

**SBWPC Legislation & Advocacy Committee Legislator Report 2016  
Assemblymember Das Williams**

Interview conducted by Joan Vignochi and Leslie Brtek  
Nov. 14, 2016

1. Please give us an update on your involvement in mentoring women to participate in the political process since our last interview a year ago. (e.g., appointments to boards or commissions, encouragement to run for office)

**I have shared my dedication to mentoring women with the WPC on many occasions and I believe your members have seen it in action repeatedly. Since I last reported to you, I have spent the entire election year mentoring three women in particular through the elections process: Monique Limon, running for my current Assembly seat; Joan Hartmann, running for 3rd District County Supervisor; and my former District Director Jeannette Sanchez-Palacios, running for Ventura City Council. As you know, and lucky for us, Monique and Joan were successful in their election. Unfortunately, Jeannette was not successful in her race but I will continue to work with her on her continued involvement in our community.**

**In addition to local elections, the Legislative API Caucus under my leadership made significant donations toward electing women legislators. *I put a focus on these races due to the trend of the number of women in the legislature continuing to drop, which is alarming.***

**As for what's ahead, I'm excited to take office as County Supervisor, where I will have the ability to appoint people to boards and commissions, and will be looking to appoint as many women as I can to these positions. Additionally, at least two of my three staff members at the County will be women.**

2. Since our last interview, please update us about how you have addressed gender and other inequities or imbalances with reference to women and minorities.

**I have continued to support all legislation that addresses gender and other inequities. In particular, since our last check in, I supported AB 1732, the most progressive gendered restroom legislation in the nation which requires that all single stall restrooms be designated as gender neutral.**

3. Please tell us diversity on your staff and any changes that have taken place this year, particularly with regard to women and their roles, as well as other ways diversity is reflected in your staff (e.g. ethnicity, LGBT, etc.)?

**I have continued to have women leading both my District and Capitol offices this year. Additionally, I will have a woman, Darcel Elliott, serve as my chief of staff for my County Supervisor office and will have at least two of the three staff positions be women.**

4. As Supervisor, will you be able to stay involved with the issues implemented in AB 969 (Campus Sexual Assault law), and if so, how?

**I am applying to be appointed as a Regent of the University of California. Higher education has been one of the top issues I have worked on during my entire time in the legislature. Increasing accountability and transparency in sexual assault reporting and strengthening UC policies on preventing sexual assault will be high on the list of things I want to achieve as a UC Regent.**

5. What, if any, new patterns or trends do you see emerging in the CA Legislature?

**I am very proud of the progressive policy we have been implementing as a state, particularly**

in the last few years. I am seeing more and more of my colleagues demonstrate courage on critical issues, such as climate change. The Speaker of the Assembly and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate are both stalwart champions for the environment and reducing the impacts of climate change, who also happen to both be Latino. I believe we will continue to see California be a world leader on climate change, on workers' rights, and accessibility to education. I am encouraged by the statement released by the two leader of the legislature in the wake of the election of Donald Trump. California will be a fighter in all that is right for the nation.

6. How do you see your experience as an Assemblymember contributing to your new role as County Supervisor?

The County and the State work very closely together. The County has to implement much of what the state puts forth. I have a very deep understanding of the policy that the County will be implementing in the near future and, in general, have a deep understanding of the legislative process. Additionally, I have a lot of experience working on compromises in legislation to make it more suitable to as many people as possible. That will come in handy when working on County policy and the differences in needs between North and South county.

7. In what ways would you like to see SBWPC support you with respect to specific issues in the future?

One reason I'm really excited to come back to the local government level is the public forum. I will definitely need WPC members to show up in support of ordinances and policies that are in line with your position papers. One thing in particular I'm looking to change is the cap on the amount of acreage we can develop for solar. If we expect to move away from fossil fuels, we need to be able to develop alternatives. I will need a lot of public support to move this change forward. I will make sure my staff is in constant communication with the WPC to include you in the public process as much as possible.

8. What else would you like to share with the SBWPC? (e.g., bills of which you are especially proud, contributions you have made or foresee making in the future)

As my time in the Assembly is coming to an end, I've become very thoughtful about what my legacy as your Assemblymember may be. I hope people will know that I have been one of the strongest fighters against climate change in the state, I have been the loudest voice for accessibility and a dedicated revenue source for our public higher education system, I have worked closely with locals to ensure I am using legislation to benefit those at home, and I have spoken in favor of equality and against discrimination for all people and workers of our state.

#### **Additional Comments:**

Assemblymember Williams legislative package may be found at:  
<http://asmdc.org/members/a37/legislation-2>

SBWPC's Legislation and Advocacy Committee tracked eight bills authored/sponsored by Assemblymember Williams which supported SBWPC Position Papers. L&A Committee members wrote letters of support for five. Of those, one was passed and signed by the governor (AB 2845 - Safe Place to Learn) and one was passed but vetoed (AB 969 – Postsecondary education: Sexual Assault Cases).