

# COO POWER PLAYERS 2001

To Make Things Work in a Closely  
Divided Congress,  
Who Must Lead? Who Will Work Together?

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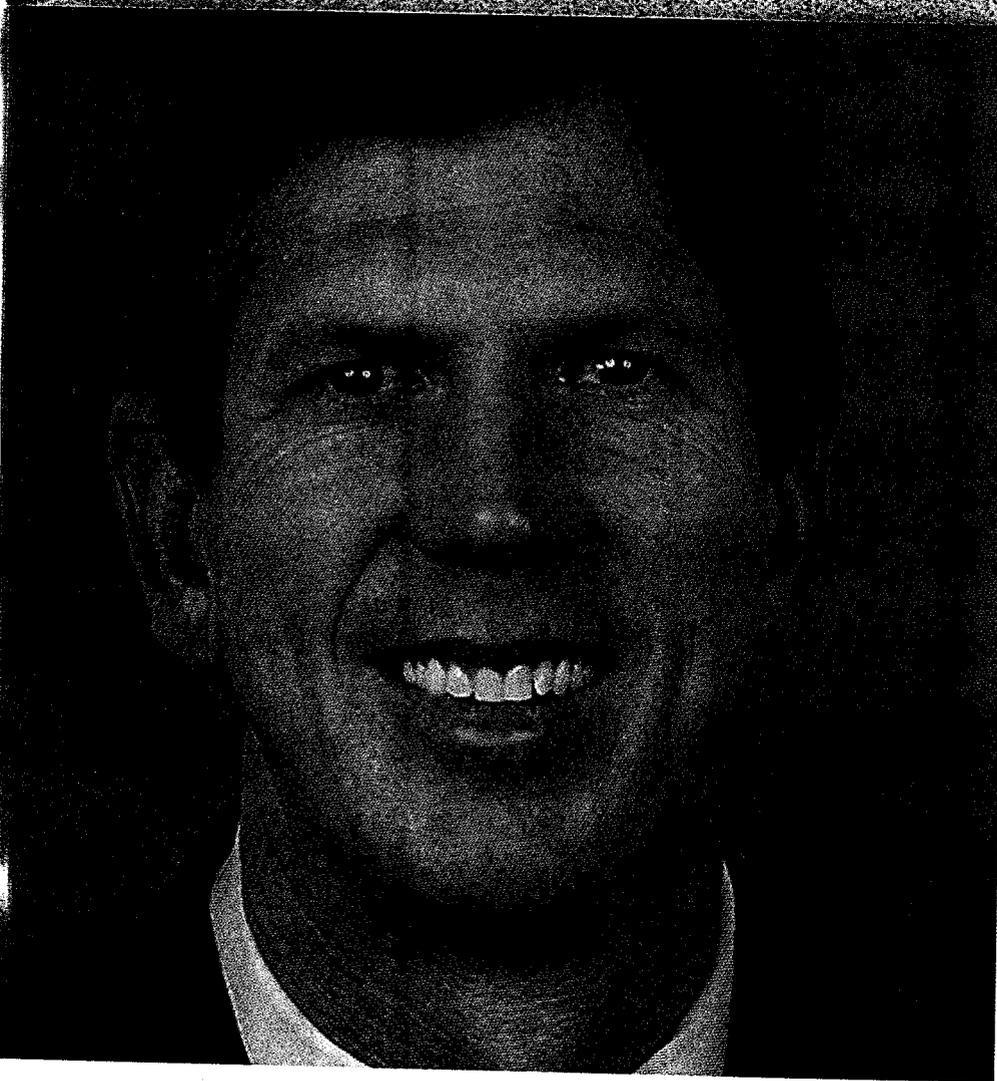
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**House History:** Elected 1990; won sixth term in 2000 with 53 percent

**20th District:** Parts of Kern, Kings and Fresno counties

**Hometown:** Visalia

**Born:** Jan. 11, 1954, Visalia, Calif.

**Religion:** Protestant

**Family:** Wife, Linda Phillips Dooley; two children

**Education:** U. of California, Davis, B.S. 1977; Stanford U., M.A. 1987

**Career:** Farmer

**Political Highlights:** No previous office

**Committees:** Agriculture; Resources

**Capitol Office:** 225-3341

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# Rep. Cal Dooley

Democrat of California

It is a measure of Cal Dooley's reputation as a leader of the so-called rational center that his name was floated as a potential appointee to both the George W. Bush and Al Gore administrations during the disputed 2000 presidential election.

The fourth-generation farmer from the Central Valley is one of the principals in the New Democrat Coalition, a group of 65 House Democrats that depicts itself as a response to "the public's demand for non-bureaucratic but activist government." Ideologically, Dooley and his colleagues in the group fall between right-of-center "Blue Dog" Democrats and the party's unreconstructed liberals.

Dooley's appeal to both sides of the aisle is necessary in a district with a large Hispanic population that is trending Republican. During his tough 2000 re-election race against Republican Rich Rodriguez, a former television anchorman waging his first political campaign, Dooley picked up endorsements from such traditionally GOP-leaning groups as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the Business Roundtable. He earned his stripes with the pro-business constituency during tough legislative battles in the 106th Congress

over expanding trade with China, the Caribbean and Africa, serving with fellow California Democrat Robert T. Matsui as the White House's chief vote-counters during the intense maneuvering in the House before it voted to make China a permanent normal U.S. trade partner.

