

= Hilda Solis =

Hilda Lucia Solis (/ soʔ?li?s / ; born October 20 , 1957) is an American politician and a member of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors for District 1 . Solis previously served as the 25th United States Secretary of Labor from 2009 to 2013 , as part of the administration of President Barack Obama . She is a member of the Democratic Party and served in the United States House of Representatives from 2001 to 2009 , representing the 31st and 32nd congressional districts of California that include East Los Angeles and the San Gabriel Valley .

Solis was raised in La Puente , California , by immigrant parents from Nicaragua and Mexico . She gained degrees from the California State Polytechnic University , Pomona and the University of Southern California and worked for two federal agencies in Washington , D.C. Returning to her native state , she was elected to the Rio Hondo Community College Board of Trustees in 1985 , the California State Assembly in 1992 , and the California State Senate in 1994 . She was the first Hispanic woman to serve in the State Senate , and was reelected there in 1998 . Solis sought to pass environmental justice legislation . She was the first female recipient of the John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award in 2000 .

Solis defeated a long @-@ time Democratic incumbent as part of getting elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 2000 , where she focused mainly on labor causes and environmental work . She was reelected easily to four subsequent terms . In December 2008 , President @-@ elect Barack Obama announced his intention to nominate Solis as the next U.S. Secretary of Labor . She took office after being confirmed by the United States Senate in February 2009 , becoming the first Hispanic woman to serve in the U.S. Cabinet . There she focused on workplace safety issues and on strengthening compliance with wage and hour laws . In January 2013 , Solis stepped down from her post as Labor Secretary .

Returning to the area of her upbringing , in April 2014 , Solis formally announced a campaign for a seat on the non @-@ partisan Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors . Solis won the seat outright in a June 3 election and was sworn in on December 1 .

= = Early life and education = =

Solis was born in Los Angeles , California , as the daughter of immigrant parents who had met in citizenship class and married in 1953 : Juana Sequeira (b . 1926 , from Nicaragua) and Raul Solis (from Mexico) . Her father was a Teamsters shop steward in Mexico and after coming to the United States , worked at the Quemetco battery recycling plant in the City of Industry in the San Gabriel Valley . There he again organized for the Teamsters , to gain better health care benefits for workers , but also contracted lead poisoning . Her mother worked for over 20 years on the assembly line of Mattel once her children were all of school age , belonged to the United Rubber Workers , and was outspoken about working conditions . She stressed the importance of education and was a devout Roman Catholic .

Hilda Solis is the third oldest of seven siblings (four sisters , two brothers) and grew up in a tract home in La Puente , California . She had to help raise her youngest siblings , and later said of her childhood : " It wasn 't what you would call the all @-@ American life for a young girl growing up . We had to mature very quickly . " She graduated from La Puente High School , where she saw a lack of support for those wishing to continue their education , including a guidance counselor who told her mother that ? Your daughter is not college material . Maybe she should follow the career of her older sister and become a secretary . ? However , another counselor did encourage her to attend college , and even went to her house to help her fill out an application . She took her younger sisters to the library to get them to follow her lead .

She was the first of her family to go to college , being accepted into the Educational Opportunity Program (which assists low @-@ income , first @-@ generation college students) at California State Polytechnic University , Pomona (Cal Poly Pomona) and paying for it with the help of government grants and part @-@ time jobs . She graduated in 1979 with a Bachelor of Arts in political science . She then earned a Master of Public Administration degree at the University of

Southern California in 1981 .

= = Early career = =

Solis served near the end of the Carter administration in the White House Office of Hispanic Affairs , where she was editor @-@ in @-@ chief of a newsletter during a 1980 ? 1981 Washington semester internship as part of her master 's program . At the start of the Reagan administration in 1981 , she became a management analyst at the civil rights division of the Office of Management and Budget , but her dislike for Ronald Reagan 's policies motivated her to leave later that year .

