



## News Release

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### For Immediate Release

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## SLA Elects 2024 Board of Directors

*Rich Gobler of Burns and Wilcox is New Chair*

**SAN RAMON, CA**—The members of the Surplus Line Association of California (SLA) have elected **Rich Gobler** of Burns and Wilcox as chair of the SLA Board of Directors. Gobler's election became official at the SLA Annual Meeting, which took place Feb. 27 in Los Angeles.

Also elected to leadership were **John Washington** of Arch Insurance Group as vice chair, and **Sarah Nichols** of Crum and Forster, who is the new secretary/treasurer. Outgoing chair **Janet Beaver** of Aurenity remains on the board as past chair, after two years as chair.

Additionally, voters approved the Nominating Committee's proposed slate for the entire 13-member board. **Kristopher Bauer** of Jencap Specialty and **Jon Larson** of ACE Westchester became the newest members of the board. Mr. Bauer previously served on the Board of Directors from 2007-09, while Mr. Larson is joining the board for the first time.

Completing the 13-member board are the following individuals who also served in 2023:

- **Tim Chaix**, R.E. Chaix and Associates
- **Jim Faley**, Vela Insurance Services
- **Robert Gilbert**, Markel West Insurance Services
- **Terri Moran**, Paul Hanson Partners
- **Pam Quilici**, Ryan Specialty
- **Charlie Rosson**, USI Insurance Services
- **Terrence Villar**, AmWINS

"I am excited to be the new chairman of the board," Mr. Gobler said. "We have a tremendous Board of Directors and an association that is clicking on all cylinders under the leadership of its visionary CEO, Ben McKay. I am eager to expand upon the great work that my predecessors have done and I plan to make membership engagement the hallmark of my chairmanship. The SLA is already making tremendous strides in this area, through the creation of dedicated data analyst teams to work with specific large brokerages as part of its Member Value Program, one of the three "caribou" that Ben has established as the SLA's superordinate goals to guide its work. I want the SLA to provide added value for members, and activate them more robustly."

Mr. Gobler noted that his immediate predecessor as chair, Janet Beaver, emphasized collaboration during her tenure, spearheading the National Excess and Surplus Summit to bring boards of the various excess and surplus line associations together to share ideas and best practices. He looks forward to continuing that push, as well as the “Employees First” philosophy that previous chair Terri Moran emphasized during her time as chair in 2020-21.

“I want to take an active role in meeting and interacting with our tremendous staff,” Gobler said. “I’ve been told of how positively staff has reacted in the past when our chairs showed up and met with them, and I want to continue that tradition of showing our team that we care about them and are committed to their success. A workforce that is cared for and treated right will do better work, and their success is vital to the many audiences the SLA serves.”

**ABOUT THE SLA:** Headquartered in San Ramon, the Surplus Line Association of California (SLA) operates as a self-governed private organization. Appointed by the Commissioner in 1994, the Association serves as the statutory surplus line advisory organization to the California Department of Insurance (CDI) and facilitates the state’s capacity to monitor and direct surplus line brokers’ placements of insurance with eligible surplus line insurers. Working with its members and the CDI, the Association assists its members’ compliance with California laws and regulations; helps maintain a healthy, fair, and competitive surplus line marketplace in California; and strives to protect the interests of California insurance consumers.

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