

POLITICO Pro's Kevin Yamamura and Katy Murphy Share Advice and Tips

Plus, updates on other POLITICO California news and reporters

POLITICO Pro provides in-depth reporting on policy and policy makers in California. Last week, KP Public Affairs checked in with POLITICO reporter Katy Murphy and POLITICO California Editor Kevin Yamamura to hear updates, discuss trends and issues, and learn how to work with the politically influential outlet.



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Before the pandemic, Murphy was mostly covering consumer regulatory issues like data privacy and the proposed Department of Financial Protection and Innovation. After the pandemic hit, her beat expanded to include other areas including unemployment, labor and workplace issues, the California economy, and regulatory agencies like Cal/OSHA.

Her coverage, like other POLITICO reporters, is a cross-section between her regular beat and current events in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. A particular area of interest for Murphy is California's Employment Development Department (EDD) and the unfolding stories of abuse and fraud. She is also following consumer protection and safety issues, as well as new bills focused on online retailers like Amazon, eBay and Etsy. She shares duties producing the daily California newsletter with each day's top stories, which includes links and information for all the POLITICO California reporters.

Murphy says she and other reporters also work on longer enterprise stories. Reporters are increasingly contributing to or leading stories originating in California, with national impact. For example, examining the influence of political figures like Californian Vice President, Kamala Harris and U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary, Xavier Becerra and progressive politics in California. What impact might it have on newly elected U.S. President Joe Biden's Administration?

Murphy and other reporters aim to be approachable. For Murphy, email, phone calls, and texts are all acceptable ways to alert her with a story lead or news tips. She welcomes exclusives and urges followers to "tip us off about issues and ideas that may evolve into a story," even if they are not yet fully formed stories.



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Yamamura oversees California POLITICO Pro operations, including supporting reporters based in Sacramento and elsewhere in the state. Yamamura described how POLITICO is looking at points where news and policy intersect, especially in light of COVID-influenced political events, including tiered restrictions, stay-at-home orders, and vaccinations.

Yamamura said POLITICO is in the hiring phase for a Deputy Editor to help manage the news flow out of California and aid local reporters in their coverage. POLITICO is also aiming to add a healthcare reporter because of the need for greater story coverage created by the pandemic.

In covering news from the Governor's office, POLITICO's approach is to let each beat reporter cover the Governor's Office news rather than assign a specific reporter. On the subject of the Governor, Yamamura and KP Public Affairs discussed the feasibility of the current recall effort. According to Yamamura, the effort would need a large infusion of cash to get the signatures needed to move forward, as the pandemic has limited the ability for traditional methods of signature collections.

Yamamura also noted some surprising pragmatism from the Governor on certain issues, especially early on in the pandemic as he sought to secure Federal help. He notes many of Governor's education proposals have not gained traction, setting up further public and political tension.

Yamamura said the best bet for public relations and policy pros who want to suggest stories is to work with the beat reporter that covers a specific issue area. However, if there are areas that POLITICO should be covering, but aren't, he

wants to know. If a news tip warrants a story, but does not fall into a clear reporting beat, he can assist with directing inquiries to the right person. He is open to emails, calls, and texts.

POLITICO Pro – California Reporters

Alex Nieves – anieves@politico.com, [@alexdrnieves](https://twitter.com/alexdrnieves) – leads cannabis coverage focusing on state legislation and local guidelines. Nieves is interested in changes to state and local tax structures and bills to expand the cannabis market.

Colby Bermel – cbermel@politico.com, [@colbybermel](https://twitter.com/colbybermel) – covers energy and power topics such as California's climate goals, renewables and fossil fuels, and PG&E. He also covers the California Public Utilities Commission, Energy Commission, CAISO, municipal utilities, and companies connected to energy in California.

Mackenzie Mays – mmays@politico.com, [@MackenzieMays](https://twitter.com/MackenzieMays) – covers education in California including the California Teachers Association's push to vaccinate teachers and the influence on school district openings.

Debra Kahn – dkahn@politico.com, [@debra_kahn](https://twitter.com/debra_kahn) – covers the environment and transportation. Lately she has followed multiple transportation agencies and their reactions to the state's vaccination plans.

Victoria Colliver – vcolliver@politico.com, [@vcolliver](https://twitter.com/vcolliver) – covers healthcare with a focus on COVID-19 restrictions, Governor Newsom's response, and vaccine distributions.

Jeremy B. White – jwhite@politico.com, [@jeremybwhite](https://twitter.com/jeremybwhite) – covers social issues that cross over into policy matters, such as housing, homelessness, prisons, and COVID-19 restrictions. He co-authors POLITICO's California Playbook, a must-read briefing on politics and government in the Golden State.

Carla Marinucci – cmarinucci@politico.com, @cmarinucci – She is senior writer for POLITICO California Playbook, a must-read briefing on politics and government in the Golden State.