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## **DA Recall Group Submits More Than 16,700 Signatures**

The effort to recall District Attorney Paul Gallegos took an important step forward today as petitions containing more than 16,700 signatures were submitted to the county elections office for validation. This number of signatures virtually assures that a recall election on Gallegos will be held.

Backers of the recall noted that the signatures submitted are nearly equal to the votes cast for Gallegos in the March 2002 District Attorney election, according to the Humboldt County Elections Department website.

In order to qualify for the ballot, 11,138 valid signatures are needed, a number equal to 15% of the county's registered voters at the time recall petition was approved in May. The 16,000 plus signatures represent nearly one and a half times the number needed. This requirement is quite different from the recall of a governor, where valid signatures must equal just 12 % of the number of votes cast in the most recent gubernatorial election. If this rule applied to the D.A. recall, the number of valid signatures needed would be less than 5,300 or about a third of what have been collected.

The recall is being supported by local business leaders and elected officials, thousands of citizens, and by numerous law enforcement organizations, including the Humboldt Deputy Sheriff's Organization, the Eureka Police Officers Association, the Fortuna Police Officers Association and the Redwood Chapter of the Peace Officers Research Association of California. Proponents cite Gallegos' generally soft stance on crime and misplaced priorities as shown by numerous plea bargains and undercharging on violent and drug-related crimes as their primary reason for his recall.

The committee expressed its gratitude to the voters for their active involvement in the recall and for the financial support from many in the in the community. The committee also noted that the recall offers those who believe they made a mistake in electing Gallegos the opportunity to make a change for the better.

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## Reasons for the Recall

Although District Attorney Paul Gallegos promised he'd be tough on drugs and violent crime, he has repeatedly mishandled criminal cases and accepted lenient plea bargains:

- He offered probation to a sex offender charged with assaulting a 12-year-old child for five hours.
- He failed to file appropriate charges in the drive-by home shootings in Eureka, and allowed the shooters to plead to a single count, even though more than a dozen homes and buildings were fired into.
- He gave probation to a drug dealer who was arrested with nearly 40 grams of methamphetamine packaged and ready for sale, had a record of drug-related offenses, and gave police a full confession.
- After promising to prosecute tree-sitters to "the fullest extent of the law," he let one off with a \$10 fine. It wasn't even a slap on the wrist – it was a pat on the back.

District Attorney Gallegos has repeatedly made statements that were false or misleading:

- He falsely claimed that Eureka police had failed to provide all charges in the drive-by home shootings, forcing him to accept a plea bargain. The truth: cops had given him all charges a week prior to the preliminary hearing – he just chose not to file them.
- He told the Board of Supervisors that Assistant District Attorney Tim Stoen – who is paid more than \$100,000 a year – regularly prosecutes cases in court. The truth: Stoen has yet to try a case here.
- After telling his staff he was so ill he had to go home from work, he instead went surfing with a friend on county time.

District Attorney Gallegos' priorities and judgment are dangerously flawed:

- In March he accused a major business of a \$400,000,000 dollar fraud and filed a civil case. In August, he accused a businessman of a \$117,000 fraud and filed a criminal case. Is this fair and equal treatment?
- Citing budget woes, he has laid off or fired five attorneys and investigators. Yet he did manage to find money to hire Stoen, whose disturbing past includes a close and well documented association with Jim Jones, his so-called People's Temple and the Jonestown disaster in Guyana.

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