

Senator Mark Ridley-Thomas Biography

Senator Mark Ridley-Thomas was elected to the State Senate in November 2006, after serving two terms in the State Assembly and represents the constituents of Senate District 26 including Beverlywood, Culver City, Hancock Park, Hollywood, Jefferson Park, Ladera Heights, Larchmont, Leimert Park, View Park, West Los Angeles, and Vermont Knolls.

He chairs the Senate's Committee on Business, Professions and Economic Development and its two subcommittees on Professional Sports and Entertainment, and The Economy, Workforce Preparation and Development. In addition to his chairmanship duties, Mr. Ridley-Thomas serves on the Senate Appropriations and Health committees.

In January 2008, he officially became Chair of the California Legislative Black Caucus.

His legislative work continues to address a broad range of issues with implications for economic and workforce development, health care, public safety, education, budget accountability, consumer protection and civic participation.

Mark Ridley-Thomas was first elected to public office in 1991 and served with distinction on the Los Angeles City Council for nearly a dozen years.

He is widely regarded as the premier leader in the Neighborhood Council movement, by virtue of his founding of the Empowerment Congress, arguably the region's most successful Neighborhood Council.

His political career was preceded by a decade of service as executive director of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference of Greater Los Angeles, which followed a brief but successful five-year stint as a high school teacher.

He is a graduate of Manual Arts High School in Los Angeles and earned a baccalaureate degree in Social Relations and a master's degree in Religious Studies from Immaculate Heart College. Mr. Ridley-Thomas went on to receive his doctorate in Social Ethics and Policy Analysis from the University of Southern California.

He is married to Avis Ridley-Thomas, the Director of the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office Dispute Resolution Center and they are the proud parents of twin sons, Sebastian and Sinclair who are juniors at Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia.