

Kalra Capitol Report



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15th Annual Silicon Valley African Film Festival

The Silicon Valley African Film Festival (SVAFF), founded by Chike Nwoffiah, kicked off October in grand style, marking its 15th year as a beacon of African cinema in the Bay Area. Celebrating "Africa through the African lens," the festival continues to enrich Silicon Valley's cultural landscape by showcasing the diverse stories and creativity that make African cinema an essential part of the global film industry. This year's celebration was made even more special by the attendance of California Asm. Ash Kalra, who walked the red carpet alongside filmmakers and community leaders, immersed himself in screenings of remarkable films, and presented awards to four of the festival's celebrated honorees.

The festival honored the legendary John Kani, who has brought African stories to international stages; groundbreaking filmmaker Julie Dash, whose work reshaped the possibilities for Black women in cinema; Malian visionary Souleymane Cissé, a pioneer in African storytelling; and Nollywood star Richard Mofe-Damijo, whose influence has helped make Nigerian cinema a global powerhouse. Asm. Kalra had the unique pleasure of recognizing these remarkable artists, sharing a heartfelt message of appreciation, and presenting them with official resolutions to commemorate their lasting impact.



SVAFF's mission to promote understanding and appreciation of Africa through film was evident in every part of the event, from post-screening dialogues to cross-cultural exchanges between American and African filmmakers. Ash Kalra's participation underscored the festival's significance not just as an artistic showcase but as a celebration of cultural connections and a tribute to the creators who bring Africa's vibrant stories to the screen.

A Message From Assemblymember Ash Kalra

Hello Friends,

I hope this message finds you and your loved ones well as we approach the festive holiday season and New Year.

As we quickly approach Thanksgiving Day, I want to extend my deepest gratitude to the constituents of Assembly District 25 for putting your trust in me by electing me to my 5th term. Thanks to your literal vote of confidence and continued support, I enter this next Assembly session with increased motivation to advocate for the well-being of the community in which I was blessed to have grown up.

This next year will mark the 17th year I will have represented my community as an elected official, the first 8 as a San Jose Councilmember for District 2. Over the past 16 years, I have seen so much change and, yet, the many reasons that make this District one of the best places to live have not changed. This last two-year term was my first in the newly drawn Assembly District 25. For most of my constituents, not much changed as the bulk of neighborhoods I represent remained the same. There are some new residents I am proud to represent, including in the Rose Garden community as well as unincorporated neighborhoods in the east hills. Additionally, the District increased quite substantially in square miles by extending southward down the Diablo Mountain range all the way to San Benito County!

With the 2023-2024 legislative session coming to an end, I am proud to report that 23 of the bills I authored were signed into law by Governor Newsom. Some of the bills signed into law in September included efforts to protect renters, move housing projects forward, and provide for more affordable housing.

Please know that I appreciate every opportunity to listen to your concerns while writing and supporting practical laws in the State Legislature. As we move forward, I remain committed to working tirelessly on your behalf to ensure that our community thrives, that every voice is heard, and that our shared goals are met. I look forward to getting back to work in the upcoming legislative session.

If you would like to learn more about my recent legislative accomplishments or need assistance with a state agency, please do not hesitate to reach out to my District Office staff at (408) 286-2535
Happy Holidays and Best Wishes for 2025!

Sincerely,
Ash



Assemblymember Kalra Attends Grand Opening of Sunrise Pavilion

On October 31, Asm. Ash Kalra joined community members, local leaders, and partners to celebrate the grand opening of Sunrise Pavilion, a transformative housing development dedicated to supporting transitional-age youth in San José. Asm. Kalra welcomed attendees and expressed deep gratitude to the Bill Wilson Center, the County of Santa Clara, the City of San José, Jamboree Housing, and the Santa Clara County Housing Authority, recognizing their vital contributions and collaboration. He highlighted how Sunrise Pavilion exemplifies the power of partnerships among government, nonprofits, and community organizations working toward a common goal: to address the urgent need for housing stability and support for young people facing homelessness.