In Washington , she met Sam H. Sayyad , whom she subsequently married . He owns an automobile repair center in Irwindale , California . The couple lives in a modest house in El Monte , California , not far from where she grew up .

Returning to California , Solis became Director of the California Student Opportunity and Access Program in 1982 , to help disadvantaged youth gain necessary preparation for college . In particular , she worked with the Whittier Union High School District . Friends urged her to try for elective office , and so in 1985 , she ran for the Board of Trustees of the Rio Hondo Community College District . She campaigned hard and overtook an incumbent and one other better established candidate to become the top placer . She was reelected in 1989 . During her time on the board , she worked towards improved vocational job training at the college and sought to increase the number of tenured faculty positions held by minorities and women . She joined several California chambers of commerce , women 's organizations , and Latino organizations . She gained added political visibility in 1991 when she was named to the Los Angeles County Commission on Insurance by Los Angeles County Supervisor Gloria Molina , a political mentor . Solis also served as chief of staff for State Senator Art Torres .

= = California State Legislature = =

Solis had the opportunity to run for the California State Assembly when , after California 's 1991 redistricting , the incumbent Dave Elder in Solis 's 57th State Assembly district was shifted into another district , while her new representative retired . In the June 1992 Democratic primary to fill the open seat , Solis 's opponents had the endorsement of powerful State Assemblyman Richard Polanco and the former incumbent . Solis had the support of Molina and U.S. Representative Barbara Boxer , in an effort that focused on door @-@ to @-@ door campaigning and featured Solis 's mother making burritos for campaign volunteers . Solis came out on top of a three @-@ way Democratic race , receiving 49 percent of the vote and besting her nearest competitor , future Assemblyman Ed Chavez , who received 31 percent . In the general election , Solis garnered 61 percent of the vote against Republican Gary Woods ' 34 percent , and gained election to the Assembly . She was one of seven Latinos who won election to the Assembly in the wake of the redistricting and became collectively known as Los Siete . Solis was among the most liberal of this ideologically diverse group .

In her one term in the State Assembly , Solis was prominent in the debate on illegal immigration to the United States , backing a bill to allow immigrants in the United States illegally to attend California colleges as long as they were residing in the state . She backed labor and opposed the tobacco industry in supporting a bill that banned smoking in all workplaces . She served on committees dealing with education , labor , and environmental issues , including a new committee that dealt with groundwater contamination and landfill leakage . She was not known as a strong orator .

The Democratic incumbent in Solis 's 24th State Senate district , Art Torres , gave up his office when he received the 1994 Democratic nomination for the statewide office of California Insurance Commissioner . Solis ran for the seat , won the Democratic primary with 63 percent of the vote against two opponents , and then won the 1994 general election with 63 percent of the vote against Republican Dave Boyer 's 33 percent . She became the first Hispanic woman to ever serve in the State Senate and the first woman ever to represent the San Gabriel Valley ; she was also the Senate 's youngest member at that time . She was reelected in 1998 with 74 percent of the vote .

In the State Senate , Solis authored 17 bills to prevent domestic violence and championed labor , education , and health care issues . She described herself as " a big believer that government , if done right , can do a lot to improve the quality of people 's lives " . In 1995 she sponsored a bill to raise the minimum wage from \$ 4 @. @ 25 to \$ 5 @. @ 75 ; it was strongly opposed by business organizations and the restaurant industry . When Governor Pete Wilson vetoed it , she organized a successful drive to make the issue into a ballot initiative the next year , using \$ 50 @, @ 000 of her own campaign funds and rallying union support . The initiative 's passing garnered her a statewide reputation and other states followed with similar initiatives . She chaired the labor committee and established herself as loyal to labor interests , but made a point of establishing relationships with Republicans on the committee . Solis held high @- @ profile hearings on labor law enforcement following a summer 1995 sweatshop raid in El Monte that discovered more than 70 Thai workers existing in slave @- @ like conditions . She called garment manufacturers to explain themselves and pushed for tougher enforcement of anti @- @ sweatshop laws . Republican State Senator Ray Haynes later said that Solis was " a committed liberal in the pockets of labor " , but Republican State Senate Leader Rob Hurtt said of her , " We obviously didn 't see eye to eye . But she was respectful . I 'll give her credit ; she was a very hard worker and she knew her stuff . "

