

INFORMATIONAL HEARING
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT, SPORTS, AND TOURISM

THE IMPACT OF EVENTS AND GATHERINGS ON CALIFORNIA TOURISM

October 2, 2024

1:00 PM to 4:00 PM

State Capitol, Room 444

PANELISTS' BIOGRAPHIES

- Emellia Zamani, Director of Government Affairs and Public Policy, California Travel Association (CalTravel)
- Anthony Brenneman, Executive Director, Orange County Sports Coalition, Co-Chair of the California Sports Coalition
- Nathan Kopp, Vice President, Strategic Initiatives, Sports San Diego, California Sports Coalition
- Mike Testa, President and Chief Executive Officer, Visit Sacramento
- Brenda Tucker, Director, Arts Marketing, San Francisco Travel
- Martha Saucedo, Chief External Affairs Officer, Anschutz Entertainment Group, Inc. (AEG)
- Andy Foster, Executive Officer, California State Athletic Commission

Emellia Zamani
Director of Government Affairs and Public Policy
California Travel Association (CalTravel)

Emellia Zamani joined CalTravel in 2019 as its first in-house lobbyist. She represents CalTravel's advocacy efforts in Sacramento to identify policy priorities and create and execute strategies for engagement with the state legislature and administration to protect and promote the travel and tourism industry in California. She was instrumental in the inclusion of a one-time \$95 million tourism marketing allocation in the state's 2021-22 budget and advancing the priorities of both leisure and business travel during pandemic-induced closures.

Emellia came to CalTravel from the office of former Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian, where she was legislative director. She was responsible for managing his legislative agenda and worked on a variety of policy areas. Prior to her time working in the California Legislature, she spent almost nine years in New York City, where she worked in various editorial jobs in the children's book publishing industry.

Emellia graduated from the University of California, San Diego with a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science and is a Sacramento native.

Anthony Brenneman
Executive Director
Orange County Sports Coalition
Co-Chair of the California Sports Coalition

Anthony Brenneman is the Executive Director of the Orange County Sports Commission. He leads start-up 501c3 non-profit, with the mission to enhance the economic, social, and cultural vitality of its communities through sports. Born and raised in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, his journey from an industrial state capital on the East Coast to leading the Orange County Sports Commission is a testament to his passion, hard work, and strategic vision.

Anthony is a 2013 graduate of Temple University in Philadelphia, where he majored in Sport & Recreation Management, with a minor in Governance & Policy. While in college, he interned in the Athletics Dept of Thomas Jefferson University, focused on NCAA DII compliance. Also, serving time as the Basketball Manager, for Temple's DI women's program. Armed with a solid educational background and a deep love for sports, he started his professional joining the City of Clearwater, Parks & Recreation Department in Florida. Working on the public side, he gained new perspective on operational structure, allowing him to hone his skills in organizing and managing city sports leagues and events.

In 2014, he sought new challenges and opportunities to make a broader impact in the sports industry. His career path led him to Cleveland, Ohio, where he became an integral part of the organizing committee for Gay Games 9. The world's largest LGBTQ+ sports and cultural

festival, being hosted that year in the Mid-West city. It was the first time the quadrennial event would be hosted in a mid-size city, with a less active community compared to traditional host cities. His role as Operations Manager, ensured a smooth event, welcoming 8,000 athletes, with another 20,000 visitors during the 8 summer days.

Anthony's passion to work with communities to host sporting events grew. Seeing it as one of the most impactful opportunities to elevate a destination. His next position took him westward, with the Snohomish (SNOW – HO – MISH) County Sports Commission outside of Seattle Washington. As one of the fastest growing suburbs in the country. He helped oversee sports infrastructure development throughout many of the cities in the county. Allowing them to attract and host future events and providing residents places to play.

