
Inventory of the Tom Bates Papers

Collection number: LP394

California State Archives
Office of the Secretary of State
Sacramento, California

Processed by:

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Tom Bates Papers

Dates: 1938-1996

Collection number: LP394

Creator: Tom Bates, California Legislator

Collection Size: 30 cubic feet

Repository: California State Archives
Sacramento, California

Abstract: Tom Bates was a Democratic California State Assembly Member from 1977-1996. The Tom Bates Papers consist of 30 cubic feet of records reflecting Bates's legislative activities during his 20-year Assembly career. This collection is particularly useful to researchers interested in social services and environmental issues in California during the 1980s and 1990s.

Physical location: California State Archives

Languages: Languages represented in the collection: English

Access

Collection is open for research.

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Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Tom Bates Papers, LP394:[folder number], California State Archives, Office of the Secretary of State, Sacramento, California.

Acquisition and Custodial History

The California State Archives acquired the Tom Bates Papers following his final term in the State Legislature.

Biography

Tom Bates was a Democratic California State Assembly Member from 1977-1996. From 1977-1992, Bates represented Assembly District 12. The district encompassed the northernmost portion of Alameda County and a slice of Contra Costa County. AD 12 included the cities of

Albany, Berkeley, Concord, El Cerrito, Piedmont, and Pleasant Hill. Following redistricting in 1992, Tom Bates's district became Assembly District 14 and Bates now represented the cities of Albany, Berkeley, El Cerrito, Emeryville, San Pablo, and Tara Hill as well as parts of Richmond, Oakland, El Sobrante, and Kensington. Bates represented AD 14 until 1996 (Who's Who in the California Legislature).

Tom Bates was born in San Diego, California in 1938 and moved to what would eventually become his assembly district in 1956 when he began attending University of California, Berkeley. Bates lettered in rugby and football at Berkeley and was a starting member of the Cal 1959 Rose Bowl team. Bates received a Bachelor of Arts in Rhetoric from Berkeley in 1961. He credits his first wife Carol Martin as the reason behind his interest in politics. He met Carol during college and they married during his junior year. Bates participated in ROTC during college and upon graduation was commissioned into the U.S. Army as an officer. Bates spent his Army service in Germany and, after being discharged, returned to the San Francisco Bay Area where he had a short career in real estate before jumping into politics (Bates Oral History).

Bates began his political career managing college friend Ken Meade's campaign for Assemblyman for the 12th district. Meade won the seat in 1970 and Bates gained recognition for his involvement in the winning campaign. Following Meade's victory, Bates worked for a short time in campaign management and in legislators' offices but was soon encouraged to run as a candidate for the Alameda County Board of Supervisors (Bates Oral History). Bates won his race for Supervisor as well as all of his subsequent campaigns. In 1976, after four years as Supervisor, Bates ran for the assembly seat in the 12th district, which was being vacated by Ken Meade. He won with 58 percent of the vote. Bates's winning percentage, after a small dip in 1978, continued to rise until he left office in 1996 (Who's Who in the California Legislature).

Throughout his long career as a public servant, Tom Bates was well known for carrying progressive legislation and tackling new problems. Bates left a successful record for passing progressive legislation, especially considering the legislator from Berkeley was up against Republican governors for 15 of his 20 years in office. Even when his legislation did not pass, it left behind a solid foundation for future legislators or Bates himself to build upon.

Bates also showed innovation in areas other than the bills he authored. Bates co-chaired the nation's first legislative body addressing the changing family. Bates used his legislative position as Assembly Human Services Committee chair to conduct roundtables on the feminization of poverty, addressing the serious problem of women falling into poverty before the issue had any national recognition. Bates used his influence as an assemblyman to seek solutions outside of the traditional legislative process. Bates brought together a collection of authoritative entities from across the East Bay to form the East Bay Public Safety Corridor. The members of this successful partnership share information in an effort to better combat crime, particularly gun violence and truancy, across jurisdictional lines.

During his time as an assemblyman, Bates was recognized as a champion of social and environmental issues, receiving many awards and commendations from such organizations as the California Association of Rehabilitation Services, SUNRAE, California Association of Rehabilitation Agencies, the California Association for the Education of Young Children, and the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights. During his tenure as Assemblyman, Tom Bates was considered one of the most liberal members of the Assembly (California Legislature at Sacramento (Handbooks)).

