



## Brief Biography

### Background

Born and raised in the border community of Brownsville, Texas, Graciela Flores Napolitano moved to California with her husband after high school. A working mother of five, Napolitano made her way up through the ranks of Ford Motor Company. After retirement, she focused full-time on civic pursuits in her adopted hometown of Norwalk where she has resided for more than 47 years.

Napolitano began her political career as a member of the Norwalk City Council, winning her first election in 1986 by a mere 28 votes. Four years later she won re-election by the highest margin of votes recorded in city history and was selected city mayor by her peers.

Following her 1992 election to the California Assembly, Napolitano emerged as a recognized leader on international trade, environmental protection, transportation and immigration. She quickly earned a reputation as a hard worker and champion for small business, women, economic expansion and job creation.

### In Congress

First elected to Congress in 1998, Grace Flores Napolitano is currently serving her fifth term. Her Los Angeles County-based district covers several cities and communities in the San Gabriel Valley and Southeast Los Angeles County areas.

The Congresswoman has been a member of the House Committee on Natural Resources since the 106<sup>th</sup> Congress and was appointed as the most senior new member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure at the start of the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress. She now presides as Chair of the Natural Resources subcommittee on Water and Power, yielding her a strong voice on water conservation, water recycling, desalination, and sound groundwater management and storage, helping to address Southern California's need for adequate water quality and supply. As a member of the Transportation & Infrastructure committee, she sits on the subcommittees of Highways and Transit, Railroads, Pipelines & Hazardous Materials, and Water Resources and Environment.

Napolitano joins Representative Tim Murphy (R-PA) as co-chair of the bipartisan Congressional Mental Health Caucus, where she has taken a leading role in suicide prevention among Latina adolescents after learning that nearly one out of three has seriously contemplated suicide – the highest rate for any ethnic or racial group in the country. She also previously served as Chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus during the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress, which continues to address national education, immigration, health, and civil rights issues, and the impact these policies have on the Hispanic community.