Kalra reminded the audience of Youth HOPE Month's significance, underscoring the importance of providing stability and opportunity to vulnerable young individuals. "Youth homelessness isn't just a statistic—it's a call to action," he shared, emphasizing that every young person deserves the chance to thrive, dream, and feel supported as they build their future.

Sunrise Pavilion offers a unique pathway to independence, featuring 43 units of both interim and permanent housing designed to support youth in transitioning to self-sufficiency. More than just a place to stay, it's a safe, supportive environment where young people can grow, learn, and envision a brighter future. Kalra underscored that housing initiatives like Sunrise Pavilion not only address immediate needs but also help reduce long-term homelessness and foster resilience in the community.

He also acknowledged the broader housing challenges across California, noting that while the crisis is complex, projects like Sunrise Pavilion demonstrate that targeted solutions can make a profound difference. He called on everyone to continue advocating for funding, supportive policies, and collaborative efforts to combat youth homelessness, adding, "Today is a moment of celebration, but it's also a reminder of the work we still need to do."

The event closed with a message of hope and commitment, as Kalra encouraged ongoing collaboration to ensure that no young person faces homelessness alone. Reflecting on the project's success, he applauded everyone involved in making Sunrise Pavilion possible, celebrating a shared vision of hope and possibility for young Californians.



HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

Assemblymember

Ash Kalra

Legislative Accomplishments

2023-2024 Legislative Session

AB 58

Rehabilitation for Transitional-aged Youth:

AB 58 extends the Young Adult Deferred Entry program until January 1, 2026, allowing pilot counties to continue offering young adults who commit nonviolent felonies the option to serve their sentence in juvenile hall rather than county jail.
Chapter 418, Statutes of 2023

AB 96

Transit Workers:

To restore and protect the voices of transit workers amidst growing technological advancements, AB 96 requires transit agencies to notify the unions of their intent to procure autonomous driving technology and collectively bargain over its implementation.
Chapter 419, Statutes of 2023


AB 261

California Golden Chanterelle:

By designating the California Golden Chanterelle as the state mushroom, AB 261 rightfully recognizes the significant impact of mushrooms on California's history, culture, and ecosystem.
Chapter 644, Statutes of 2023


AB 607

Course Materials Cost Transparency:

To close price transparency gaps and give students predictability when selecting college courses, AB 607 makes public universities and community colleges display estimated course material costs on the online course schedule platform ahead of course registration.
Chapter 660, Statutes of 2023

AB 636

Protecting the Rights of Farm Workers:

AB 636 requires employers of H-2A visa workers to provide written notice of specified state employment rights to H-2A farm workers so they can be aware of their right to report a violation of California law.
Chapter 451, Statutes of 2023


AB 943

Breaking Down the Other Act:

AB 943 will create greater data transparency around the state's incarcerated population by requiring the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to disaggregate ethnic data of people in custody with specific categories for Asian and Pacific Islander groups and Indigenous people.
Chapter 459, Statutes of 2023

AB 1118

California Racial Justice Act Claims:

Following up on landmark legislation, AB 1118 makes technical and clarifying changes to the procedures for raising claims under the California Racial Justice Act to ensure the most efficient processes are used.
Chapter 464, Statutes of 2023


AB 1210

Sodium Nitrite Labeling:

To increase awareness of the dangers of sodium nitrite, AB 1210 requires sodium nitrite at a purity of 10% or greater to be labeled as fatal if ingested and provide information about intravenous methylene blue, the recommended treatment.
Chapter 469, Statutes of 2023

AB 1414

Protecting Consumers Against Predatory Debt Collection:

By prohibiting debt collectors from suing on "common counts" when the obligation to pay is based on a written contract, AB 1414 ends the practice of predatory debt collection lawsuits that often evade consumer protection laws.
Chapter 688, Statutes of 2023


AB 1469

Assisting Unsheltered People:

