

Hello, this is Tom Cookman with a Community Comment.

I am so thankful that we are going to have a new District Attorney in Humboldt County. I have been a very vocal critic of the policies implemented by Paul Gallegos during his time in office. I know that there is a large segment of our population that believes marijuana is a very minor drug and shouldn't be illegal. The thought process is that it really doesn't harm people or cause them to put other peoples lives in danger like alcohol does. Before our lenient marijuana laws were in place there were people who went to prison for what some considered very minor offenses. The problem with allowing the marijuana cultivation to operate without fear of prosecution isn't with the people who are growing a few plants in their homes or with the people who are smoking marijuana everyday, it is the fact that this drug is valuable. Any activity where there is huge profits to be made, there is a criminal element that will be attracted to the community that allows this activity to take place. This is human nature, nothing else. Humboldt County quickly became a focal point for people who wanted to make a lot of money in the marijuana industry. In my opinion, Paul Gallegos failed to see who would set up shop, not just in Southern Humboldt or in a few isolated places, but everywhere. There isn't a neighborhood that doesn't have some marijuana activity going on in it. These criminals that moved to Humboldt County brought their friends and families with them. These people are not who you want living next door. I really wish I had been wrong when I predicted the escalation in criminal activity that we've experienced since Paul Gallegos became our District Attorney. Humboldt County has turned into a cesspool. When someone is murdered, most of us hear about it. Take a moment and just think about how many murders we've had in the last ten years. It is sickening. The

reality is that for every murder victim that is found, think about how many are buried deep in the ground out in the hills in Southern Humboldt. The people who are being killed and disposed of are people who are engaging in home invasion robberies and are just a missing person from some other city. I could go on and on, but the bottom line is that the situation we find ourselves in today, needs to change. We need to start by electing a District Attorney who will be tough on crime. We need to elect someone with experience. I really wish Worth Dikeman would've won when he ran against Paul Gallegos. The face of Humboldt County would look much different today if he were our DA. We have four people who are running for the office and it takes fifty percent of the votes plus one to win the seat in June. It is highly unlikely that this will happen in June, so we will narrow the field to two candidates and our new District Attorney will be elected in November. I will pay close attention to their campaigns to see who is willing to make the tough decisions that will make Humboldt County a safe place to live once again. I read one comment from Elan Firpo in regards to capital punishment where she is quoted as saying "I don't think civilized societies kill people for killing people, it just doesn't make sense". When someone rapes and murders a little girl like Richard Allen Davis did to Polly Klaas, I want a District Attorney who is willing to seek the death penalty. The majority of our society believe certain people deserve to be put to death for their heinous crimes and we need prosecutors who are willing to seek the death penalty, because that is part of the law. Having a District Attorney who infuses their personal feelings into policy is why we are in the criminal mess we find ourselves in today. We need to prosecute criminals to the fullest extent of the law.

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