Tom Bates represented the East Bay in the Assembly for 20 years before being termed out due to Proposition 130 in 1996. Although Bates had not planned to run for re-election in 1996, he did fight the lifetime term limit clause arguing that it was too restrictive and violated both his constitutional rights and those of his constituents. The lawsuit was eventually defeated (Bates Oral History). Tom Bates retired from the legislature and is currently (2009) serving his third term as mayor of Berkeley. He is married to former Berkeley mayor and current state senator, Loni Hancock, representative for the Ninth Senate District. They have four children and seven grandchildren (Berkeley Mayoral Website).

According to the California Legislature at Sacramento (Handbooks) and the Assembly Final History, Bates served on the following committees:

- Standing and Interim Committees
- Aging, 1981-1982
- Aging and Long Term Care, 1987-1988
- Agriculture, 1995-1996
- Consumer Protection, 1985-1986
- Criminal Justice, 1981-1982
- Criminal Law and Public Safety, 1983-1984
- Education, 1995-1996
- Elections, Reapportionment, and Constitutional Amendments, 1993-1994
- Energy and Natural Resources, 1981-1982
- Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials, 1993-1994
- Governmental Organization, 1989-1992
- Health 1977-1982

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- Higher Education, 1991-1992
 - Housing and Community Development, 1979-1982
 - Human Services, 1983-1996
 - *Chair 1983-1994
 - Insurance, 1995-1996
 - Labor and Employment, 1985-1988
 - Natural Resources, 1983-1994
 - Public Employees and Retirement, 1979-1980
 - Public Safety, 1985-1986, 1989-1994
 - Resources, Land Use, and Energy, 1977-1980
 - *Vice Chair 1977-1978
 - Revenue and Taxation, 1989-1990
 - Transportation 1977-1978
 - Ways and Means, 1981-1984
 - Subcommittees
 - Air Quality, 1977-1978
 - Energy, 1977-1982
 - Health and Welfare, 1983-1984
 - Health Care Investigations, 1977-1978
 - Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities, 1977-1982
 - *Chair 1979-1982
 - Oversight of GAIN, 1985-1986
 - Public Lands, 1979-1980
 - Resources and Transportation, 1983-1984
 - Task Force on Mentally Disordered Sex Offenders, 1981-1982
 - Select Committees
 - Select Committee on Child Care, 1987-1988
 - Select Committee on Children and Youth Services, 1991-1992
 - Select Committee on Fire, Police, Emergency and Disaster Services, 1991-1994
 - Select Committee on Groundwater Contamination and Landfill Leakage, 1993-1994
 - Select Committee on Homelessness, 1989-1990
 - Select Committee on Defense Conversion, 1994-1996
 - Legislative Task Force
 - Joint Select Task Force on the Changing Family, 1987-1990
 - *Co-Chair 1987-1990
 - Joint Committees
 - Joint Task Force on Child Support, 1993-1994
 - Joint Committee on Oversight of GAIN Implementation, 1985-1990
 - Additional Committees, Commissions and Boards
 - Committee for National Health Insurance, 1979-1982
 - Steering Committee for the National Conference on Alternative State and Local Public Policy, 1979-1984
 - Member, Board of Directors for the California Project, 1983-1987
 - High-Tech Caucus, 1988-1992

Scope and Content

The Tom Bates Papers consist of 30 cubic feet of records reflecting Bates's legislative activities during his 20-year Assembly career. Record series include Bill Files, 1977-1996; Hearing Files, 1989; Subject Files, 1952-1996; Chronological Correspondence, 1993-1996; News Clippings, 1986-1988; Photographs, 1938-1996; Human Services Subject Files, 1961-1994; Mental Health Subcommittee Subject Files,

1979-1982; and Mental Health Subcommittee Correspondence, 1979-1982.

This collection is particularly useful to researchers interested in social services and environmental issues in California during the 1980s and 1990s. As a member of the Assembly Health Committee from 1977-1982, then chair and member of the Assembly Human Services committee from 1983-1996, Tom Bates spent his legislative career focused on helping traditionally disadvantaged groups such as children, the disabled, and the poor. Bates, throughout his 20-year legislative career, also served on committees dealing with environmental issues. He was particularly focused on issues dealing with protection and expansion of state parks, air quality and energy conservation through promotion of transportation alternatives, and water protection and distribution. Because of Bates's continued commitment to social services and environmental legislation throughout his career as an assemblyman, his collection provides a detailed and long-range view of policy changes in these areas and their effects on California during the 1980s and 1990s.