AB 1469 amends the Santa Clara Valley Water District Act to expand its statutory purpose and allows them to use resources for outreach, counseling, transitional housing, or other services for unsheltered people living on public lands in Santa Clara County.
Chapter 729, Statutes of 2023

AB 1581

Restoration Management Permit Act:

To streamline environmental restoration permitting, AB 1581 improves the Department of Fish and Wildlife's "Restoration Management Permit" to consolidate all species take and natural water authorizations that qualified restoration projects may need.
Chapter 681, Statutes of 2024

AB 1649

County Public Works:

AB 1649 increases change order thresholds for the County of Santa Clara until January 1, 2027, to allow the County to avoid possible delays on large time-sensitive public works projects.
Chapter 281, Statutes of 2023

AB 1755 Updates to Lemon Law:

To better protect consumers and ensure quicker resolution of lemon law disputes, AB 1755 improves current court procedures so consumers can get their car replaced or bought back within months rather than years.

Chapter 938, Statutes of 2024



AB 2288 PAGA Reform: By incentivizing employer compliance with California's labor laws and helping ensure workers are made whole, AB 2288 preserves the Private Attorneys General Act (PAGA) as a vital tool to enforce workers' rights while also reducing prolonged litigation for the parties involved in a PAGA case.

Chapter 44, Statutes of 2024

AB 2347 Tenant Eviction Due Process: AB 2347 creates a fairer process in eviction cases to allow

tenants a meaningful amount of time to actually exercise their rights by increasing the time for them to respond to a summons by five additional days and codifying a timeline for demurs and motions to strike hearings.

Chapter 512, Statutes of 2024



AB 2509 Improving IPM Practices: By establishing a definition for "invasive species" and requiring the Invasive Species Council of California to prioritize certain practices, such as integrated pest management (IPM), AB 2509 will help California more consistently implement pest management solutions.

Chapter 720, Statutes of 2024

AB 2602 Digital Replicas and Performer Rights: Amidst rapidly growing technological

innovation, AB 2602 protects a performer's right to their digital self by requiring informed consent and proper representation in executing a contract for any transfer of rights of that individual's likeness or voice.

Chapter 259, Statutes of 2024

AB 2682 Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority:

AB 2682 amends the Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority's Enabling Act to promote better natural environment conservation, support sustainable agriculture, and connect people to nature.

Chapter 733, Statutes of 2024



AB 2812 VTA Contracting Thresholds: AB 2812

modifies the bidding thresholds the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) uses to procure supplies, materials, or equipment, allowing VTA to lessen the administrative burden and costs of procuring routine, non-construction items.

Chapter 17, Statutes of 2024

AB 2926 Affordable Housing Preservation:

As California faces a dire affordable housing shortage, AB 2926 helps preserve existing affordable housing and protects low-income tenants from being displaced by giving an opportunity for a preservation buyer to keep the property as affordable housing.

Chapter 281, Statutes of 2024



AB 3122 Streamlined Housing Projects: To encourage more housing development and allow ongoing projects to move forward without further unnecessary delays, AB 3122 offers developers the flexibility to adapt to changing market demands and capitalize on recent updates to the state density bonus law.

Chapter 754, Statutes of 2024

ACR 86 Spay and Neutering Services: In response to California's pet

overpopulation crisis, ACR 86 encourages state, local, and nonprofit or private partners to develop and fund high-volume spay-and-neuter services and urges the Veterinary Medical Board to encourage out-of-state veterinary professionals to register to practice in the state.

Chapter 51, Statutes of 2024



ACR 211 Cricket: As California prepares to host the 2028 Summer Olympic

Games, where cricket is set to make its official return since the 1900 Paris Olympic Games, ACR 211 highlights the rich history of the sport of cricket and urges the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) to recognize it as an official high school sport.

