

Richard Alatorre was born on May 15, 1943, in Boyle Heights, to Joe Alatorre, a repairman at a stove factory from El Paso, Texas, and Mary Alatorre, a beautician from Arizona. He and his sister Cecelia were raised in East Los Angeles, a working-class, predominantly Latino community that shaped his perspective and values. Growing up in this diverse neighborhood, Richard witnessed the struggles of immigrant families striving for better lives, experiences that fueled his passion for equity and justice. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from California State University, Los Angeles, and a master's degree in Public Administration from the USC – a place where he would hold a lifelong connection and love. His academic achievements would prepare him to navigate the complexities of public policy and community organizing. In the late 1960s, Richard's commitment to justice led him to work with gang members, serve as a community organizer, and become Western Regional Director for the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund. There, he initiated lawsuits on behalf of Spanish-speaking children who had been wrongly assigned to classes for the mentally disabled simply because they did not speak English. His work for the U.S. Civil Rights Commission further deepened his advocacy for marginalized communities. Richard's entry into politics came in 1972, when he was elected to the California State Assembly.

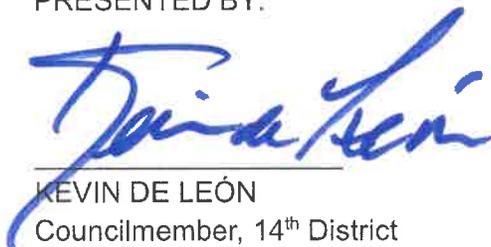
He served in the Assembly for 12 years, where he was known as a "hard-nosed dealmaker" and a trusted lieutenant of Speaker Willie Brown. Richard used his influence to ensure that the voices of the Latino community were heard, becoming a driving force behind some of the most important legislation in California's history. In 1981, as Chairman of the historic Elections and Reapportionment Committee, Richard played a central role in redistricting California's legislative and congressional boundaries. His work was pivotal in creating equitable opportunity districts that finally gave Latinos substantial political representation, transforming California's political landscape for generations. That work transcended over decades, providing the diversity in the State Capitol we know today and stands as a testament to Richard's vision and leadership.

In 1985, Richard made history once again when he became the second Latino in the 20th century to be elected to the Los Angeles City Council and the first representing District 14. For nearly 40 years, District 14 has been led by Latino representatives, a legacy that began with Richard. His leadership helped ensure that the predominantly Latino and Spanish-speaking communities of Boyle Heights, Lincoln Heights, and El Sereno had a strong voice in City Hall. He became a close ally of Mayor Tom Bradley and a powerful advocate for civil rights, affordable housing, and the expansion of public transportation. He also played a key role in the passage of state enterprise zones, bringing tax incentives and job creation to the Eastside. Richard's time on the Council was marked by his fight to ensure that language was never a barrier to civic participation. His groundbreaking legislation on translation services made city government accessible to all, regardless of the language they spoke. Richard Alatorre's life was one of service, vision, and unwavering commitment to justice. He transformed California politics, giving a voice to communities that had been silenced for far too long. His legacy will continue to resonate in the halls of power, in the neighborhoods of CD14, here in City Hall, but more importantly, in the hearts of all who knew him.

It is incumbent that the City of Los Angeles ensure that Richard Alatorre's legacy is celebrated and remembered by all who walk through the heart of Downtown Los Angeles's Civic Center.

I THEREFORE MOVE that Los Angeles Street from Alameda to 1st Streets in Downtown Los Angeles be designated as "Richard Alatorre Legacy Corridor", and that the Department of Transportation be instructed to erect permanent ceremonial signage to this effect at these locations.

PRESENTED BY:


KEVIN DE LEÓN
Councilmember, 14th District

SECONDED BY:



ORIGINAL



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