

Lilia García-Brower was born and raised in East Los Angeles. She is the proud mami of Maya and was appointed by Governor Newsom as the California State Labor Commissioner on July 29, 2019. As Labor Commissioner, she oversees the primary law enforcement agency for workplace protections. The Labor Commission has 19 offices throughout California and employs 700 hardworking public servants who investigate and adjudicate a wide range of workplace violations from unpaid wages to retaliation. Prior to this most recent appointment, she was the executive director of the Maintenance Cooperation Trust Fund for 19 years. Working with a powerful team of committed individuals, Lilia lead the MCTF as it grew to be one of the most effective joint labor management organizations. The MCTF investigates cleaning companies for employment law violations and works with government agencies and private bar lawyers to hold unscrupulous employers accountable. The MCTF has facilitated the winning of more than 80 million in back wages and has brought in more than 8000 jobs from the predatory underground economy into the formal economy. The MCTF has also built productive relationships with District Attorneys throughout the State referring more than 40 illegal operators for criminal prosecution. The MCTF is nationally recognized for its innovative work in public-community enforcement partnership. Lilia co-founded an effort in 2001 to form a statewide coalition of worker advocates who represent mainly immigrant workers who suffer wage theft. This coalition has evolved and continues today with membership of an estimated 60 organizations throughout California. In 2007, Lilia was appointed to the Fraud Assessment Commission in the California Department of Insurance. She was reappointed by 2 governors and continued to serve on the Commission until her recent appointment as Labor Commissioner. The objective of the commission is to augment the fight to end worker's compensation fraud in California. In 2015 the MCTF team broadened the scope of exploitation the organization works to eliminate due to the courage of Georgina Hernandez, a nonunion janitor who spoke out publicly about being raped at work. Lilia recognized that the MCTF needed to develop a whole new skill set so she sought out a partnership with the East Los Angeles Women's Center to provide skill based empowerment training to MCTF investigators and female janitors as to how to defend themselves against harassment, assault and misogynistic cultures. Most recently in 2017 Lilia initiated a collaboration with current and former janitors; many survivors of sexual violence, to form the !Ya Basta! Self-defense group. In 2018, the group trained 160 women. In 2019, the MCTF Ya Basta instructors became certified to train self-defense instructors with the goal of establishing Ya Basta chapters in 5 other cities throughout California. Eventually, the Ya Basta chapters will train 1000 janitors annually on how to defend themselves at work and throughout their lives.