Dooley is a loyal Democrat, more apt to reach out to like-minded Republicans on trade or natural resources issues than to openly defy his party's leadership. He supported the "patients' bill of rights" measure passed in 1999, has voted for gun control initiatives and in 2000 opposed Republican bills to end the tax code's "marriage penalty." And he fulminated against Green Party candidate Ralph Nader for eating into Vice President Al Gore's support in pivotal states during the presidential race, calling Nader a "sanctimonious ass."

Dooley has been rebuffed in efforts to join the leadership, however. He lost his 1998 bid for vice chairman of the Democratic Caucus to New Jersey's Robert Menendez, 124-81.

On debates about the federal regulation of natural resources, Dooley is as involved as he is in part because the issue looms so large in his district, which covers portions of the San Joaquin Valley from Fresno to Bakersfield. As the ranking Democrat on the Resources Committee's Water and Power Subcommittee, he brings to policy debates the experiences of a large-scale agribusinessman who, like many of his constituents, makes arid

land bloom with water from the Central Valley Project, a network of government-subsidized dams and canals.

Since the turn of the century, Dooley's family has tried to coax from the ground a range of crops that includes cotton, alfalfa and walnuts. President of the California Future Farmers of America at age 18, he went on to earn an undergraduate degree in agriculture economics at the University of California-Davis and a master's in management from Stanford University — all good preparation for a supervisory role in the family's San Joaquin Valley business, Dooley Farms.

Dooley is always on guard against proposals to phase out the irrigation subsidies, as a congressionally appointed panel recommended in 1998. "The Central Valley Project has made the valley the most productive agricultural region in the world," he says, "providing a stable, abundant supply of high-quality food and fiber for the entire nation and for our trading partners."

In 2000, he worked with California's Democratic Gov. Gray Davis on a joint federal and state master plan for use of Central Valley water known as "CALFED." The plan envisions spending more than \$8 billion over the next seven years to parcel out water to farmers and city dwellers. Dooley will be instrumental in drafting authorizing language for the plan in the 107th Congress and in securing funding for its full implementation.

Exports are vital to agricultural producers in the Central Valley, a point Dooley has underscored as he advocated the major trade expansion initiatives during his tenure. This has put him at odds with Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt and other Democrats who are close to organized labor.

On fiscal policy, Dooley is more in sync with conservatives than with his fellow Democrats. He voted against President Clinton's landmark 1993 budget, which reduced the deficit with the aid of a healthy tax increase. In 1997, as Congress struggled to reach a balanced-budget agreement with the White House, he voted for an interim Republican plan on taxing and spending that most Democrats rejected.

In votes on environmental policy and worker-management relations, Dooley sometimes sides with the Republican majority. Dooley also has sharp words for Democrats who feel "that employers are evil, that they are mean-spirited people who will use any means to take advantage of their employees."

In the 105th, for example, he was in the minority of Democrats who supported a GOP proposal allowing companies to offer employees compensatory time in lieu of pay for overtime work. Critics of the measure said workers would be coerced into taking whatever form of compensation the company preferred, an assertion Dooley rejected. "I am a private sector employer, and I take personal offense and find it insulting that so many of my colleagues would contend that we are going to take advantage of the people that work for us."

Dooley was drawn early on not only into his family farming concern but also into politics, another field where his family had some expertise; his brother and sister-in-law were senior aides to former Gov. Edmund G. "Jerry" Brown Jr. Dooley went to work in 1987 for state Sen. Rose Ann Vuich, a Fresno Democrat legendary for her constituent service. Dooley's association with Vuich helped him temper the more liberal flavor of his relatives' politics. In 1990, Dooley took 55 percent to topple six-term GOP Rep. Charles "Chip" Pashayan Jr., who was tainted by the 1989 savings and loan scandal. After an easy victory in 1992, Dooley slipped a bit in the big Republican year of 1994; his 57 percent tally then has led Republicans to keep him in their sights for future races. He defeated Rodriguez in November with 53 percent.

## 106th Congress: CQ Key Votes

2000

■ Raise hourly minimum wage by \$1 over two years	Yes
■ Halt funding for U.S. mission in Kosovo unless European nations pay more of the share	No
■ Provide Medicare benefits to military retirees and their dependents	Yes
■ Give China permanent, normal status as a trading partner of the United States	Yes
■ Repeal estate, gift and trust taxes over 10 years	Yes
■ Prohibit implementation of president's designations of federal lands as national monuments	Yes
■ Approve GOP plan to provide prescription drug coverage for Medicare beneficiaries	No
■ Increase level of debt relief for poor nations indebted to international financial institutions	Yes

1999

■ Impose steel import quotas	No
■ Kill proposal to take aviation trust funds off budget	Yes
■ Require criminal background checks for some purchasers at gun shows	No
■ Remove barriers among banking, securities and insurance companies	Yes
■ Authorize state grants to hire teachers and reduce class size	Yes
■ Overhaul campaign finance law, with ban on soft money and restrictions on advocacy advertising	Yes
■ Approve bipartisan proposal to increase rights of patients in managed care health plans	Yes

YEAR	VOTING PARTICIPATION	PRESIDENTIAL SUPPORT		PARTY UNITY	
		Support	Oppose	Support	Oppose
2000	91	71	29	82	18
1999	98	72	28	77	23
1998	99	80	20	80	20
1997	98	76	24	77	23
1996	98	81	19	74	26
1995	96	65	35	62	38
1994	96	74	26	82	18