



Written by [Luis Miguel](#) on August 18, 2023

## Californians Push to Recall Yet Another Progressive D.A. as Crime Rises

“Progressive” reform can be very appealing to Democrat voters — until those voters find themselves forced to live with the consequences of those policies.

California has become home to an ironic trend — progressive district attorneys are being elected on a platform of “criminal justice reform,” and then promptly being recalled once that platform is believed to lead to higher crime.

As [Politico](#) notes, the latest left-wing “reformer” to fall into this trend is Pamela Price, the D.A. of Alameda County, which is part of the San Francisco Bay area — a Democrat stronghold.

Late last month, Price faced the wrath of constituents at a church in an Oakland neighborhood. Residents spoke over her, venting their concerns about widespread assault and car thefts.

One woman described being pulled out of her car at gunpoint. “I voted for you, but I don’t feel safe here,” she told Price.

A group known as Save Alameda For Everyone, or SAFE, filed the intent to recall paperwork on Tuesday, along with the needed signatures to officially begin the process.

This marks the third time within the last 18 months that California voters have tried to recall their prosecutor. One such effort was against Chesa Boudin, the former D.A. of San Francisco who was successfully recalled last year.

Boudin defended Price, comparing their ordeals and arguing that the opposition to their style comes from law-enforcement interests which do not want to see the system change.

“They were going to try to recall [Price] no matter what,” Boudin said. “They want anybody who has a vision for trying to change the system to learn the lesson that you don’t try to change the system.”

Also last year, Los Angeles District Attorney George Gascón faced a recall push, though he escaped with his position still intact. Nevertheless, Gascón faces a tough 2024 reelection battle.

Asian Americans have played an important role in these recall efforts, spurred by rising violence against Asians by black criminals. One case that has caught the attention of Asians has been that of Jasper Wu, a 23-month-old boy killed by a stray bullet while he and his family were driving on Interstate 880 in Oakland back in 2021.



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Oakland, California



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In the immediate aftermath of Wu's killing, Price floated the idea of no-jail punishment for the culprits and even dropped charges that would have prevented them from getting parole.

Oakland Chinatown Chamber of Commerce President Carl Chan, who is backing the recall of Price, told Politico the DA's actions are encouraging crime by showing offenders that there will not be serious consequences for their law-breaking.

"Six months in, you're already pretty much destroying the legal system," said Chan, who was assaulted before Price took office. "Justice reform doesn't mean we have to go the wrong direction. We cannot use justice reform to allow people to commit crimes against innocent people."

The outlet further reported on the Price camp's pushback against the criticism, even as the Alameda County prosecutor has taken a soft-on-crime approach:

Price argued that the recall push was "consistent with the history of fighting against racial oppression in this country. Racism is real, and it does not evaporate just because we won the election."

Price's supporters say the longtime civil rights litigator has done precisely what she campaigned on. She has sharply curtailed the use of sentencing enhancements that add time for factors like gang membership, sought to avoid condemning people to life without parole, revived probes of police shootings and jail deaths, reviewed old convictions and expanded oversight of a troubled county jail.

... Oakland, a city of over 400,000 people, has increasingly attracted tech workers from nearby San Francisco and seen housing prices skyrocket as its historic Black population shrinks. Violent and property-related offenses have risen markedly in recent years despite being below historical highs, with homicides up 80 percent and car break-ins soaring by 90 percent compared to 2019. Brazen daytime crimes in wealthier neighborhoods have amplified demands for a crackdown in a city long divided between poorer flatlands that backed Price and affluent uphill districts where she drew less support.

Backlash against progressive reforms is taking place outside of California as well. Manhattan DA Alvin Bragg and Philadelphia prosecutor Larry Krasner, while not the targets of recall efforts, have been confronted with legislative action intended to counter their policies of lighter sentencing and restrictions on policing.

Republicans have pointed to the pushback to support their argument that the policies of progressive criminal justice reformers do not work as promised when put into practice, but instead only serve to embolden the criminal element.

Price's defenders argue that critics are unfairly blaming her for things over which she does not have control, asserting that police and municipal officials have greater roles to play in crime prevention.

The critics, however, fire back that a lack of strong consequences is an invitation for criminals to violate the law freely — a pattern that has taken root in San Francisco, and which Californians in other areas fear will become the norm throughout the state.



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