Stanford



Ann Patterson

Policy Scholar, Sustainability Accelerator

Bio

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Ann Patterson is a policy scholar at the Woods Institute for the Environment and the Sustainability Accelerator at the Doerr School for Sustainability, where she focuses on issues related to climate and energy.

She recently served as Senior Counselor for California Governor Gavin Newsom, where she advised the Governor regarding the January 2025 Los Angeles wildfires and emerging energy-sector and insurance issues. She also advised the Governor on policy solutions to stabilize the state's electric utilities in the wake of the catastrophic 2025 fires, which resulted in enactment of Senate Bill 254 (Becker, 2025). Patterson's experience led to a focus on the wide-ranging societal and economic consequences of catastrophic wildfires in California and the implications for insurance accessibility and energy affordability.

Until March of 2025, Patterson served as Cabinet Secretary for Governor Newsom, where she oversaw the work of all state agencies and departments within the administration as well as development of the state budget. Prior to her appointment as Cabinet Secretary, Ann served as Governor Newsom's Legal Affairs Secretary, providing legal advice and counsel to the Governor and the Governor's office, as well as overseeing litigation to which the Governor or the State of California was a party. She also served as legal counsel to the Governor's energy team, formed to stabilize the state's utility sector in the wake of PG&E's 2019 bankruptcy filing.

Prior to joining the Newsom Administration, Ann was a partner in the law firm of Orrick, Herrington, and Sutcliffe, where she practiced from 2005 until 2018.