# Response to Kim Ogg's "fact check" on her record

### The Resolution

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Summary	

Summary

Outline

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"The DA reneged on her campaign promises to oppose high misdemeanor bail by asking for high cash bail for minor crimes in December of 2017."

# Ogg's Response:

"DA Kim Ogg is on record against holding non-violent misdemeanor offenders in jail solely because they lack the money to post bail. [1] DA Ogg has been transparent with the public about actual bail practices, including changes needed to protect the public from repeat violent offenders [2]."

### The Truth:

In her response to the resolution, Ogg only reaffirms what the resolution documents. That Kim Ogg initially campaigned on supporting bail reform but has since very publicly reversed her support:

- At the end of the day she supports using high bail to keep misdemeanor offenders in jail behind bars,. Period.
- On December 21st, 2017, Ogg <u>sent an e-mail</u> directing her prosecutors to "file motions for high bond & bond conditions at intake (misdemeanor and felony)." Here is the e-mail:

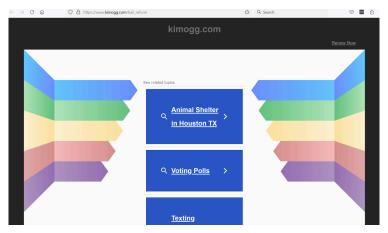
From: Ogg, Kim Sent: Thursday, December 21, 2017 4:59 PM To: Petroff, Amanda Cc: Wilhelm, Michelle; Ellis, Gavin; Neyland, Sarah; Heung, Marina; Alfred, Tiffany; Driver, Stephen; Brodrick, Adam; Kelley-Henry, Andrea; Johnson, Jules; Allard, Joseph; Sanchez, Joseph; White, Phillip; Jackson, Britney; Carter, Heyward; Forrest, Alexander; Colson, Simone; Bily, Eric; Lewis, John; Barr, David; Akingbola, Bayoji; Denholm, John; Cannady, Teresa; Harrigan, Dennis; Sims, James; Leslie, Coby; Hansel, Shella; Byrne, Lauren; McCrory, Daniel; Russell, Abbie; Collins, Lisa; Cloud, Carvana; Flavin, Kathleen; Wallace, Twyanette; Byrom, Celeste; Hayes, Elizabeth; Harkness Ashley; Fortenberry, Paul; Stott, Cory; Warren, Katie; Dupree, Tiffany; Burro, Jamie; Drehner, Shannon; Fiedler, Leah; Baty, Lucas; Williams, Maegan; Powers, Sean; Stayton, Patrick; Jamaleddine, Jill; Cicconetti, Mario; Aaron, Brittney; Beavers, Angela; Waddle, Thomas; Volkmer, Ryan; Merlwether, Jennifer; Turner, Valerie; Sawtelle, Gilbert; Kugler, Eric; Nichols, Denise; DeAngelo, Lori; Little, Casey; Brucker, David; Riley, Braden; Leitner, Jim; Mitcham, David; King, Vivian Subject: Re: INTAKE PROSECUTORS PLEASE READ This directive is coming directly from me. It is our duty as prosecutors to preserve public safety and to help assure the appearance of defendants in court. In the instances sent out by Amanda Petroff, we must be on record requesting a high bond. Thank you for your attention to these critical matters. I appreciate everyone's hard work and attention to this important kind of detail. Best, Kim Ogg Harris County district attorney Sent from my iPhone On Dec 21, 2017, at 10:44 AM, Petroff, Amanda < PETROFF AMANDA@dao.hctx.net> wrote: It is imperative that we file motions for high bond & bond conditions at Intake (misdemeanor and felony). Examples of situations where a motion for high bond MUST be filed include but are not limited 1) Defendant is currently on bond (misdemeanor or felony) 2) Defendant is currently on deferred adjudication or probation (misdemeanor or felony) 3) Defendant has extensive criminal history Or any other situation where in your judgment the Defendant should not be given a PR or standard bond. Misdemeanor high bond request should be \$15,000. On felonies use your judgment based on the facts and the Defendant's criminal history to determine the amount of the requested bond. I've included the felony bond schedule as a guide. I've also included a motion for high bond and motion for bond conditions. The Chief on duty will review each case to ensure that the proper motions have been filed.

