

**The Honorable Judith Zaffirini**  
**Senator, 21<sup>st</sup> District**  
**State of Texas**

Senator Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) represents the 21st Senatorial District. The second highest-ranking Texas state senator, she also is the highest-ranking woman and Hispanic senator and the highest-ranking senator for Bexar County and the border region. She has carried all 17 counties in the large and diverse district in every re-election, something no one else ever has accomplished.

Senator Zaffirini was appointed Chair of the Senate Higher Education Committee in 2011 and Co-Chair of the Joint Oversight Committee on Higher Education Governance, Excellence, and Transparency; and a member of the Senate Finance, Health and Human Services, Economic Development, Redistricting, and Administration committees. The first Hispanic woman to serve as President Pro Tempore of the Texas Senate and as Governor for a Day, she has served three consecutive terms as Chair of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee, seven terms on the Appropriations Conference Committee, 10 terms on the Senate Finance Committee, 10 terms on the Senate Education Committee, and on the Legislative Budget Board since 2004.

Senator Zaffirini's legendary work ethic is reflected in her 100 percent perfect attendance in the Texas Senate since 1987, except for breaking quorum deliberately to prevent an untimely re-districting that the U.S. Supreme Court (2006) ruled violated the Voting Rights Act and disenfranchised voters in SD 21. Continuing her career-long 100 percent voting record, Senator Zaffirini has cast 47,550 consecutive votes. She has sponsored and passed 725 bills and 52 substantive resolutions and co-sponsored and passed another 384 bills. Her legislative priorities include improving public education, higher education, and health and human services.

Senator Zaffirini has received more than 670 awards and honors for her legislative, public service, and professional work, including more than 160 in communication. Additionally, in 2011 Senator Zaffirini received 21 awards from the Press Women of Texas Association, who have recognized her communications expertise repeatedly with national and statewide awards for her publications, speeches, and public relations campaigns, including annual statewide first-place awards; and three awards from the National Federation of Press Women.

Dr. Zaffirini is an award-winning communication specialist with 13 years of teaching experience, including at the college and university levels. The South Texas Press Association honored her for her distinguished career in journalism and public service. Through her business, Zaffirini Communications, she provides professional communication services, including consulting, workshops and seminars, one-on-one coaching, keynote addresses, and writing. A distinguished communicator, educator, and leader, she holds B.S., M.A., and PhD degrees from The University of Texas at Austin.

A member of the Texas Philosophical Society and of Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, her professional memberships include the Texas Press Women, Texas Public Relations Association, International Communication Association, Speech Communication Association, and Association for Borderlands Studies.