

Joe Simitian was elected to the California State Senate in November 2004 to represent the 11th State Senate District, which includes parts of San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Santa Cruz counties. His public service over the years includes stints as a State Assemblymember, member of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, Mayor of Palo Alto and President of the Palo Alto School Board. He has also served as an election observer/supervisor in El Salvador and Bosnia, and participated in refugee relief and resettlement efforts in Albania and Kosovo.

In the Senate, Simitian chairs the Human Services Committee and serves as a member of the following committees: Budget and Fiscal Review; Business, Professions and Economic Development; Education; Energy, Utilities and Communications; Environmental Quality; and Transportation and Housing. He is also one of two Democratic members on the Budget Subcommittee on Education.

Senator Simitian received his Bachelor of Arts degree, with academic honors, from The Colorado College. He also holds a Master of Arts degree in International Policy Studies from Stanford University, a Master in City Planning degree from the University of California at Berkeley, and a Juris Doctor law degree from the University of California at Berkeley (Boalt Hall).

Raised in Palo Alto and a graduate of Palo Alto (“Paly”) High, Simitian’s roots are in the Midpeninsula. His community involvement includes service on the boards of local organizations such as American Leadership Forum – Silicon Valley, Adolescent Counseling Services and the Clara-Mateo Alliance, and he co-chairs the Silicon Valley Manufacturing Group’s Housing Leadership Council.

Since serving in the Legislature, Simitian has been recognized by many groups for his commitment and the passion he brings to his job. In his first year in the State Assembly, he was recognized by San Jose Magazine as one of the “Power 100 of Silicon Valley,” and was recognized by the American Electronics Association as “Legislator of the Year.” In 2002 Simitian received the California School Board Association “Outstanding Legislator of the Year” award and had a 100% voting record with the California League of Conservation Voters. Also in 2002, the California Journal identified Simitian as among those at the “Top of the Class.”

Simitian brings to his work a unique perspective and background – service at all levels of local government; hands-on experience in the private sector as a public schools attorney, businessman, and certified city planner; a breadth of international interests and experience; as well as professional education and training particularly applicable to his work in the Legislature.