

Former California Attorney General Bill Lockyer: Why the Law Should Always Precede Politics, No Matter Your Party

Bill Lockyer On Why the Law Should Always Precede Politics, No Matter Your Party

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, UNITED STATES, March 5, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The law should always come before politics, and that's a concept [Bill Lockyer](#) stands behind 100 percent. A former California Attorney General, [Lockyer recently discussed how Gov. Gavin Newsom plans to appoint](#) a state attorney general who supports his view, and why existing law should always come before political belief.

The Governor's field of candidates to fill the Attorney General are some of California's leading opponents to the death penalty.

The state of California will soon be seeking a new Attorney General, as current Attorney General Xavier Becerra is likely to become the Secretary of Health and Human Services under President Biden. Many activists for criminal justice reform have pushed for Governor Newsom to choose a replacement who won't pursuing the death penalty for individuals convicted of murder.

Governor Newsom placed a moratorium on executions in 2019. However, the opposition has noted that the death penalty remains a legal part of the Constitution of the state of California.

Bill Lockyer, the Attorney General for the state from 1999 to 2007, was asked his opinion on the topic.

"The state law should always be put before politics," Lockyer said. "Whomever Newsom chooses to appoint is obligated under the state of California Constitution to uphold the laws of this state."

[Bill Lockyer did not](#) comment on whether he supports or opposes the death penalty, but he was clear about the Governor and the future Attorney General's legal obligation to enforce the existing laws of California. He added that this includes defending the death sentence.

Lockyer further stated that while former CA officeholders Kamala Harris and Jerry Brown opposed the death penalty, they adhered to the state laws and defended death sentences during their terms. As the former Attorney General explained, this is the correct thing to do,

particularly as someone who represents citizens across the state.

Currently, the death penalty in the state of California is under great scrutiny. Opponents not only argue that it is being applied incorrectly, but also that the death penalty itself violates the state's constitution.

Contra Costa County District Attorney Diana Becton recently argued that the death penalty in California is disproportionately applied to people with mental health issues and people of color.

But as Bill Lockyer explained, it is not a public official's duty to determine which laws are fair or just. Instead, an elected representative's first and most important obligation is to uphold and enforce the laws currently enshrined in the California Constitution.

"The rule of law needs to be protected in the government, and we've seen this abused many times," Bill Lockyer finished. "Elected officials can fight for changes in the law, but they cannot impose these changes on the people of California before any changes have been officially implemented. In this case, the elected Attorney General has a responsibility to uphold the death penalty in this state until the law is changed."

Caroline Hunter
Web Presence, LLC
+1 786-551-9491
[email us here](#)

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