



National Association of Women Business Owners-California Taps Governor-Appointed Former Lead of California's Office of the Small Business Advocate (CalOSBA), Dr. Tara Lynn Gray as Statewide Director of Advocacy

(Los Angeles, California, July 2026)— The National Association of Women Business Owners California (NAWBO-CA), home to the largest number of chapters of the nation's leading organization for women entrepreneurs, has appointed Dr. Tara Lynn Gray as its new statewide Director of Advocacy. Gray brings 30 years of high level, small business leadership gravitas, as the most recent Director of California's Office of the Small Business Advocate (CalOSBA), an appointment made by Governor Gavin Newsom in March 2021. In her new role with NAWBO-CA, Gray will oversee the organization's legislative, regulatory, and public policy efforts on behalf of the largest concentration of women-owned businesses in the United States, with approximately 1.5 million women-owned firms generating billions of dollars in economic activity and employing hundreds of thousands of Californians in the 4th largest economy in the world. Her appointment will focus on developing ecosystems that affect public policy initiatives.

An influential stakeholder in the California state legislative environment, Gray is focused on adding to the organization's longstanding advocacy for women's leadership and economic empowerment.

During her tenure as Director of CalOSBA, Gray led the state's primary small business advocacy office and oversaw nearly \$5.3 billion in programs, grants, technical assistance initiatives, and capital access resources designed to support entrepreneurs throughout California. Her leadership expanded opportunities for small businesses to access funding, government contracts, business training, and economic development resources, with a particular focus on underserved communities and women-owned enterprises. Prior to leading CalOSBA, Dr. Gray served as President and CEO of the Fresno Metro Black Chamber of Commerce, where she built programs focused on entrepreneurship, workforce development, supplier diversity, and economic mobility. Throughout her career, she has worked to create stronger pathways for small business success while helping entrepreneurs access the resources, networks, and opportunities needed to grow and thrive.

"I will be bringing together the priorities and vision of our 10 state chapters for what true economic sovereignty looks like for women entrepreneurs in this state," said Gray, "Together, our board, chapter advocates, and members are going to build an advocacy powerhouse that cannot be ignored. We are entering the most consequential phase of the legislative year, and I am honored to lead an advocacy effort that empowers women business owners to influence the policies that affect their businesses, their employees, and their communities. As California lawmakers work to prepare for critical policy committee hearings and advance legislation ahead of key August fiscal committee and floor vote deadlines, the decisions made in Sacramento over the coming months will

shape the future of entrepreneurship across our state. NAWBO-California will be working every day to ensure that the voices of women entrepreneurs are heard loud and clear throughout this process.”

"NAWBO-CA is first and foremost focused on advocacy," said NAWBO-CA President, LaVada English. "Women business owners are not simply participants in California's economy—they are among its most powerful drivers of innovation, job creation, and community prosperity. We are honored to have Dr. Gray help strengthen our collective voice in Sacramento, advance procurement equity, expand access to capital, and advocate for policies that empower women entrepreneurs to scale and succeed."

About - The National Organization of Women Business Owners California ([NAWBO-CA](#)) is a nonprofit mutual benefit corporation and the statewide voice for women business owners in California—the world's fourth-largest economy. Representing California's largest network of NAWBO chapters, the organization advocates on behalf of the state's 1.5 million women-owned businesses, which comprise nearly 40% of all businesses and contribute an estimated \$580 billion in revenue. Through policy advocacy, leadership development, and strategic partnerships, NAWBO-California advances opportunities for women entrepreneurs by promoting access to capital, procurement opportunities, board leadership, and business growth. Chapters include Los Angeles, San Diego, Silicon Valley, San Francisco Bay Area, Bakersfield, Santa Barbara, Orange County, Central Coast, and Inland Empire.

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