Related Material at the California State Archives

Assembly Human Services Committee Records

Assembly Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Subcommittee Records

Other Repositories

Tom Bates's personal papers may be found at the Berkeley Historical Society, 1931 Center Street, Berkeley, California.

Oral History

Tom Bates, Oral History Interview, conducted 2000-2001 by Leah McGarrigle, Oral History Program, University of California, Berkeley for the State Government Oral History Program available at the California State Archives and some other repositories.

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Bates, Tom

Mental health policy

Environmental protection

LP394:1-284 Series 1 Bill Files 1977-1996

Physical Description: 284 file folders

Arrangement

Bill files are arranged chronologically by legislative session and then numerically by bill number.

Scope and Content Note

Bill files created by Tom Bates may include bill analyses, statements, amendments, correspondence, press releases, newspaper clippings, and background information. Some of Bates's notable accomplishments in the legislature include his long struggle to pass a motor voter bill. Bates made several attempts to make voter registration available at the Department of Motor Vehicles but was continuously vetoed by Governor Deukmejian (AB1787, 1985; AB899, 1987; AB864, 1989). A bill was eventually passed (AB979, 1992) shortly before the federal Motor Voter Act of 1993. During his tenure as an assemblyman, Bates was able to add age, disability, and sexual orientation to those groups granted additional remedies against violence under the Ralph Civil Rights Act (AB848, 1984). Bates also passed legislation requiring that security bars have an emergency release latch after several people perished because they were trapped in their homes during the 1991 Oakland fire (AB3026, 1995). Bates was also responsible for the legalization of the nation's first brewpubs (AB3610, 1981). His legislation was mimicked across the nation and brewpubs are now a sizeable industry in the United States. Bates created the Eastshore State Park turning an undeveloped strip of coastline in the East Bay into a park for hiking, biking, and other day-activities (AB809, 1989; AB754, 1991). Bates, concerned for the environment, also passed legislation requiring the California Department of Transportation to pursue and invest more in bicycle facilities (AB3933, 1983).

1977-1978: AB515-AB3753, ACR18-160 (LP394:1-36)

1979-1980: AB81-AB3250, ACR113 (LP394:37-73)

1981-1982: AB470-AB3768, ACR34 (LP394:74-99)

1983-1984: AB3-AB3934, ACR54-ACR151 (LP394:100-141)

1985-1986: AB459-AB4411, ACA16, ACR17-ACR118, AJR80 (LP394:142-176)

1987-1988: AB79-AB4418, ACA37-ACA61, ACR89-ACR161 (LP394:177-200)

1989-1990: AB478-AB4319, ACR59-ACR80, AB26X-AB37X (LP394:201-234)

1991-1992: AB293-AB3800, ACA30, ACR14-ACR45, AJR19, AB25X-AB59X (LP394:235-265)

1993-1994: AB535-AB3076, ACR146, AB90X-AB94X (LP394:266-272)

1995-1996: AB4-AB3436, AB34XX (LP394:273-284)

LP394:285 Series 2 **Hearing File 1989**

Physical Description: 1 file folder

Arrangement

Hearing file arranged chronologically by date of hearing.

Scope and Content Note

The hearing series consists of one file folder containing a transcript of a hearing held in San Jose on October 27, 1989 before the Joint Select Task Force on the Changing Family, of which Tom Bates was a co-chair, regarding planning a community that works for families.

LP394:286-383 Series 3 **Subject Files 1979-1996**

Physical Description: 98 file folders

Arrangement

Subject files are arranged alphabetically by subject heading.

Scope and Content Note

Subject files may contain newspaper clippings, press releases, correspondence, reports, notes, memoranda and other materials. The subject files contain information gathered by Bates, his chief of staff Dion Aroner, capitol office staff, and district office staff in Berkeley. The subjects covered in this series are reflective of the length of time Tom Bates spent addressing the issues as a member of the corresponding committees during his 20-year legislative career. The subjects most covered in this series are a direct reflection of Tom Bates's lengthiest committee appointments, which were to the Assembly Committees on Human Services, Natural Resources, and Public Safety. As such, the files primarily cover issues dealing with human services, the environment, and the criminal justice system.