Solis was an environmental activist in the State Senate , due to concerns that stemmed from a childhood spent within smelling distance of the Puente Hills Landfill and making frequent visits to the San Gabriel Mountains . In 1997 , she worked to pass environmental justice legislation with a law to protect low @- @ income and minority communities from newly located landfills , pollution sources , and other environmental hazards in neighborhoods that already had such sites . She got the bill , SB 1113 , approved over the strong opposition of various business interests , water contractors , and some state government agencies , but Wilson vetoed it . She returned in 1999 with a weakened measure , which was signed by Governor Gray Davis . Calling for " the fair treatment of people of all races , cultures , and incomes with respect to the development , adoption , implementation , and enforcement of environmental laws " , it represented the first legislation of its kind in the nation and is considered a landmark .

Solis faced controversy with her 1999 legislation , SB 63 , that lowered the carpool restrictions on the El Monte Busway from three or more occupants to two or more . When this took effect in January 2000 , it quickly resulted in greatly increased volume on the busway and protests from bus riders and prior carpoolers . Solis at first defended the change , but it continued to have a detrimental effect on the busway and did not improve flow in the regular traffic lanes . By May , she was co @- @ sponsoring legislation to rescind the change and restore the higher occupancy requirement , which passed and took effect in July 2000 .

Due to her work in overcoming obstacles for environmental justice , in 2000 Solis was given the Profile in Courage Award by the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation , and was praised as " a politician who hasn 't shied away from challenging the old boy network both within and without the Latino community " . She was the first woman to win the award , and gained appearances in George and People magazines and on the Today show . Art Torres , who had become California Democratic Party chair , said of Solis , " She 's going to be a national star " .

= = U.S. House of Representatives = =

Term limits would have prevented Solis from seeking reelection to the State Senate . After months of deliberation , she decided to run for the U.S. House of Representatives in 2000 against 18 @- @ year incumbent Matthew G. Martínez in the 31st congressional district , which consisted largely of working class Hispanics and Asians . This action was criticized by Hispanics and others , and only two members of Congress , Barbara Boxer and Loretta Sanchez , supported her . Martínez was more conservative than many of his constituents , as he had supported the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) , opposed gun control , and supported bans on specific abortion procedures . He was also criticized for lacking effort and neglecting his district . Solis was able to obtain the support of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor (which called her a " warrior for working families ") , Emily 's List , Handgun Control Incorporation , the Sierra Club and the

California League of Conservation Voters . With their help , Solis outspent Martínez by a 4 @-@ to @-@ 1 margin and had hundreds of volunteers working for her .

She defeated the incumbent Martínez in the March 2000 Democratic primary by a 69 percent to 31 percent margin . On primary night , Martínez called Solis " obnoxious " and accused her of untruthful advertising . He subsequently switched to the Republican Party , and urged Latinos to vote against her , to no great effect . Without a Republican opponent in the general election , Solis beat three little @-@ known challengers from third parties and won 79 percent of the vote .

Upon arriving in the House of Representatives , Solis was named freshman class whip , making her responsible for collecting votes from first @-@ term Democrats . National Journal magazine named her one of its " Ten Freshmen to Watch " , and said that her election " is a sign of things to come in California and a generational changing of the guard in the Hispanic Caucus " . Solis commissioned for her new office a painting of the United States Capitol with the San Gabriel Mountains behind it , so that she would not forget her roots . Her Washington apartment was tiny .

