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Senator Brian Jones elected as Senate Minority Leader

“The California Senate Republican Caucus has rolled up our sleeves and is ready to collaborate with our colleagues across the aisle to fix California – now let’s get to work!”

Sacramento – Leader-elect Jones issued the following statement upon being unanimously selected this morning by members of the California State Senate Republican Caucus to be their Senate Minority Leader:

Thank you to my colleagues for their trust in my vision to lead our caucus. Senator Wilk has been a strong leader for this caucus as he has supported us in our communication, legislative, and constituent services in important ways.

Californians are best served by hard-working elected officials that put bipartisanship and the betterment of the community first. This philosophy is something I have always tried to adhere to in the past and I will carry over as Senate Minority Leader.

As California Republicans, we are fighters for the middle and working class. We stand united with commonsense solutions to help fix California.

Californians rightly expect their leaders to put aside political differences and tackle issues such as high inflation, spiraling gas prices, and persistent unemployment and under-employment. Rampant crime, homelessness, and small business closures also have taken its toll on our communities.

Some of our most pressing issues are a matter of government performance. Our state’s public education institutions, our transportation network of roads, highways, and freeways, and our water and energy infrastructures were all once the envy of the nation, but now are instead often the punch line of jokes.

As Ronald Reagan said in announcing his run for Governor of California in January 1966, “Our problems are many but our capacity for solving them is limitless . . .”

The California Senate Republican Caucus shares our late Governor and President's optimism and we pledge to continue working tirelessly in a bipartisan manner for the betterment of our state. We are here to make government work for the people, rather than the other way around.

It was recently announced that California is poised to be the 4th largest economy in the world, yet California has one of the worst business tax climates in the nation.

The state has spent \$14 billion in the last two years on homelessness, yet California has the highest homeless population in the nation. Our state has swaths of areas where children, families, and veterans are living homeless on our streets.

The state spends billions on a White Elephant called High Speed Rail, yet California has the worst roads in the nation. We can all name dozens of highways and freeways throughout the state that are long overdue for maintenance, upgrades, and expansion.

Many of our small, rural communities in California have polluted water not fit for drinking, cooking, or bathing and must truck in bottled water just to survive. California has some of the worst drinking water in the nation.

Our hardworking farmworkers and family farmers have had to fallow fields because vital water storage projects such as Sites Reservoir, Temperance Flat, and the Delta tunnels have been delayed for not just years, but decades.

The gap between California's wealthy coastal elites and those inland suffering in poverty grows more every day.

Small businesses, middle class families, and college-bound Californians move out of state every day, with many of them never wanting or able to return because of the high cost of living, lack of affordable housing, and increasing property and violent crime in our state. As a sign of the severity of the issue, the moving company U-Haul ran out of trucks trying to meet the demand of those fleeing California.

The California Senate Republican Caucus is concerned and for years we have been actively putting forth potential solutions to our state's ills.

Unfortunately, the so-called Democrat "super majority" ruling party in California has traditionally too often had an "our way or the highway" mindset.

Despite that, those of us in the Minority Party are even more determined to be heard, to be the "loyal opposition," to be the voice of those left behind, and to present positive alternative solutions to the problems California faces.

All too often the Democrat Party leadership's approach has been "let's create a new agency," or "let's raise taxes," or "let's study the problem."

One example of this has to do with skyrocketing gasoline prices – we all saw this coming long before the Ukraine Invasion that the Democrats like to use as an excuse. Gas prices rise for a number of reasons, namely here in California because of the different blend of fuels, very limited refinery capacity, and over a \$1 per gallon in state taxes and fees.

Over a year ago, the California Senate Republican Caucus came up with a surefire way to immediately reduce gas prices. With state running a \$100 billion surplus the obvious answer was to suspend the state's gas tax, which would have immediately lowered the price of gas anywhere from 50 cents to \$1 per gallon.

Our Democrat-controlled Senate and Assembly refused to even discuss or vote on suspending the gas tax and instead they "studied" the problem for a year while gas prices went up further and further.

The Democrat politicians finally came up with a half-baked "rebate plan" that took months to develop and many of the rebate checks still haven't been mailed out.

Rebates are a nice idea but the California Senate Republican Caucus plan for a gas tax suspension was a much more efficient, quicker, and transparent way to give California motorists relief at the pump, immediately.

It's in situations such as this that we in the Minority Party will continue stepping up and offering alternative solutions that we think work better than the stale, big-government, Majority Party knee-jerk standard responses.

I, and all the members of the California Senate Republican Caucus, have our sleeves rolled up and are ready to collaborate with our colleagues across the aisle to fix California. Now let's all get to work!"

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Senator Brian W. Jones was reelected to the California State Senate in 2022 representing the 40th Senate District which includes Alpine, Bonsall, Escondido, Fallbrook, Lakeside, Mira Mesa, Pine Valley, Poway, Rainbow, Ramona, Rancho Bernardo, Rancho Penasquitos, San Marcos, Santee, Scripps Ranch, Valley Center, Torrey Hills, University City, and North City of San Diego communities.



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