For an alphabetical list of subjects, see Appendix A in Master Finding Aid at the California State Archives.

LP394:384-404 Series 4 **Chronological Correspondence 1991-2004**

Physical Description: 21 file folders

Arrangement

Correspondence is arranged chronologically by month.

Scope and Content Note

Chronological correspondence contains outgoing letters sent by Tom Bates to constituents, public agencies, and other officials. The correspondence covers a wide range of subjects relating to Bates's legislation, issues affecting his legislative district, and assembly committees. Most of the letters contain either Bates's expressed support or opposition on an issue or a request to the Governor for support or opposition on an issue. Also in the chronological correspondence are letters and supplementary material from constituents that Bates occasionally retained with his return response.

LP394:405-411 Series 5 News Clippings 1986-1988

Physical Description: 7 file folders

Arrangement

News clippings are arranged by subject then chronologically.

Scope and Content Note

News clippings contain articles mentioning Tom Bates. The news clippings are primarily from Northern California news publications but also include articles from Los Angeles area papers. Bates kept a file of news clippings containing general references to his legislative work and separate files of news clippings on subjects that were of particular interest to him.

- General, May 1986-March 1988 (LP394:405-406)
- Campaigns, June 1986-March 1988 (LP394:407)
- Mountain Lions, January 1987-May 1987 (LP394:408)
- National Guard, May 1986-March 1988 (LP394:409)
- Water, June 1986-February 1988 (LP394:410)
- Women, August 1986-February 1988 (LP394:411)

LP394:412-430 Series 6 **Photographs 1938-1996**

Physical Description: 19 file folders

Arrangement

Photographs are arranged alphabetically by topic.

Scope and Content Note

Photograph files contain photographs of both Tom Bates as well as numerous California political figures (including Art Agnos, Tom Bradley, Jerry Brown, Willie Brown, Alan Cranston, Ron Dellums, Elihu Harris, Bill Lockyer, Leo McCarthy, George Miller, Nicholas Petris, Art Torres, and Maxine Waters) as well as activist Cesar Chavez, U.S. Senator Ted Kennedy, presidential hopefuls Gary Hart and Walter Mondale, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, actor Ed Asner, and Olympic Gold Medalist Edwin Moses.

LP394:431-603 Series 7 **Assembly Human Services Committee Files 1976-1995**

Physical Description: 171 file folders

Arrangement

Assembly Human Service Committee Files are arranged alphabetically by subject.

Scope and Content Note

The Assembly Human Service Committee Files contain reports, correspondence, news clippings, press releases, bill files, committee notes, hearing testimony and other materials. Tom Bates served on the Assembly Human Services Committee from 1983-1996 and chaired the committee from 1983-1994. During this time Bates kept extensive subject files specific to the committee and its issues.

For an alphabetical list of Assembly Human Services Committee subjects, see Appendix C in Master Finding Aid at the California State Archives.

LP394:604-616 Series 8 **Assembly Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Subcommittee Files 1979-1982**

Physical Description: 13 file folders

Arrangement

Arranged into two subseries: (1) Subject Files and (2) Correspondence.

Scope and Content Note

The Assembly Mental Health and Development Disabilities Subcommittee Files are arranged into two subseries: (1) Subject Files, and (2) Correspondence. Tom Bates served on the Assembly Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Subcommittee from 1977-1982 and chaired the subcommittee from 1979-1982. Bates kept some of the files after leaving the position as chair.

folder LP394:604-610Subseries 1 **Subject Files 1979-1982**

Physical Description: 7 file folders

Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically by subject heading.

Scope and Content Note

The first subseries, Subject Files, contain newsletters, correspondence, reports, proposals, and applications relating to Alameda County Mental Health Care, 1981-1982; Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Overview (1979-1982); Mental Health Care Applications (1979); and Mental Health Legislative Work Group (1979-1980).

folder LP394:611-616Subseries 2 **Correspondence 1979-1982**

Physical Description: 6 file folders

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically by month.

Scope and Content Note

The second subseries, Correspondence, consists of letters between various individuals pertaining to the Assembly Mental Health and Development Disabilities Subcommittee and its issues.
