

CALIFORNIA

Voters in California will select a new governor to replace term-limited Governor Gavin Newsom (D), along with an attorney general, state treasurer, and other executive offices. Twenty (20) out of 40 senate seats, and all 80 assembly seats, are up for reelection. Democrats are expected to maintain their control of the legislature and executive offices.

Governor

Democratic Nominee

Xavier Becerra

Xavier Becerra entered the race as a relative long shot, polling in the single digits earlier this year. The tide shifted in mid-April when former U.S. Representative Eric Swalwell (D) exited the primary, consolidating Democratic support and allowing Becerra's statewide name recognition to take hold. The former U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services demonstrated a steady rise in the polls in the weeks that followed before winning the primary election.

Becerra brings extensive public service experience to the governor's race. Prior to serving in the Biden administration from 2021 to 2025, he was California's Attorney General from 2017 to 2021, a role in which he frequently litigated against the first Trump administration. He previously represented California in the U.S. House of Representatives for more than two decades.

Aligning with many of his Democratic counterparts, Becerra's gubernatorial campaign centers on **resisting the Trump administration** and addressing **affordability** issues. He has pledged to expand affordable housing, stand up to price gouging and unjustified rate hikes, expand help with childcare and essential costs, and use the power of the state to lower prices.

He has plans to address shortcomings in the state's **healthcare** system through measures that include cutting prescription drug costs using state purchasing power, expanding CalRx to produce and purchase essential medications at lower cost, streamline administrative oversight, launch universal telehealth access, and launch the California Healthcare Workforce Investment Fund.

Becerra's **AI** policy agenda focuses on driving industry growth through collaboration without compromising the state's workforce – and unions – or child safety. It includes expanding AI literacy for Californians, promoting responsible AI in state government, investing in workforce programs, and providing transparency in automated decision-making. He has also pledged to work with his counterparts across the nation to adopt California's AI standards. He contends that state's **data centers** must cover their own energy costs and comply with environmental disclosure requirements.

Becerra is planning to hold a California Entertainment Summit that brings guilds, crew organizations, producers, studios, streamers, and tech companies together to collaborate on an action plan for the **film and television industry's** future. He supports a California Content Performance Disclosure requirement: platforms must share meaningful performance data with the cast, writers, directors, and crew whose work drives their value, in a standardized form that gives workers what they need to bargain fairly.

He additionally supports infusing major investments into the state for **disaster preparedness**, including early warning systems, seismic retrofits, and boosting emergency communications.

Larry Sabato's Crystal Ball rates the race Safe Democratic, and the Cook Political Report rates it Solid Democratic.

Trivia: After earning his Bachelor of Arts in economics from Stanford University in 1980, Becerra became the first person in his family to graduate from college.