

2024 SUPER ROLE MODEL

Ash Kalra

CA State Assembly, District 25

Assemblymember Ash Kalra was born in Toronto, Canada, and moved to California as a young child. He represents California's 25th District, which encompasses the majority of San José, including downtown and open space areas in southeast Santa Clara County as well as the South San José neighborhood where he grew up and now resides. He was first elected to the CA State Assembly in 2016, becoming the first Indian American to serve in the California Legislature in state history, and was re-elected to his fourth term in 2022. He received a Bachelor of Arts in Communication from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and a law degree from Georgetown University.



Earlier in his career, Kalra served on the San José City Council for eight years and was a Deputy Public Defender for Santa Clara County for 11 years. As a public defender, he represented indigent clients in both felony and misdemeanor matters, and a majority of his time was spent in drug treatment court where clients were given the opportunity to complete a rehabilitation program and turn their lives around.

Today, Assemblymember Kalra is the Chair of the Committee on Labor & Employment and also serves as a member on the Housing & Community Development, Judiciary, Transportation, and Water, Parks, & Wildlife committees. Additionally, he is Chair of the California Legislative Progressive Caucus to help guide a strategic, thoughtful approach to advancing a compassionate, inclusive agenda for Californians. Assemblymember Kalra has established himself as a leader on issues ranging from criminal justice reform to environmental protection, and he has championed legislation on health care reform and sustainability, housing affordability, and expanding economic opportunity for all.

To confront racism and systemic bias in our systems of justice, Assemblymember Kalra authored the historic California Racial Justice Act of 2020 (AB 2542), a landmark bill addressing racial discrimination in criminal sentencing and convictions, and a follow up bill in 2022 (AB 256) to apply the Racial Justice Act retroactively for persons with past convictions. As a longstanding champion of a single-payer health care system, Assemblymember Kalra introduced AB 1400 in 2021 – the statewide legislation also known as CalCare – which would guarantee comprehensive, high-quality health care for all Californians as a human right.

For his long-standing commitment to address racial disparities and advance equity within our criminal justice and healthcare systems as well as his legislation to promote secure and peaceful communities for all residents, Alum Rock Counseling Center is proud to present Assemblymember Ash Kalra with the agency's 2024 Super Role Model Award.