

**SPEAKER ROBERT RIVAS** was first elected to the State Assembly in 2018. During his first term, he was appointed as the Chair of the Assembly Agriculture Committee and elected as Vice-Chair of the influential Latino Legislative Caucus. A lifelong resident of the 29th Assembly District, Rivas previously served two terms on the San Benito County Board of Supervisors prior to becoming an Assemblymember.

Rivas was raised in Paicines, California, where his grandfather was a farm-worker at Almaden Vineyards. Rivas and his brother grew up in farmworker housing, cared for by their single mother and beloved grandparents, who emigrated from Mexico in the 1960s in search of the California Dream.

As a child, Rivas watched his grandfather stand side-by-side with Cesar Chavez, Dolores Huerta, and the UFW as a leader in the fight to win fair contracts for farm-workers. Rivas' grandfather was known for his passionate advocacy on behalf of his fellow workers, but also for his ability to work with owners to negotiate contracts acceptable to both sides.

Through his grandfather, Rivas learned that you could fight fiercely for your beliefs, while respecting those with whom you disagreed. Still, it seemed unlikely that Rivas would become a community leader, at least not if doing so required public speaking. For much of his childhood he struggled to overcome a severe stutter, a condition he continues to contend with today.

Rivas' childhood experiences—growing up in a farmworker community, struggling to overcome a disability—gave him a direct understanding of the challenges faced by many residents as they struggle to build better lives for themselves and their families. His efforts on behalf of those who have faced similar and other challenges is apparent in his legislative work.

During his tenure in the Assembly, Speaker Rivas has championed legislation to improve California's supply of affordable housing, increase workplace health and safety protections, create the Golden State Teacher Grant Program, and secure the first-in-the-nation COVID-19 Farmworker Relief Package, which included critical efforts related to access to PPE and testing, temporary housing, and healthcare.

A long-time champion of the environment, Rivas won bipartisan support for the Oil Transportation Safety Act, which improved the state's preparedness to protect coastal regions after a potential spill of non-floating oil. Further, Rivas has led efforts to accelerate the construction of renewable energy and ensure the state explores all options to use public lands and oceans to effectively sequester carbon.

Rivas attended local public schools in San Juan Bautista and Hollister. He graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Government from CSU Sacramento and later earned a Master's in Public Administration from San Jose State University. Speaker Rivas lives in Hollister with his wife Christen, where they are raising their children.

# ROBERT RIVAS

71st Speaker of the Assembly