Chapter 181, Statutes of 2024



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Give the Gift of Life: Support Mothers' Milk Bank This Giving Tuesday

This Giving Tuesday, consider supporting Mothers' Milk Bank. The need for donor milk is at an all-time high, and by becoming a milk donor, you can make a difference for vulnerable infants. Human milk provides essential nutrition for premature babies, helping them grow stronger and thrive.

Why Your Donation Matters Milk donation is more than a gift—it's a lifeline. Your support helps close the gap between demand and supply, ensuring more babies receive the critical nutrients they need.

How to Help Becoming a milk donor is simple, and every contribution counts. Visit Mothers' Milk Bank's website to learn more and start the process.

Mothers' Milk Bank in San José is a nonprofit dedicated to providing lifesaving breastmilk to babies in need. For more information, visit camilkbank.org.



Diwali: Celebrating Light, Unity, and Cultural Recognition



Every year, Assembly District 25 celebrates Diwali, the Festival of Lights, with a special sense of pride and accomplishment, marking State Assemblymember Ash Kalra's eighth consecutive year advocating for the recognition of Diwali in California. Kalra, who became the first Indian American elected to the California State Legislature in 2016, has spent the past eight years leading efforts in collaboration with colleagues in the State Capitol and constituents in the district to officially honor Diwali.

Diwali, a time-honored celebration of the triumph of light over darkness, knowledge over ignorance, and good over evil, holds profound cultural and spiritual significance for Indian Americans and South Asian Americans. Observed by Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, and Jains across the United States, the festival brings families and communities together to light lamps, share sweets, and express gratitude, embodying a universal message of hope, renewal, and positivity.

Recently, Asm. Kalra co-hosted a Diwali celebration at the State Capitol with BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha, inviting his colleagues in the legislature, including Dr. Darshana Patel—the second Hindu American ever elected to the State Legislature—to learn about the cultural significance of the festival and enjoy traditional snacks and refreshments.

In AD 25, Diwali celebrations were equally vibrant, featuring traditional dances, music, food, and prayers. Assemblymember Kalra and his representatives actively participated, engaging with constituents to celebrate the festival's importance.

With the recognition of Assembly House Resolution 111 following the 2024 election, Kalra is confident the state will continue to champion cultural diversity and inclusivity. "Recognizing Diwali at the state level reaffirms California's commitment to embracing our diverse cultures," said Kalra. "It is a celebration of light, unity, and the strength of our community, and I'm honored to continue advocating for its recognition."

Supervisor Cindy Chavez is Assembly District 25's Woman of the Decade!



In November, Asm. Ash Kalra honored Santa Clara County Supervisor Cindy Chavez as Assembly District 25's Woman of the Decade, recognizing her extraordinary leadership and service. Chavez's life as a lifelong public servant has been defined by a steadfast commitment to progress, justice, and the well-being of our community.

Since 2013, Supervisor Chavez has served on the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, including a pivotal role as Chair during the one-in-a-century COVID-19 pandemic. She led the county's response, training over 500 community leaders and youth to combat misinformation and provide trusted public health messaging. She will term out at the end of 2024, when the newly elected Supervisor in her district is officially sworn in.

Prior to her election to the County Board of Supervisors, Chavez had a distinguished career as a City Councilmember for the City of San José. During her tenure on the Council, and while serving as Vice Mayor, she strengthened communication between state, county, and local law enforcement authorities to keep the community safe.

Chavez's advocacy spans a wide range of issues, from healthcare and education to transportation and environmental protection. As a key figure in preserving essential healthcare services, she played a crucial role in saving two major hospitals from closure. Her Children's Health Initiative has ensured that no child in Santa Clara County goes without health coverage, regardless of their insurance status. In transportation, she was instrumental in expanding BART to North San José and securing the electrification of Caltrain—transformative projects that will benefit generations of residents.

Beyond infrastructure, Chavez has been a champion for labor rights, spearheading the Healthy Nail Salon Recognition Program to protect workers from toxic chemicals. She has also shown leadership in environmental conservation, spearheading efforts to protect Coyote Valley and preserve its unique natural resources.

