

Dr. Shirley Weber, Secretary of State, California

Dr. Weber was born on a farm in rural Hope, Arkansas, where her father, David, was a sharecropper. Her California story began at three years old, when she and her family fled the farm and moved west after her father refused to back down in a dispute with a white farmer, and a lynch mob then threatened her father's life. The family relocated to the Pueblo Del Rio housing projects in South Los Angeles, where Dr. Weber grew up.

Dr. Weber is a living testament to the power of public education: she is a proud product of California public schools – district schools in Los Angeles, through high school, and later at UCLA, where she earned three degrees, including her Ph.D., at the age of 26. As one of the few Black women in southern California navigating academia in the late 1960s and early 1970s, Dr. Weber became one of the youngest-ever professors at San Diego State University, where she helped found the Africana Studies Department.

Dr. Weber has translated her lifelong commitment to service into an ambitious agenda, including legislation on education, civil rights, public safety, food insecurity, protections for persons with disabilities, and voting rights. As Chair of the Elections and Redistricting Committee, Dr. Weber helped to oversee California's elections and campaign finance law before becoming Secretary of State, and authored legislation to extend voting rights to people on parole – more than 50,000 Californians – and to ensure that those on probation and parole are aware of their voting rights and able to cast their ballots.

As Secretary of State, she has engaged in the fight to protect poll workers and election officials from partisan attacks and has fought to help Californians better understand our state's electoral process. At a time when voting rights are under attack nationwide, Dr. Weber has stood strong against partisans who want to suppress the vote or distort the truth.

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Dr. Weber is the mother of two children. She has two grandsons and a granddaughter, and is the widow of the late Honorable Daniel Weber, a California state judge.

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