

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The speaker of the United States House of Representatives, Dennis Hastert, and Democratic leader of the House, Nancy Pelosi, announced yesterday, March 10, that Representative Xavier Becerra (CA-31) was their choice to fill a seat on the Smithsonian Institution's Board of Regents, which was left vacant by the untimely death of Rep. Bob Matsui (CA) this past January.

"Bob Matsui's passing certainly leaves a great vacuum in our caucus and in his various leadership roles," Rep. Becerra said. "I'd like to try and help meet the challenge that his loss presents us by ensuring his voice lives on this successful board.

"I am honored and humbled by this appointment and am so very thankful to Speaker Hastert and Leader Pelosi for their faith and confidence in my ability to serve in this distinguished role," Rep. Becerra said. "The Smithsonian museums are among this country's most endearing treasures and I look forward to helping maintain and enhance their coveted works of art.

"I have experienced the Smithsonian in the way those fortunate enough to have traveled here have experienced it – wandering around with family in tow, taking in the displays not only through my own eyes, but through the eyes of my children," Rep. Becerra said. "As a regent, I hope to bring that important perspective of a typical family visitor in combination with my background as a Member of Congress and a proponent of the Smithsonian's efforts to reach all Americans."

Charged by Congress with the oversight of the Smithsonian Institution's 16 museums, the Board of Regents includes 17 men and women who represent a cross section of various sectors across the country including government, academia, philanthropy, business and the arts. Those currently serving on the Board of Regents include: William H. Rehnquist, chief justice of the United States, ex officio, chancellor; Richard B. Cheney, vice president of the United States, ex officio; Senator Bill Frist (Tennessee), Senate majority leader; Senator Thad Cochran (Mississippi); Senator Patrick J. Leahy (Vermont); Rep. Sam Johnson (TX-3); Rep. Ralph Regula (OH-16); Hanna H. Gray, Harry Pratt Judson distinguished service professor of history at the University of Chicago and former president of the University of Chicago; Anne d'Harnoncourt, the George D. Widener director of the Philadelphia Museum of Art and a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences; Manuel L. Ibáñez, president emeritus and professor emeritus (Biochemistry), Texas A&M University; Walter E. Massey, physicist and president of Morehouse College in Atlanta; Roger W. Sant, chairman emeritus and cofounder of the AES Corporation and chairman of the board of the Summit Foundation in Washington, D.C.; Alan G. Spoon, managing general partner in Polaris Venture Partners, former President of the Washington Post Company; Patricia Q. Stonesifer, co-chair and president of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; Wesley S. Williams Jr., partner in the law firm of Covington & Burling; and Eli Broad, chairman of AIG SunAmerica, Inc. and founder-chairman of KB Home.

### Becerra.house.gov ###