As congresswoman , Solis was most known for her work on environmental issues as a member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce , the Committee on Natural Resources , and the Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming . She made the promotion of green @-@ collar jobs a priority and sponsored the Southern California portion of the California Wild Heritage Act , which would create or enlarge many wilderness areas . In 2003 she sponsored legislation that funded a National Park Service study to designate a large swath of the Angeles National Forest , the Puente and Chino Hills , and the Rio Hondo and San Gabriel River , a National Recreation Area . (In 2013 , after Solis had left the Obama administration , the Park Service recommended proceeding with a greatly reduced version of the original proposal ; while other advocates evinced disappointment , Solis said it was still a positive step and that Congress could expand the area in whatever legislation it undertook .)

Solis was not a member of the Education and the Workforce Committee , but championed the Employee Free Choice Act and was the only member of Congress on the board of American Rights at Work , a pro @-@ union organization that strongly supports the act , for whom she served as treasurer starting in 2004 . On trade she voted against both the Dominican Republic ? Central America trade agreement and the U.S.-Peru trade agreement , and also expressed opposition to a purposed bilateral U.S.-Colombia trade agreement , citing concerns about human rights violations . Solis opposed legislation that would soften job safety requirements . She received 100 percent ratings from several pro @-@ labor groups for the years 2005 through 2007 , and was a major recipient of union political donations . United Farm Workers co @-@ founder Dolores Huerta is one of Solis 's role models .

During her tenure in the House Solis was an advocate of comprehensive immigration reform . She was one of the leading opponents of H.R. 4437 a House bill sponsored by Wisconsin Congressman Jim Sensenbrenner and voted against it .

Solis supported legislation aimed at reducing the number of teen pregnancies within Latina and African American communities and sponsored a bill , that became law in 2003 , that granted U.S. citizenship to immigrants after one year of military service instead of the previous three years .

Solis is Roman Catholic and pro @-@ choice . Along with 47 other Catholic members of Congress , she sent a letter to Cardinal Theodore McCarrick of Washington , D.C. , in order to dissuade him from refusing them the sacraments because of their pro @-@ choice legislative voting . Solis signed a " Statement of Principles , " stating her commitment to her faith as well as her disagreement with the Roman Catholic Church on some issues . They stated that on those issues , such as abortion rights , they decided to follow their conscience instead of the Church teachings .

Solis was a member of the Congressional Progressive Caucus and rated a lifetime " liberal quotient " of 99 percent from Americans for Democratic Action , and a lifetime 2 percent rating from the American Conservative Union . From 2006 to 2008 she wrote blog entries for The Huffington Post . Solis believed in the importance of mentoring , and as a House member continued relationships she had established with up @-@ and @-@ coming political figures in her district , including California State Assemblywoman Judy Chu and Monterey Park Mayor Sharon Martinez .

After the 2000 census and subsequent redistricting , Solis 's area became part of California 's 32nd

congressional district . She was reelected for additional terms in 2002 , 2004 , and 2006 by very large margins , twice with no Republican in opposition . She ran unopposed in 2008 .

Solis chaired the Health and the Environment Task Force of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus during the 110th Congress . However , during 2006 and 2007 , Solis was part of a falling out between several female representatives and Joe Baca , leader of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus , arguing there was a " lack of respect afforded to women members of the Hispanic Caucus , " which Baca denied . She had previously broken ties with the caucus ' political action committee over its campaign contributions to Baca 's sons . Baca responded that Solis " was a kiss @-@ up " to Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi , a remark for which he later apologized . Solis was indeed considered a close ally of Pelosi , which helped her get a seat on the Energy and Commerce Committee . She considered running for the position of Democratic Caucus Vice @-@ Chairman for the 110th Congress , but deferred to incumbent John Larson after Rahm Emanuel chose to run for caucus chair , which Larson had been running for . Solis 's aggressive fundraising for the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee gained her a vice chair position on the Democratic Steering & Policy Committee . At the time of her selection to Obama 's cabinet , she had been elected 2nd vice chair of the Hispanic Caucus and was considered a potential candidate for a leadership position in the House .

