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Clarissa Reyes Falcon and Joseph Cruz Elected as Chair and Vice Chair of the California Transportation Commission

ROSEVILLE, Calif. – Today at its January 2026 business meeting, the California Transportation Commission (Commission) elected Clarissa Reyes Falcon as its Chair and Joseph Cruz as its Vice Chair, effective March 1. Chair-elect Falcon is the first person of Asian American and Pacific Islander heritage to be elected as Chair of the Commission, and the first Chair from the San Diego region since 2008.

“I am grateful to my colleagues for the opportunity to serve as Chair of the California Transportation Commission. We have made significant strides in investing in an equitable and resilient transportation system, but our work is far from finished,” said Chair-elect Falcon. “I look forward to building on our close partnership with Governor Newsom, the Legislature, Caltrans, and our local stakeholders to accelerate the multimodal projects that will define California’s future.”

“I am honored to assume the role of Vice Chair to help shape a transportation future that supports our workers and our economy,” said Vice Chair-elect Cruz. “Together with my colleagues we will continue to deliver results for all Californians.”



Clarissa Reyes Falcon is a government and public relations professional representing over 30 years of unique experience in the public, private and non-profit sectors, including serving 14 years working for the State Assembly and State Senate. In November 2010, Ms. Falcon founded Falcon Strategies, a firm that specializes in strategic communications, project and issue advocacy, coalition building, and public policy analysis guiding clients through complicated government processes while deploying holistic approaches to engaging with communities.

In continuing her service to communities throughout San Diego County, Ms. Falcon was appointed to the Commission in September 2021 by Senate President pro Tempore Toni G. Atkins and reappointed in January 2024. In addition, she serves on the Boards of the South Bay Family YMCA, Sweetwater Union High School Cares Foundation, Circulate San Diego, the UCSD Chancellor’s Community Advisory Board, member of the Fiat Lux Alliance for the University of California Office of the President, board member of the Asian Business Association, and South County Economic Development Council as well as a founding board member of the San Diego Leadership Alliance. Ms. Falcon has been recognized as a Woman of the Year by former Senate President pro Tempore Toni Atkins and former State Assemblymember Lorena Gonzalez.

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Ms. Falcon received her bachelor's degree from UC San Diego and lives in Bonita, CA with her husband, Michael, and children, Benjamin and Ella.

Joseph Cruz is the Executive Director of the California State Council of Laborers (CSCL), the largest construction trade union in California, and represents over 75,000 hardworking union construction workers before the Legislature and state regulatory bodies. Mr. Cruz has a wide range of experience lobbying on several public policy fronts, including transportation, labor, housing, and water, as well as local government, economic development, environmental regulation, and a keen understanding of California's budget process.



Prior to CSCL, Mr. Cruz was a founding partner at Cruz Strategies, a prominent minority owned lobbying firm in the state, and represented numerous interests, including labor, business, energy, water, and transportation before the state Legislature.

He served 11 years as the Legislative Director for the California Alliance for Jobs, representing over 100,000 construction workers and 5,000 contractors throughout California. Mr. Cruz has helped manage several state bond and local sales tax measures that have collectively generated over \$50 billion.

He got his start in politics as a field organizer for San Francisco Mayor Willie L. Brown and served as a senior consultant for numerous California State Assembly Speakers, including Cruz Bustamante, Antonio Villaraigosa, and Robert Hertzberg.

Mr. Cruz currently serves as a board member to the California Council of Environment & Economic Balance, California Foundation on the Environment and the Economy, and Transportation California. He was appointed to the Commission by Governor Newsom in 2023.

The California Transportation Commission is an independent state agency responsible for funding highway, local road, transit, intercity passenger rail, active transportation, and general aviation projects throughout California. The Commission also advises and assists the California State Transportation Agency Secretary and the Legislature on state transportation policies and plans.

For more information, visit the Commission's website at catc.ca.gov.

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