Asm. Kalra shared, "Supervisor Chavez's legacy of advocacy, rooted in the values of equity, justice, and integrity, has shaped a stronger, more resilient Santa Clara County and will continue to inspire leaders in the years to come. I extend my deepest gratitude to Supervisor Chavez for her unwavering dedication to improving the lives of all Californians in my Assembly District and beyond."

Celebrate the Holidays at Christmas in the Park!



Get ready for the holidays as Christmas in the Park returns to Downtown San José! This beloved tradition, now in its 43rd year, opens with the Drive-Thru experience on November 21 and the Downtown Park opening on November 29 at Plaza de Cesar Chavez.

Transforming two acres into a holiday wonderland, the event features over 40 animated exhibits, dazzling lights, and the 65-foot Community Giving Tree. Guests can stroll through an enchanted forest of beautifully decorated trees by local schools, businesses, and community groups.

This free event also includes visits with Santa, nightly entertainment, and festive treats. Don't miss out on the Bay Area's favorite holiday celebration!

Celebrating Heritage and Freedom: Honoring ACR 195 in San José

On August 3, 2024, the San José Vietnamese Heritage Garden in Asm. Ash Kalra's district was filled with a solemn celebration as the Vietnamese American community and elected officials gathered to honor the passage of Assembly Concurrent Resolution (ACR) 195. This significant resolution, authored by Asm. Evan Low, acknowledges the Vietnamese Traditional (Heritage) and Freedom Flag—the flag of Vietnam from 1948 to 1955—as a symbol of the Vietnamese American community and was recently passed by the California State Legislature. Assembly District 25, represented by Kalra, is proud to be home to one of the largest Vietnamese-descended populations outside of Vietnam, with the City of San José having the largest Vietnamese population in the world.



The honor of ACR 195 took place during the monthly flag-raising ceremony organized by the United Vietnamese American Community of Northern California. This ceremony was a moment of pride and reflection for the Vietnamese American community, celebrating both their heritage and their ongoing commitment to democratic values. With the state's recognition of the Vietnamese Freedom Flag, the ceremony will continue to underscore the importance of recognizing cultural symbols and honoring those who have contributed to the fight for freedom and human rights.

The morning gathering began with a flag-raising ceremony, followed by the presentation of commemorative copies of ACR-195 to distinguished Vietnamese American community leaders. Among

those honored were representatives from the United Vietnamese American Community of Northern California, the Former Vietnam Armed Forces Alliance of Northern California, and the Association of Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 201.

Asm. Kalra, who co-authored ACR 195, highlighted the significance of the resolution and the sacrifices made by the trailblazers. "As a state representative for San José's Little Saigon, I would like to express my deep appreciation for the veterans and heroes present here today who fought against communism and sacrificed for democracy and human rights for all," Kalra remarked.

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Asm. Kalra Honors the Legacy of Tommie Smith & John Carlos



On October 16th, Asm. Ash Kalra stood before the statues of Tommie Smith and John Carlos to commemorate the 40th anniversary of their iconic stand for justice and human rights at the 1968 Olympics. In a powerful speech, Asm. Kalra honored their courage, reflecting on the moment when Smith and Carlos raised their fists in silent protest, a gesture that transcended the Olympic podium to ignite a global movement for civil rights and social justice.

Asm. Kalra spoke to the bravery it took for Smith and Carlos to risk their personal success in pursuit of a greater cause, recognizing that silence in the face of injustice would have equaled complicity. Instead, their actions amplified the voices of millions, awakening a commitment to equality that continues to inspire activism today. Kalra underscored the importance of civic

engagement and community action, noting that real change starts with those willing to stand up and demand it—whether through policy, public service, or grassroots advocacy.