- On Oct 3rd, 2021, the Houston Chronicle's reporting noted that, "An initial supporter of misdemeanor bail reform, Ogg has added her voice to the chorus of critics pointing a finger at the reforms as a "driving factor in the crime crisis gripping our community."
- An archived version of Ogg's campaign website reveals that she has scrubbed her website of all material outlining her support for bail reform.

#### **Before (Archived Site):**

https://web.archive.org/web/20221110133205/https://www.kimogg.com/bail\_reform

Now: https://www.kimogg.com/bail\_reform



The report she references in this argument was a garbage report her office came up with. She isn't even a party to the O' Donnell case, but still filed something that very much opposes bail reform.

The plaintiffs of O'Donnell wrote a thorough report that discounted her methodology.

### The Resolution:

"In 2019, the DA openly declared her opposition to efforts to fix the broken cash-bail system."

# Ogg's Response:

On Page one of the Harris County District Attorney's Office "Bail, Crime and Public Safety Report," DA Kim Ogg stated "it is important to reaffirm the District Attorney's Office's position that no person should be held in jail just because they are poor, and public safety should always be properly considered before anyone is released on bond"[3].

### The Truth:

- In March, 2021, Kim Ogg publicly testified in support of SB6, which was sponsored by Republican Senator Joan Huffman and later signed into law by Governor Abbott in Houston. The law undermined the discretion of Democratic judges in Harris County to determine bail, making it harder for offenders to attain their constitutionally protected right to bail. The legislation is in direct contradiction to the bail reform settlement reached by Harris County.
- In late 2020/Early 2021, <u>reporting in Texas Monthly</u> revealed that, "For years, the Democratic DA had been publicly criticizing local judges who set what she deemed insufficiently high bonds for defendants accused of violent crimes. Now her office would deliver a direct warning. First assistant district attorney David

Mitcham, Ogg's top lieutenant, informed the judges that there would be a "reckoning" if they didn't start setting higher bonds."

### The Resolution

"The DA has openly attacked Democratic judges who did not agree with her politics during the 2020 election cycle,"

## Ogg's Response

Rule 8.02 Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct prohibits lawyers from making false statements concerning the qualifications or integrity of a judge [4]. The DA's Office did file an official complaint with the Texas Judicial Conduct Commission against Judge Franklin Bynum. The commission recommended removal for consistently demonstrating bias against the District Attorney's Office.

### The Truth:

Again, this response reaffirms what the resolution claims, that Ogg is targeting Judges she disagrees with politically. Reporting from Texas Monthly corroborates that Ogg targeted at least one Judge - Democrat Franklin Bynum, at least in part because of his political beliefs, which were no secret when he campaigned for and won his seat for Judge.

"Ogg's complaint charges the judge with political bias, noting that he self-identifies as a democratic socialist and "prison abolitionist," and highlighting his <u>very public criticism</u> of the criminal justice system and a photograph of him wearing a "Defund the Police" T-shirt."

#### The Resolution

"Kimbra Kathryn 'Kim' Ogg, the Harris County District Attorney released a 56 page report in September of 2021 with the express intent of undermining the efforts of elected members of the Democratic Party's historic efforts on bail reform, and."

**Ogg's Response:** The report does not undermine the efforts of elected Democrats. DA Kim Ogg opposes bail for repeat violent offenders and supports no cash bail for non-violent misdemeanor offenders [3]. Current publicly-available statistics show that less than 3% of the Harris County jail population are misdemeanor offenders [6].

**The Truth:** See earlier discussions of cash bail. She very clearly has broken her promise and supports high cash bail for misdemeanor offenders, which is why she has scrubbed any mentions of the matter from her website.

### The Resolution

"The DA enabled a partisan investigation into local elections in November of 2022...the very same day Gov Abbott and the Harris County Republican Party publicly attacked our Nov. 2022 election"

## Ogg's Response:

Texas law mandates that the District Attorney SHALL investigate election misconduct upon receipt of a sworn affidavit signed by two people [7]. A DA who refuses to do so can be removed from office. Texas Local Gov't Code 87.001(3)(b) [8].

The Truth: 1) She has not provided an affidavit by two people to the public. The governor tweeted about it, and the DA said the Texas Rangers reached out.

2) The law only says you have to do an investigation. It doesn't dictate the terms. She has been at this investigation for 9 months. It could have easily been dismissed for the nonsense that it is.

