of Concord by fighting for Measure L in 2004. DeSaulnier also fought actively against California's Proposition 75 – the partisan attempt to silence the voice of public employees. He has campaigned recently on behalf of in-home supportive workers, for hotel workers, and intervened to prompt the Contra Costa Board of Supervisors to recognize IFPTE's representation of over 950 County Employees.

Health Care

DeSaulnier has worked throughout his career to greatly advance healthcare access and quality of treatment for constituents. He authored local measures to fight childhood obesity and to expand second-hand smoke regulations. Recognizing the great need for women's health services, DeSaulnier introduced a comprehensive Women's Health Program serving the needs of Contra Costa County. The plan included construction of five new Women's Health Centers featuring a 'one-stop' approach to women's health needs. DeSaulnier spent his surplus office funding as a County Supervisor on suicide prevention, alcohol and drug abuse counseling, preventative dental care for disadvantaged youth, and school breakfast programs.

DeSaulnier was a member of the Speaker's Healthcare Reform Working Group in the State Assembly and was a key advocate for affordable and accessible health care. He introduced 10 related bills – including on smoking, drug abuse and disease prevention – and was honored by the American Cancer Society.

Transportation

Contra Costa County and the burgeoning Northern California region have benefited from numerous transportation and mobility improvements resulting from the strong partnership between Senator

DeSaulnier, Congressman George Miller, Congresswoman Ellen Tauscher and Assembly Member Tom Torlakson. DeSaulnier's Capitol Hill advocacy secured increased transportation funding for the expansion of Highway 4, eBART to eastern Contra Costa County, development of a fourth bore in the Caldecott Tunnel, and improvements to other Bay Area roadways.

During his 10 years on the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, DeSaulnier and his fellow commission members oversaw the most recent edition of the long-range plan, Transportation 2030, which charts a new course for the agency, particularly with regard to promoting 'smart growth' development patterns.

DeSaulnier also guided the development and implementation of the FasTrak electronic toll collection system and the 511.org traffic information system to ease traffic congestion and speed travel throughout the Bay Area and surrounding communities.

In response to the 2007 fiery tanker truck crash that closed the MacArthur Maze, DeSaulnier co-authored legislation (Assembly Bill 1612) that cracked down on hazardous materials truck operators who had operated without regular safety inspections. DeSaulnier has been a strong champion for the expansion of the light rail eBART extension into Eastern Contra Costa County (expected operation by 2013-14).

Children & Family Issues

The welfare and needs of children have been one of DeSaulnier's highest priorities throughout his service. He has sponsored numerous initiatives on their behalf including the Contra Costa Children's Report Card and the Children's Accountability Act, both tools for evaluating children's issues and the impact of county programs on children. He also established the annual Children and Families' Budget, a separate County budget that reviews and measures the effectiveness of County programs in these areas. His other projects for children include AfterSchool4All, the Future Fund and the Children and Families Committee of the Board of Supervisors. The 40 bills authored by DeSaulnier in the State Assembly included efforts to fight truancy among school children, to remove unsafe guns from our streets, to improve indoor air quality in schools, and to create opportunities for at-risk youth.

Air Quality

DeSaulnier has cultivated extensive experience in air quality management. The historic Contra Costa County Industrial Safety Ordinance and the Refinery Flare Rule sponsored by Supervisor DeSaulnier stand as landmark collaborations that are recognized nationally as offering the most stringent protections to workers and surrounding Bay Area communities.

Smart Growth

DeSaulnier continues to play a significant role in regionalism and smart growth. He was a coauthor in 2008 of SB 375, which is widely regarded as the most significant transportation and land use legislation in California in the past 20 years, and has long been a champion of the need for government agencies to solve regional problems collaboratively. He established the Interregional Partnership spearheading legislation to change growth patterns. He instigated the Regional Agencies Smart Growth Strategy and the Contra Costa: Shaping Our Future process. He is also the co-author of the Contra Costa County Smart Growth Action Plan. DeSaulnier will continue to advocate Transit Oriented Developments (such as the Contra Costa Centre) and mixed-use infill projects that combine housing, offices, and retail, in order to reduce unnecessary vehicle trips.

Background

Born in Lowell, Massachusetts, DeSaulnier earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in History from the College of the Holy Cross. DeSaulnier has been a member of the Teamsters union as well as the hotel workers union. Unique to many Democratic legislators, DeSaulnier has been a small business owner most of his career. Over the last 35 years, DeSaulnier owned several successful restaurants in the greater Bay Area. An avid runner, he has completed 21 marathons. DeSaulnier lives in Concord with his two sons.