Later that afternoon, Asm. Kalra opened a fireside chat that set the stage for thoughtful discussion on the legacy of Smith and Carlos. He emphasized that their activism taught us all that challenging the status quo is essential to true progress, calling on the next generation to continue fighting for equality. Reflecting on the enduring relevance of their stand, Asm. Kalra reminded everyone that while the struggle for justice remains, the passionate activism of figures like Smith and Carlos continues to fuel meaningful change.

The day closed with a powerful reminder of the responsibility each generation holds to uphold the principles these men fought for and to further the quest for an equitable world. As Asm. Kalra affirmed, the legacy of Smith and Carlos calls on us all to make our voices heard, for social justice and equality can only be achieved when we stand united.



Grand Opening of Temaki Bar in San José



Asm. Ash Kalra was on hand to celebrate the grand opening of Temaki Bar, an exciting new dining spot in San José's District 25. Located at 5657 Snell Ave, Temaki Bar promises to become a favorite for locals with its unique blend of hand rolls and an impressive sake selection—the largest in the Bay Area. The grand opening on September 22 drew a lively crowd, with sounds by DJ Quantum adding to the festive atmosphere. Guests were treated to a wide range of hand-crafted hand rolls made from premium ingredients, showcasing the creativity and passion of Temaki's chefs. Asm. Kalra was proud to support this new business, which adds a fresh and innovative flavor to the district's vibrant culinary scene. Temaki Bar is open from 11 AM to 9 PM and is closed on Mondays. Visit their website for more details: temakibarsj.com



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Photos from Around the Capitol, the District & Beyond



Make a Friend (or Two) for Life at San José Animal Care Center!



Wrigley and Sugar are a tight-knit pair of bunnies. Sugar, true to her name, is the sweetest bunny girl you'll ever meet. She came to the shelter as a baby and was adored by everyone there before she went to her foster home. She loves people and will come right up to you, showering you with love and melting your heart with her affectionate licks. Wrigley, on the other hand, had a rough start in life and was rescued from a terrible situation. Even in his foster home, he's timid and always on alert. We decided to pair Sugar and Wrigley because we believed Sugar's love and confidence could help him, and we're thrilled it worked out.

Since they've been together, Wrigley feels more secure and confident around Sugar. Sugar quickly adjusted to life in a home, enjoying snuggles with Wrigley and keeping him company. She loves a good head rub and won't give up until she gets one. And Wrigley, though cautious at first, always ends up joining in the fun with Sugar. They are both lovable, sweet buns who are eagerly waiting for their forever home.

Ready to make them yours? Adoptions and fosters take place in person at the Animal Care Center, conveniently located at 2750 Monterey Road in San José. Adoption hours are from noon to 4:00 p.m. on Monday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, and 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Please note that adoptions and fosters are processed on a first-come, first-served basis.





Contact Us!

Want to sign up for the newsletter?

Please email Celeste Walker at celeste.walker@asm.ca.gov.



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Administrative Law	(916) 323-6225
Aging	(916) 419-7500
Alcoholic Beverage Control	(916) 419-2500
Board of Equalization	(800) 400-7115
Bureau of Automotive Repair	(800) 952-5210
California Courts	(415) 865-4200
California Highway Patrol	(800) 835-5247
Caltrans	(916) 654-2852
Child Supportive Services	(866) 901-3212
Civil Rights Department	(800) 884-1684
Consumer Affairs	(800) 952-5210
Controller's Office	(916) 445-3028
Developmental Services	(916) 654-1690
Employment Development	(800) 300-5616
Fair Political Practices Commission	(916) 322-5660
Fish & Wildlife	(916) 445-0411
Food & Agriculture	(916) 654-0466
Health Care Services	(916) 445-1248
High Speed Rail Authority	(916) 324-1541
Insurance	(800) 927-4357
Motor Vehicles	(800) 777-0133
Parks & Recreation	(800) 777-0369
Public Health	(916) 558-1784
Rehabilitation	(916) 324-1313
Secretary of State	(916) 653-6814
Social Services	(916) 651-8848
Toxic Substances Control	(800) 728-6942
Veterans Affairs	(800) 952-5626