Also, when the election happened last year, this law didn't exist; the law she references was not on the books when she started this investigation.

3) All the law says is that you cannot have a policy or practice written or unwritten saying that she won't look into it. She doesn't have to launch a nine month investigation. She could easily have looked at it, seen it was nonsense, and moved on. She hasn't. The resolution is accurate.

#### The Resolution:

WHEREAS, the DA openly undermined gun violence prevention programs forwarded by local city, county, state and congressional Democrats in 2022.

# Ogg's Response:

Law enforcement agencies are required by law to disclose all evidence that could be favorable to a person charged with a crime. The gun buyback programs did not log details of the weapons or provide for comparative testing with open cases, violating the Michael Morton Act and potentially jeopardizing pending cases.

### The Truth:

This reaffirms what the resolution says: That Ogg opposes gun buyback programs being run and supported by local Democrats.

Her reasoning for WHY she opposes it is totally absurd: Gun buybacks happened across the county without violating the Michael Morton Act. And just because someone else is getting exculpatory evidence does not mean she is getting in trouble. She's not getting the guns back. The natural conclusion of her argument is that she wants to keep guns that were used to commit a crime in the hands of the person who did it.

#### The Resolution:

"New investigative reporting from the *Houston Chronicle* in an article in September of 2023 revealed that Kim Ogg also abused the power of her position as the top law enforcement official in the county to bully and intimidate elected officials, judges, and public servants she disagrees with by threatening them with criminal prosecution, draining their bank accounts, damaging their reputations, and intentionally creating a paralyzing culture of fear across local government"

## Ogg's Response:

The DA and all prosecutors are bound by oath to apply the law equally to all and and to prosecute criminal cases without regard to any discriminatory factors such as religion, race, gender, age, sexual orientation or political affiliation.

### The Truth:

As the Houston Chronicle has already documented, the law is not being applied equally to all. In fact, it is being used to target elected officials, public servants, election workers and other political opponents of the District Attorney.

Where is her report on **Chris Diaz**?

Additionally, a May 24th, 2021 Chronicle article showed that female deputies filed suits over being "exploited in bachelor party stings." The article cites a 40-page civil rights

suit filed by the deputies' attorney in saying one of the deputies "took her concerns to the Harris County District Attorney's Office. District Attorney Kim Ogg's office referred the matter to the constable office's internal investigators."

Why did Ogg not pursue that case against a Democratic constable, a constable whose Chief of Staff later primaried Judge Hidalgo? And that information wasn't leaked to the media, either.

Additionally, we have yet to see her investigate a single GOP elected investigated. There were a lot more in Harris County when she entered office.

And once again: Why does the DA complain all the time about violent cases in Harris County, but chooses to investigate paper crimes?

Ogg claims she investigated Steve Hotze as way of showing that she investigates Republicans as well as Democrats on corruption matters. But that was for a *violent crime*. And Steve Hotze isn't the counterweight to actual elected officals. He's a rightwing, unelected, discredited wide-eyed conspiracy theorist. AND the DA chose not to investigate the matter she referenced for years until the key recording in that case finally got leaked.

**The Resolution:** WHEREAS, the DA openly stated that she would determine whether or not to prosecute the most extreme abortion ban in the nation on behalf of Governor Greg Abbott on a "case by case basis," [9] and;

# Ogg's Response:

[17] Ch. 87 Texas Local Govt. [18] Andrew Warren removal document Texas law prohibits District Attorneys from adopting a policy of refusal to prosecute a class of criminal offenses, including abortion. An elected prosecutor's public statement against enforcement of any law subjects them to removal [17]. Elected Democratic District Attorneys have been removed from office and replaced by Republican DA's after making such anti- prosecution policy statements [18].

#### The Truth:

When Ogg made her statement about abortion (6/24/22), the law she referenced had not gone into effect and didn't go into effect until 9/1/23.

Four other Democratic DAs made Ft. Bend, Dallas, Bexar, Travis, Nueces county all made clear statements saying they wouldn't prosecute as part of a nationwide pledge. Ogg was asked to sign on. She didn't.

As for her claim that Democratic DAs have been removed for making those statements and replaced by Republican DAs, her citation references a FLORIDA law. She is not referencing a Texas law. The DA, being a lawyer, knows that a completely different state law fundamentally changes the significance of the law.