Solis was a strong supporter of Hillary Rodham Clinton 's 2008 presidential bid ; when that fell short , Barack Obama aggressively sought her support , as part of strengthening his appeal to Hispanic voters . She supported Clinton 's effort to establish a U.S. Public Service Academy and was a co @-@ sponsor of a House bill to create one . Solis did not become wealthy from her political career ; by 2008 , she and her husband 's main assets consisted of retirement funds and his auto shop , valued at under \$ 100 @,@ 000 .

= = U.S. Secretary of Labor = =

On December 18 , 2008 , sources close to the Obama transition team identified Solis as the President @-@ elect 's choice for U.S. Secretary of Labor , the last cabinet position yet to be filled . The selection earned praise from the AFL @-@ CIO and other labor organizations , but was not well received by business groups and the anti @-@ union group Center for Union Facts . The official announcement was made by Obama on December 19 . Solis 's successor was chosen in a special election in California 's 32nd congressional district ; she declined to endorse a candidate in the primary (from which her past mentee Judy Chu emerged on top and eventually won the general election) .

Solis 's confirmation hearings were held on January 9 , 2009 , before the Senate Health , Education , Labor , and Pensions Committee . Committee chair Ted Kennedy repeatedly praised her , while , despite examination by Republican members , Solis declined to discuss specific policy issues , including the Employee Free Choice Act . Several days later , Senate Republicans said they might try to put a procedural hold on her nomination because of her unwillingness to answer questions in detail in the hearings . By January 23 , a secret hold was placed on the nomination by an anonymous Republican . A series of written questions and responses between Republican members and Solis followed , during which she was more forthcoming . Republican Mike Enzi pressed her on whether her unpaid high @-@ level positions at American Rights at Work constituted prohibited lobbying activity ; Solis denied violation of rules of conduct and stated she had not helped lobbying . Solis did acknowledge that she had failed to report those positions on her annual House financial disclosure forms at the time , which a White House spokesperson argued was an unintentional oversight . On February 2 , Obama appointed veteran Labor Department official Edward C. Hugler as Acting Secretary . The prolonged process was considered by some Republican aides to be a preview of future battles on labor issues between the Obama administration and Republicans in Congress .

A vote on Solis 's committee confirmation was set on February 5 , but postponed after news that Solis 's husband Sam Sayyad had just paid \$ 6 @,@ 400 in outstanding state and local tax liens dating back to 1993 for his auto repair business . Sayyad had filed a separate tax return from Solis ,

and intended to contest the lien as they were for business taxes he believed to have already paid . A White House spokesperson stated Solis should not be penalized for any mistakes that her husband may have made . The revelations came in the wake of several other Obama nominations troubled or derailed due to tax issues . Committee Republicans subsequently indicated they would not blame Solis , but were still concerned about her ties to American Rights at Work . On February 11 , 2009 , the committee approved her nomination by voice vote with two votes opposed . After still further delays , Republicans agreed not to subject her nomination to a filibuster and on February 24 , 2009 , Solis was confirmed by the Senate by a vote of 80 ? 17 . She resigned from the House and was sworn into her new position that evening . (A ceremonial swearing in featuring Vice President Joe Biden was later held on March 13 .)

Solis became the first Hispanic woman to serve as a regular U.S. cabinet secretary and the first cabinet secretary with Central American descent . She also became the first Hispanic Secretary of Labor . Solis felt that under the George W. Bush administration , the department had become unimportant and lacking in power , and that its actions reflected a pro @-@ business agenda . Accordingly , she hoped to reinvigorate it .