In 2016, Anthony was recruited to Orange County, to take a similar role, building out the sports division of what was then called Sports Anaheim. For many years, Anaheim and Orange County were seen as an extension of Los Angeles. Now with the goal, of establishing itself as its own identity in the sport tourism industry. After 4 years of success, growing the Anaheim focus, in 2019 by having an extend portfolio, and diverse membership support, Orange County Sports Commission was launched. Still in its infancy, the commission has since become a beacon for sports and a catalyst for community development in the region. Looking to continue to rebound coming out of the pandemic. Working on events such as the USA Gymnastics National Championships, IWF World Weightlifting Championship, ISU Four Continents Figure Skating Championships, NCAA DI Men's Basketball West Regional, AVP Huntington Beach Open, FIE Fencing Foil Grand Prix, USA Curling Night in America, World Ultimate Frisbee Beach Championships, Volleyball Nations League, NCAA Women's Beach Volleyball National Championships.

Anthony's approach involves not only organizing sporting events but also leveraging the positive impact sports can have on local communities. From boosting local economies to promoting a sense of unity and pride, the Orange County Sports Commission has become a model for other regions looking to harness the power of sports for holistic community development.

Nathan Kopp
Vice President, Strategic Initiatives
Sports San Diego
California Sports Coalition

Nathan Kopp is the Vice President for Sports San Diego, the 501(c)(3) non-profit organization responsible for recruiting, supporting, and hosting sports events in the San Diego region. In addition to serving as the regions sports commission to bring new events to the destination, Sports San Diego also owns and operates annual tourism driving sports events including the DIRECTV Holiday Bowl, Rady Children's Invitational college basketball tournament, and California State Games.

Nathan has worked in the sports industry for 15-years which includes previous stops with Central Michigan University Athletics, Chicago Bears, Florida Collegiate Summer League, United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee, Rock 'n' Roll Marathon Series, and San Diego Tourism Authority. Across his many positions, he has worked over 500 sports events including some of the largest in the world including multiple World Championships, Super Bowls, Pan American Games, and the Winter Olympics.

Mike Testa
President and Chief Executive Officer
Visit Sacramento

Mike Testa is the President and CEO of Visit Sacramento, leading a talented team that's dedicated to promoting Sacramento as an attractive place to visit, and creating and attracting events and programs that grow the region's prowess as a tourism destination. Through the impact of travel, Mike and his team strengthen Sacramento's economic position, create jobs, and improve the quality of life for people in the community.

Mike has been busy over the last decade building Sacramento's tourism landscape. He helped establish the region's Farm-to-Fork identity, created nationally recognized events like the Tower Bridge Dinner, and brought the famed Michelin Guide to the city. He built relationships with national promoters to position Sacramento as an ideal festival destination for major music events like the Aftershock and GoldenSky festivals. Under his leadership, Sacramento has attracted new citywide conventions, and he signed the largest convention held in Sacramento, the Unified Wine & Grape Symposium, to a 10-year agreement.

Mike is a graduate of St. Mary's College and has spent his career promoting, connecting, and developing relationships to elevate organizational goals. As an expert communicator and seasoned destination marketing executive, he is highly sought after to speak at CEO forums, participate in panel discussions, and facilitate conversations around marketing, tourism development and community economic creation and development.

Brenda Tucker
Director, Arts Marketing
San Francisco Travel

Brenda Tucker, Director Arts Marketing with San Francisco Travel. This role builds awareness of the arts in San Francisco while marketing the city through the arts to domestic and international travelers. In the previous year, Brenda has won multiple awards and driven over 75,000 room nights with arts campaigns. A twenty-six-year San Franciscan, Brenda moved to the city to work with photography and other titles at Chronicle Books from Washington DC where she worked at the Smithsonian Press. After Chronicle Books, Brenda spent ten years at California College of the Arts as Communications Director, helping to grow the student

population by 25% and garnering earned media in dozens of top outlets like NPR, Wall Street Journal, BBC, and a full page feature in the NY Times.