### The Resolution:

"The DA has amplified demonstrably false claims from Republican officials that local democrats are "defunding law enforcement" despite consistent increases each year in funding for justice and safety led and passed by democrats on Commissioners Court."

### **Ogg's Response:**

The DA has consistently pursued an increase in the number of prosecutors needed to address population growth and the increase in violent and property crimes. Three unrelated studies affirmed the need for more prosecutors in Harris County, including TSU's report on "Prosecutorial Staff, Budgets, Caseloads and the Need for Change"[19], finding that the Harris County DA's Office has 408 fewer prosecutors than Cook County but handles twice as many cases per prosecutor.

### The Truth:

Again, this statement only corroborates what the resolution states, which is that Ogg has falsely accused Democrats of "Defunding law enforcement." There are tons of video clips from commissioners court of Ogg making this accusation. She usually packs the room with people who agree with her politically from the law enforcement community when she does it. What's not cited by Ogg here is the fact that Democrats on Commissioners court have not only NOT defunded the police, they've actually proposed consistent *increases for* the budget of the District Attorney's office each year (along with all other county law enforcement agencies):

Department	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022
Rosen, Precinct 1	\$35,129,000	\$36,803,000	\$37,767,000	\$40,275,000	\$41,999,000	\$43,506,997
Garcia, Precinct 2	\$7,918,000	\$8,725,000	\$8,815,000	\$9,256,000	\$9,455,000	\$10,165,425
Eagleton, Precinct 3	\$15,525,000	\$16,578,000	\$16,580,000	\$17,409,000	\$18,386,000	\$18,861,059
Herman, Precinct 4	\$46,461,000	\$50,809,000	\$53,113,000	\$54,200,000	\$56,925,000	\$58,811,078
Heap, Precinct 5	\$38,945,000	\$41,636,000	\$42,462,000	\$43,300,000	\$44,194,000	\$44,920,246
Trevino, Precinct 6	\$9,485,000	\$9,973,000	\$9,997,000	\$10,497,000	\$10,599,000	\$10,854,412
Walker, Precinct 7 Sandlin, Precinct 8 HCSO Law Enforcement HCSO Detention HCSO Jail Medical District Attorney	\$11,182,000	\$12,111,000	\$12,424,000	\$13,675,000	\$14,420,000	\$14,945,431
	\$7,804,000	\$8,375,000	\$8,617,000	\$9,130,000	\$9,312,000	\$9,447,328
	\$216,415,000	\$208,884,000	\$218,159,000	\$229,167,000	\$240,606,000	\$246,381,330
	\$186,000,000	\$209,000,000	\$204,645,000	\$214,877,000	\$241,161,000	\$244,906,152
	\$62,000,000	\$66,300,000	\$66,986,000	\$75,335,000	\$79,388,000	\$80,205,814
	\$77,050,000	\$78,590,000	\$82,903,000	\$88,700,000	\$94,280,000	\$95,598,731
Juvenile Probation	\$76,000,000	\$78,320,000	\$79,098,000	\$85,053,000	\$86,494,000	\$87,612,963
Total	\$789,914,000	\$826,104,000	\$841,566,000	\$890,874,000	\$947,219,000	\$966,216,966

AND if she does not have enough prosecutors, why is she wasting time and resources investigating all of this nonsense that doesn't affect public safety?

### The Resolution:

WHEREAS, Kim Ogg sided with prominent state Republicans including Governor Greg Abbott and Lt. Governor Dan Patrick to promote and lobby for draconian crime laws that disproportionately impact people of color, including an expansion of mandatory minimums laws that fuel our mass incarceration crisis, [13] statewide legislation designed to undermine the work of local Democratic judges who are restoring fairness to our judicial system in August of 2023, [14], [15] and;

**Ogg's Response:** DA Kim Ogg has pursued legislative changes to improve the justice system for crime victims and the public's safety. [22]-[24]

The Truth: She does not dispute our claim at all. She offers completely alternative facts to what was said. Her explanation can only be interpreted as conceding this fact that she supported the policies of the state and undermined efforts at bail reform.

### The Resolution:

WHEREAS, Kim Ogg has enabled Republican attacks on free and fair elections by opening a criminal investigation led by the Texas Rangers against innocent election workers based on debunked conspiracy theories, innuendo, and outright lies invented and promoted by Republican party officials, and;

**Ogg's response:** Texas law requires that upon the filing of two affidavits by registered voters complaining of criminal conduct in connection with an election, the District Attorney SHALL investigate the offenses [25]. Refusal to do so can result in removal of the elected District Attorney [26].

