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JoCASTA ZAMARRIPA

1976

City: Madison, Milwaukee

County: Dane, Milwaukee

JoCasta Zamarripa was the first Latina and first out bisexual member of the Wisconsin State Legislature and Milwaukee Common Council.

JoCasta Zamarripa was born March 8, 1976, in the same Milwaukee neighborhood she would later represent. Raised by a single mother and the oldest of four children, Zamarripa attended St. Joan Antida High School. In 2005, she graduated from the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee with a bachelor of fine arts, the first in her family to graduate from college. After college, she worked for Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin as a community outreach coordinator and educator and began organizing for Fair Wisconsin, an LGBTQ+ rights organization.

In 2010, Zamarripa was elected to represent the 8th Assembly District, becoming the first Latina elected to the Wisconsin Legislature. She was re-elected multiple times, continuing to serve in the Legislature until 2021. She came out as bisexual during her 2012 re-election campaign, making her the first out bisexual member of the Legislature. In 2013 and 2015, she was the State Assembly Democratic Caucus Vice-Chair. She used her position to advocate for the Latinx community in Wisconsin. She was a member of the Governor’s Council on Migrant Labor and wrote two bills to give more rights to undocumented people in Wisconsin. The first would allow undocumented students who graduated from a Wisconsin high school to pay in-state tuition at public or technical colleges, and the other would allow undocumented people to get driver’s licenses. She also strongly supports women’s rights and other progressive causes. She was a member of many committees in the Assembly, including the Committee on Campaigns and Elections, Housing and Real Estate, Jobs and the Economy, International Affairs and Commerce, and Small Business Development.

In 2020, Zamarripa was elected to the Milwaukee Common Council, where she was the first Latina and first out LGBTQ+ member of the body. Previously, she was a board member of Equality Wisconsin, an LGBTQ+ organization, and the 9 to 5 National Association of Working Women. Zamarripa continues her public service today as a board member of the social justice organization Citizen Action of Wisconsin and Emerge Wisconsin, a group dedicated to increasing the number of Democratic women in elected office. Zamarripa was re-elected to the Common Council in 2024.

To learn more, visit womeninwisconsin.org/profile/jocasta-zamarripa