In 2015 KQED came calling and Brenda spent almost three years as the Executive Director of Marketing and Communications, growing the organization's audience to the most listened to public radio station in the US. During her tenure, she launched podcasts like The Bay and Political Breakdown as well as communicating the spectrum auction that garnered KQED \$94.5m+ while losing no membership. Her last project can be heard dozens of times a day across KQED's Radio, TV and on demand digital properties as their Sonic ID. KQED was the first station to create a comprehensive Sonic ID in the public media system and the ID has won both public media and design awards. The role at San Francisco Travel started in 2019 and combined two of Brenda's greatest passions, travel and the arts.

Martha Saucedo
Chief External Affairs Officer
Anschutz Entertainment Group, Inc. (AEG)

Martha is a highly-experienced executive with public and private sector experience developing and implementing large scale political, communications and community engagement strategies.

Ms. Saucedo is responsible for leading AEG's external affairs division, including corporate communications, public and community affairs, government affairs, sustainability, external diversity equity and inclusion efforts as well as philanthropic and social impact initiatives. She is responsible for developing the organization's priorities with respect to local communities. In addition, she oversees the AEG Community Foundation, established to provide funding to non-profit organizations that work to improve educational and recreational opportunities for children.

Martha implemented the landmark L.A. LIVE "Community Benefits Agreement", developing programs in key areas such as affordable housing as well as parks and recreation development in the communities surrounding LA LIVE. In addition, she has been responsible for development and implementation of community engagement strategies around large private-public developments such as the Dignity Health Sports Park on the campus of California State University, Dominguez Hills. She also serves as co-chair of AEG's Women's Leadership Council.

Prior to joining AEG, Ms. Saucedo worked on behalf of Mattel, Inc. managing relationships with local, state and federal elected officials. She was responsible for advising senior management on pending legislation with potential impact to the company as well as maintaining key relationships with both business and community-based organizations.

Ms. Saucedo also has significant experience working in the public sector, having worked for former U.S. House of Representative Member, Xavier Becerra. In this position, Martha was responsible for monitoring and analyzing policy changes affecting local transportation, housing and healthcare issues in the district office.

Martha is a past Chair of the Central City Association Board of Directors, a 400-member business advocacy organization dedicated to the economic vitality of Downtown Los Angeles. She is Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees for the California Science Center Foundation and serves on the UCLA Foundation Board of Directors, which provides oversight of the foundation's endowment and assets. She previously served on the California Hospital Medical Center Community Advisory Board, the Board of Directors for Friends of the Expo Center and was the Treasurer of the UCLA Alumni Association Board of Directors.

Andy Foster
Executive Officer
California State Athletic Commission

Mr. Andy Foster serves the California State Athletic Commission as Executive Officer. Previously, Mr. Foster served as Executive Director of the Georgia Athletic and Entertainment Commission and as Regional Director of the Southeastern United States for the Association of Boxing Commissions. Before his appointment as a regulator, Mr. Foster served as the head mixed martial arts (MMA) referee for the Georgia Commission, officiating hundreds of bouts in both professional and amateur rule sets. Mr. Foster has also competed in professional MMA, amateur MMA, amateur boxing, amateur kickboxing, and amateur sport grappling. In addition, Mr. Foster instructed martial arts between 2002-2008 and trained many martial artists.

Mr. Foster served on the Association of Boxing Commissions Committee of Unified Amateur Mixed Martial Arts Rules as Chairman, and he served on the Boxing and MMA Matchmaking Committee. Mr. Foster currently serves as chairman for the Association of Boxing Commissions MMA Rules Committee, the Association of Boxing Commissions Medical Committee, Association of Boxing Commissions Boxing Officials Training Committee, and the Association of Boxing Commissions MMA Officials Training Committee. Mr. Foster is a member of and the Association of Boxing Commissions Governmental Affairs Committee and the Association of Boxing Commissions Fighters Committee.

Mr. Foster was named 2019 Yahoo Sports Man of the Year in boxing and has been named Executive Officer of the year by the North American Boxing Federation (NABF) in 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024. Mr. Foster attended the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies at Georgia State University and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Public Policy.