The Truth: Again, she has not provided an affidavit by two people to the public. The governor tweeted about it, and the DA said the Texas Rangers reached out.

2) The law only says you have to do an investigation. It doesn't dictate the terms. She has been at this investigation for 9 months. It could have easily been dismissed for the nonsense that it is.

Also, when the election happened last year, this law didn't exist; the law she references was not on the books when she started this investigation.

3) All the law says is that you cannot have a policy or practice written or unwritten saying that she won't look into it. She doesn't have to launch a nine month investigation. She could easily have looked at it, seen it was nonsense, and moved on. She hasn't. The resolution is accurate.

**The Resolution:** "WHEREAS, Kim Ogg has also stood silent on Republican efforts to enact SB1 and other voter suppression laws targeting only Harris County, even going so far as to bring additional criminal charges against Hervis Rogers, [16] a local 64-year-old black man Attorney General Ken Paxton already jailed and prosecuted in 2021 for voting, and; [27]Texas Election Code Ch. 273 Sec. 273.001

[28] Local Govt. Code Ch. 87

# Ogg's Response:

Texas law mandates that a District Attorney SHALL investigate election misconduct upon receipt of a sworn affidavit signed by two people [7]. A DA who refuses to do so can be removed from office. Texas Local Gov't Code 87.001(3)(b) [8].

The Truth: AGAIN: Requiring you to investigate doesn't mean you have to investigate and take it to the grand jury! She could have looked at the case, seen it as nonsense, and not sought charges. The law does not say she had to seek charges.

Instead, Mr. Rogers had to prep for court and undergo all of that financial and personal stress for something totally ridiculous.

And again: if she's complaining that she doesn't have prosecutors to crack down on violent crime, then why is she pursuing these ridiculous cases at the bidding of Ken Paxton?

All this says is that Kim Ogg agrees with our accusation.

### The Resolution:

"Whereas the DA has accepted thousands of dollars from some of the same notorious bail bondsmen in the county, the same bail bondsmen who have enabled the criminals she has failed to prosecute to be released,"

### Ogg's response:

The Texas Constitution provides gives nearly all criminal offenders in Texas the right to bail. DA Ogg and other Democrats supported a local rule change that now requires bail bond companies in Harris County to follow clear rules when applied to any "serious or violent sexual offense"

### The Truth:

This response avoids answering the claim altogether. Ogg has received thousands of dollars from the very bail bond industry she criticized her opponent for taking in 2016. Moreover, Ogg even appointed a bail bondsman to her transition team to advise her on bail policy.

And even further: her old website, which she took down, criticized her former opponent for taking money from bail bondsman. From her since-deleted campaign website:

could not post bond to secure their appearance in court. Worse yet, the Harris County District Attorney and Judges utilize a bond schedule that is now the subject of a multimillion dollar lawsuit because it is unconstitutional. Yet, Harris County judges refuse to use pre-trial bonds in all but 5% of the criminal cases filed by the DA, causing the other 95% of those jailed in Harris County to hire bail bondsmen. These same bail bondsmen, in turn, support the current District Attorney and incumbent judges through tens of thousands of dollars in campaign contributions. The result is that for many, an arrest leads to a plea of guilt, and then a conviction— so that they can get out of jail. During the past decade, the Harris County Jail itself has garnered one of the worst reputations in the nations, having been responsible for more than 200 prisoner.

