



For more than twenty years, Mark Takano has worked to improve the lives of Riverside County residents, both as an elected official and as a teacher at Rialto High School.

Born and raised in Riverside, Mark's commitment to public service began at an early age. His family roots in Riverside go back to his grandparents who, along with his parents, were removed from their respective homes and sent to Japanese American Internment camps during World War II. After the war, these two families settled in Riverside County to rebuild their lives.

Mark attended La Sierra High School in the Alvord Unified School District, and in 1979 he graduated as the school's valedictorian. Mark attended Harvard College and received his bachelor's degree in Government in 1983. As a student, he bused tables to help make ends meet. During his senior year, he organized a transcontinental bicycle ride to benefit the international development agency Oxfam America.

Upon graduation, Mark returned home to Riverside and began teaching in the Rialto Unified School District in 1988. As a classroom teacher, Mark confronted the challenges in our public education system daily.

In 1990, Mark was elected to the Riverside Community College District's Board of Trustees. At RCC, Mark worked with Republicans and Democrats to improve higher education for young people and job training opportunities for adults seeking to learn a new skill or start a new career. He was elected Board President in 1991 and helped the Board and the District gain stability and direction amid serious fiscal challenges.

In 2012, Mark became the first openly gay person of color to be elected to Congress.

Mark Takano represents the people of Riverside, Moreno Valley, Jurupa Valley and Perris in the United States House of Representatives. He serves as the Ranking Member of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and as a senior member of the Education and Workforce Committee.

As former Chairman of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Mark authored the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act, or the Honoring our PACT Act, comprehensive toxic exposure legislation that addresses the full scope of issues affecting toxic-exposed veterans' access to VA care and benefits. The Honoring our PACT Act expanded VA healthcare eligibility for over 3.5 million veterans exposed to burn pits, established a presumption of service connection for over 23 respiratory illnesses and cancers, and also eliminated the requirement that veterans prove exposure to toxic substances – a requirement that has often prevented many from accessing the care and benefits they have earned and deserve.

Mark lives in Riverside, California, and Washington, DC.