In her first days as secretary , Solis affirmed an extension to unemployment benefits specified by the 2009 Obama stimulus package , and joined Vice President Biden 's Middle Class Task Force . In her first major speech as secretary , Solis pleased community forum attendees at Miami 's Greater Bethel AME Church by vowing more aggressive enforcement of workplace protection laws , saying " You can rest assured that there is a new sheriff in town . " In late March 2009 , Solis vowed to add 250 investigators to the department 's Wage and Hour Division after a Government Accountability Office report showed the division 's enforcement of wage laws was quite inadequate ; the staffing up was completed by the end of the year . In late May 2009 , Solis suspended immigrant guest worker regulations related to H ? 2A visas adopted in the final days of the Bush administration ; the move earned plaudits from the United Farm Workers . In July 2009 , she expressed concern about workplace deaths among Hispanics , which she said they were especially vulnerable to (her continuing attention to issues such as this during her tenure would lead to Hispanic workers considering her their champion) . In October 2009 , the Occupational Safety and Health Administration levied the largest fine in its history on BP plc for failing to fix safety problems following the 2005 Texas City Refinery disaster . Business groups such as the National Federation of Independent Business complained that Solis was forging a less cooperative relationship , one that departed from the Bush administration 's " compliance assistance " approach ; the Labor Department said that compliance assistance was still an important part of the new strategy .

For 2010 , Solis 's agenda was to enact some ninety new rules and regulations intended to grant more power to unions and to workers . Whether Solis would try to revive Clinton administration ergonomics rules that had been discarded in the early days of the Bush administration , and that business groups continued to oppose , was unclear . In the wake of the April 2010 Upper Big Branch Mine disaster in West Virginia , the worst in the U.S. in forty years , Solis announced that the Labor Department 's Mine Safety and Health Administration would conduct an internal review of its enforcement of the Massey Energy mine prior to the accident . She also requested that the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health provide an independent analysis of that review . (By the end of her tenure , however , some safety experts said she had fallen short of getting any meaningful new regulatory scheme in place in the wake of the disaster .) Later that month , Solis and the department hosted the first @-@ ever meeting of the G @-@ 20 labor ministers ; they discussed how to accelerate job creation in their respective countries . Solis also faced disgruntlement from a local of the American Federation of Government Employees representing her own employees , who were unhappy that a longstanding flextime program reduced under the George W. Bush administration had not been restored . The department said the program was modern and fair and that it was part of ongoing contract negotiations with the local . The year also saw the department trying to crack down on firms that illegally use summer internships for free labor , by clarifying what may constitute an unpaid academic internship ; the move brought resistance from universities . The year additionally saw Solis leading an administration campaign against farmers who employed children or underpaid workers . (Proposed new rules in this area were

dropped in 2012 , however , following adamant criticism from conservatives and agricultural groups .)

In February 2011 , as protests continued over Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker 's proposal to limit that state 's public employee unions ' collective bargaining rights , and similar proposals were made in other states , Solis spoke out strongly and emotionally against such moves , saying " [those governors] aren 't just asking workers to tighten their belts , they 're demanding they give up their uniquely American rights as workers " . Overall , however , the Obama administration did not speak out forcefully against these moves .

In October 2012 , Solis defended the work of the Bureau of Labor Statistics , after the Current Population Survey it puts out monthly reported that unemployment in the United States had fallen below eight percent for this first time since Obama took office . Some critics , including former General Electric CEO Jack Welch , charged that the number had been tampered with in order to benefit Obama one month before the U.S. presidential election . Solis said , " I 'm insulted when I hear that because we have a very professional , civil service organization where you have top , top economists that work at the BLS . They 've been doing these calculations . These are our best trained and best @-@ skilled individuals working in the BLS , and it 's really ludicrous to hear that kind of statement . " For the year , the Labor Department set a record for the most back pay it had ever collected due to wage violations , \$ 280 million going to some 300 @,@ 000 workers . Workplace fatalities in construction and general industrial sectors reached an all @-@ time low .

On January 9 , 2013 , Solis tendered her resignation as Secretary of Labor , becoming one of several Cabinet members deciding not to stay on for Obama 's second term . Her last day in office was January 22 , 2013 .

