



# [Women Breaking Glass Ceiling at LADWP](#)

## **First Female Board President and V.P. Lead First All-Female Board**

With the Los Angeles City Council's confirmation of Mia Lehrer as the newest member of the Board of Water and Power Commissioners, LADWP has the distinction of being led by the first all-female Board in its history.

Appointed by Mayor Eric Garcetti in October, Lehrer joined four existing Board members including President Cynthia McClain-Hill, Vice-President Susana Reyes, Commissioner Jill Banks Barad, and Commissioner Nicole Neeman Brady. Lehrer filled the vacancy created by the departure of Board President Mel Levine, who had served as President since 2013—the longest-running term of any Board president.

"Mia will bring her proven leadership, firsthand experience, deep expertise, and extraordinary drive to ensuring LADWP remains one of the most sustainable, reliable, and responsible public utilities in America," said Mayor Garcetti upon her nomination in September. "When Mia takes her seat on the Board, we will make history for our city and mark a critical moment of progress on the road to true equity — all while deepening the department's commitment to safeguarding our environment, combating climate change, and creating good-paying jobs."

"I'm excited and ready to join this board made up of talented and accomplished individuals who happen to be women, and who also reflect the diversity of the city we serve," said Lehrer. "I want to thank Mayor Garcetti for this opportunity to serve and make a difference when it comes to securing an environmentally sustainable future for Los Angeles."

It was the second time the glass ceiling was broken by LADWP's Board of Commissioners in 2020. In July, McClain-Hill and Reyes were elected as the first female Board President and Vice President, respectfully.

"I am greatly honored to serve as President of this Board and grateful for the support of Mayor Garcetti, members of the City Council, and my fellow Board members. This is a time of unprecedented challenges, as we work to build a stronger Los Angeles by achieving our goals for clean, reliable and sustainable water and energy in the midst of an international pandemic, financial crisis, and urgent cries for racial justice and equity in our city," McClain-Hill said.

Mayor Garcetti has made gender equity a top priority from the beginning of his term in office, taking actions to bring parity and balance into the heart of City leadership. Women currently hold more than 50% of the positions on more than 40 City Boards and Commissions.

Raised in El Salvador, Lehrer earned her Master of Landscape Architecture at the Harvard Graduate School of Design and later founded Studio-MLA in 1996, an L.A. urban design and landscape architecture firm. She has lectured widely on landscape and urban design, including environmental and sustainability issues and the public process. Her firm has completed numerous projects including Franklin Ivar Park in Hollywood and Vista Hermosa Park in downtown Los Angeles.

During Lehrer's first Board meeting on October 27, the Board considered key programs, including the \$50 million low-income utility assistance program, restoration efforts in Mono Basin and Clean Grid L.A. Board President McClain-Hill remarked, "Today is a historic first as we hold our first meeting as an all-female board of commissioners. It has taken us 118 years in the history of LADWP to see this day, and I'm very excited to be part of this."