### From her campaign finance report:

	MONET	ARY POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIO	NS	SCHEDULE A	11
	The Instruc	ction Guide explains how to complete this fo	1 Total pages Schedule A1: Sch: 7/11 Rpt: 10/46		
2	FILER NAME Ogg, Kim			3 Filer ID	
4	Date 11/02/2016	<ul> <li>Full name of contributor</li></ul>	7 Amount of Contribution (\$) \$1,5	500.00	
8	Principal occu		9 Employer (See Instructions	(s)	$\dashv$
	Attorney	,	Law Office of Anthony		
2		ction Guide explains how to complete this f	orm.	1 Total pages Schedule A1: Sch: 16/25 Rpt: 19/34 3 Filer ID	
4	Date 10/14/2020	5 Full name of contributor out-of-state PAC (ID#:_Muharib, Anthony  6 Contributor address; City; State; Zip Code 1001 Texas, Ste. 900  Houston, TX 77001	7 Amount of Contribution (\$) \$1,	,000.00	
8	Principal occu	upation / Job title (See Instructions)	9 Employer (See Instruction	ns)	
L	Attorney		Law Office of Anthony	Muharib	
I					
	Date 01/05/201	Full name of contributor  Muharib, Wisam (Mr.)  Contributor address; City; State; Zip Code 2911 Hardy St  Houston, TX 77009		Amount of Contribution (\$)	\$200.0
ł	Principal oc	cupation / Job title (See Instructions)	Employer (See Instructi	tions)	
	Entrepren	eur	Self Employed		

### Ogg's claims regarding the resolution:

Beyond the Scope. The Resolutions Committee "shall study proposed policy resolutions (that is, formal expressions of the position of the HCDP on issues of public concern) to be offered to the CEC." The proposed resolution to "Formally Admonish the District Attorney" is not an issue of "public concern" which falls within the regular course of the CEC's business.

The Truth: We have proven repeatedly that this is well within the scope of the resolutions committee and is a matter of public concern. Resolutions have covered a broad interpretation of what constitutes policy, and this resolution is a position taken by the CEC on our policy toward an official who has repeatedly violated our values. An HCDP chair has made public statements in the past about the DA, as well as others who have violated our values. We are allowed to speak as a body, and this resolution takes positions on multiple policies. It is the decision of the Resolutions committee to make this determination, not the decision of the DA to make this decision. And the Resolutions committee's job is to support public debate of the resolution.

Notice and Timing Requirements Not Met. The proposed resolution has not been presented in writing to the Resolutions Committee "at least two weeks in advance of a Steering Committee meeting" as required. Nor has the day, time, and location of the next Resolutions Committee been posted on the website, as required. Until these requirements are met, the proposed resolution cannot proceed.

The Truth: This argument only argues against the idea of passing this resolution at the CEC. We honor the schedule and needs of the resolutions committee. If they would like to take this up in December because they are hard at work electing Democrats for the November election, that is fine by us.

No Emergency. The proposed resolution does not address any emergency and is therefore inappropriate for submission to the County Chair for referral to the Steering Committee for disposition.

The Truth: This has nothing to do with anything. This is not an emergency resolution.

Misuse of Party Resources. To urge passage of such a resolution and advocate for adoption by the CEC (or by the Steering Committee pursuant to Article VI.2) for publication on the HCDP website is an inappropriate use of Party resources. Departure from Primary Purpose. The primary mission of the Harris County Democratic Party is to elect Democrats who support the U.S. Constitution, share our values, and are willing to stand up against extremist Republicans and policies threatening the County and its residents, not to harm fellow Democratic candidates, nor to give one Democratic candidate an advantage over another Democratic candidate. The proposed resolution creates division within the Party and mimics Republican party disfunction.

The Truth: The resolution focuses very clearly on the many ways in which the DA has violated party values, sided with Republicans, and dangerously used her office to launch investigations against Democrats. We have no interest in the upcoming primary, and clearly make no mention of any of that in this resolution. That is the concern of the DA and any other candidates in that race.

What we have seen is that the DA has implicitly sided with extremist Republicans like Ken Paxton by taking cases to the grand jury when she was not required by law to do so.

Finally, this resolution's primary purpose is to hold DA Ogg accountable for causing dysfunction and sowing division within the party. Her bunk investigations into Democrats with whom she has political disagreements are a clear sign of dysfunction and division. This resolution is an important conversation, and any attempt to quell or silence it is out of line with party resources. The information and premise Ogg is using to try to shut down any dissent is the exact kind of tactic she has used to attack other Democrats, and she has made our case for us that this is an important matter to bring before the CEC.

Ignores Governing Laws. In addressing the deficiencies of the proposed resolution, many existing laws, statutes and ethical guidelines guide and limit the actions of elected district attorneys in Texas.

The Truth: This is completely false. The statutes the DA cites are misplaced, hyperbolized in their scope, and in one case refer to a law that isn't even a Texas statute. We have considered the laws and statutes she references. She simply is manipulating the truth and lying about what the implications of those laws actually are.