Solis , who had never become part of the inner circle of presidential advisors , said it had been a difficult decision and Obama praised her work as secretary . Reflecting upon her tenure , Solis generally garnered praise from labor unions and leading Democrats for her stricter enforcement of job safety regulations and more aggressive pursuit of wage and hour violators . Other leaders and analysts in the labor field thought her performance as secretary was underwhelming , with minimal public visibility and no memorable legacy left behind . All agreed that she operated in a difficult political environment , with the effects of the Great Recession still being felt , Republicans staunchly opposed to labor @-@ based initiatives , and the Obama administration 's attentions focused elsewhere . Business groups , meanwhile , continued to characterize her as having been uncooperative in her dealings with them .

= = Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors = =

Solis 's departure from the Labor Department was linked to an interest in running for a seat on the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors in 2014 , when incumbent Gloria Molina would be term @-@ limited . She also said she wanted to rest , reconnect with her local community after twelve years in Washington , and spend time with her now 87 @-@ year @-@ old mother .

Later during January 2013 , Solis confirmed her interest in the County Board of Supervisors race , saying " I 'm going to take a look at it . " In explaining why a former U.S. Representative and Cabinet member would be interested in a county @-@ level body , analysts stated that the board is the most powerful county @-@ level legislative body in the United States , and exercises some executive and quasi @-@ judicial powers as well . It controls a workforce larger than the Labor Department 's and its \$ 26 billion budget is equivalent to that of an average U.S. state . Each member presiding over some two million constituents , three times that of Solis ' old congressional district , and that it is quite possibly the fourth most powerful position in California politics , after Governor , U.S. Senator , and Mayor of Los Angeles . The supervisors have long been nicknamed " the five little kings " .

In November 2013 , Solis became a scholar @-@ in @-@ residence at her alma mater of Cal Poly Pomona . Her duties were to include guest lecturing in classes , mentoring students , and assisting in curriculum development , with a focus in political science .

During early 2014 , reports emerged that the United States Office of Special Counsel , the United States Department of Justice , and the FBI had begun investigating Solis during 2012 for possible

violations of fundraising rules by federal officials during her time as Labor Secretary . Allegations were made that Solis solicited subordinates for funds for the 2012 re @-@ election campaign of President Obama . A spokesperson for Solis said that she believed she had done nothing wrong . The matter was also being looked into by the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee and its chair , Representative Darrell Issa , who said there was evidence supporting the allegations . By early 2016 , no further word had emerged on any of these investigations .

On April 5 , 2014 , Solis formally announced the start of her campaign for the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors seat , with the election to be held on June 3 . By this time she had raised over \$ 600 @,@ 000 for her effort and was considered the favorite to win the contest . News of the federal investigation had little effect on her campaign . Solis won the seat on June 4 , 2014 , garnering 70 percent of the vote against two other opponents . The margin meant she won the seat outright and would not need to run in a runoff election .

As Supervisor for District 1 , she was at the forefront of the response to the Exide lead contamination issue , which affected Vernon and several other communities within her purview and which touched upon her past concerns with environmental justice . The Supervisors allocated some county money for cleanup , with Solis saying , " the state continues to drag its feet " . Going to the state capitol and asking for additional funds to remedy the situation , she said , " This has gone on too long . " In February 2016 she praised Governor Jerry Brown for finally increasing state funds for the cleanup , saying " Our voices were heard . For too long we have seen two Americas : one in which affluent neighborhoods get immediate help and relief . The other America is made up of poor working @-@ class families who silently suffer . Today 's announcement from the governor reconciles these two Americas . "

Among the other areas Solis was responsible for was Downtown Los Angeles . There she said her main priority was dealing with gentrification and the lack of affordable housing .

Regarding the new job as a whole , Solis said , " It 's fascinating how many people work for the county ? over 100 @,@ 000 . At the Department of Labor it was like 15 @,@ 000 . The budget here is \$ 26 billion , much more than what I was used to in D.C. " In December 2015 Solis took over as Chair of the Supervisors , a position which is rotated on a yearly basis . She said a priority for 2016 would be " to reaffirm our commitment to our diverse county family ? to make this family , our family , inclusive for everybody , no matter their background , no matter where they come from , no matter how far down the scale they have been . "