



**Attorney General candidate Dave Jones files lawsuit against  
Appointed Attorney General Xavier Becerra**

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*Lawsuit against Becerra seeks damages and to enjoin Becerra's illegally filmed  
campaign commercials.*

On Thursday, elected Insurance Commissioner and candidate for Attorney General Dave Jones officially filed a civil case against Appointed Attorney General Xavier Becerra for illegally filming campaign commercials inside the historic Stanley Mosk State Library and Courts building in Sacramento.

Jones, who filed the complaint at the Stanley Mosk Courthouse in Los Angeles, calls for damages to be measured by the cost of producing and airing the commercials, which could total over \$2 million. Jones is also requesting that all video footage and photographs taken in the state building be taken off the air and destroyed so that it cannot be used in future advertisements.

The civil complaint filed by Jones states: "The conversion of a state courtroom into a campaign film set, in lieu of recreating a courtroom scene through purchasing scene materials with campaign funds, provided the [Becerra] campaign with a significant monetary gain. The value of filming political campaign ads in the Stanley Mosk Library and Courts building was of such significant benefit to Defendant Becerra that Defendants used footage of the multiple scenes unlawfully staged in its ornate state courtroom and this historic

state building in each of his four campaign commercials of which Plaintiff has viewed to date."

The four campaign commercials including the courtroom footage also misled voters in regards to Mr. Becerra's recent legal experience.

"Moreover, Defendants' use of a state courtroom in the Subject Advertisements is misleading because Defendant Becerra was on inactive status with the State Bar of California for 26 years before being appointed as Attorney General...", states the complaint. "This misleading material resulted in a substantial gain to Defendants."

**[Read the entire Civil Complaint.](#)**

Becerra's campaign admitted that it used the courtroom of the Third District Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court as a backdrop for its campaign commercials. The Becerra campaign claims that it received a permit to use the space from the California Film Commission, but any permit issued does not trump California Government Code 8314, which prohibits Becerra from using a public resource, in this case the Supreme Court courtroom and interior of a state building, as a set to make a campaign commercial:

*(a) It is unlawful for any elected state or local officer, including any state or local appointee, employee, or consultant, to use or permit others to use public resources for a campaign activity, or personal or other purposes which are not authorized by law.*

In addition, the Film Commission stated clearly on its website as of May 22, 2018, that "Filming requests for Appellate Courtrooms located within state office buildings will not be considered." Becerra thus somehow obtained a "permit" contrary to the Film Commission's own rules. Furthermore, in the permit, there is no mention that Becerra intended to film a campaign commercial - instead the permit says that Becerra will simply be interviewed.

Outrageously, the Film Commission Website has been changed since Jones first complained about illegal use of the courtroom by Becerra to add language creating an exception for the Third District Court of Appeal courtroom from the general prohibition on filming. **[A link to the original language without the exception is here.](#)**

"Mr. Becerra is charged with upholding the law and instead has violated the very law he is sworn to uphold, in a willful violation of the public's trust," said Jones. "The staging of political ads in the very courtroom used by the California Supreme Court, takes Mr. Becerra's politicization of his office to a new and

jarring level. No one is above the law and anyone who believes he is, is not fit to hold the office of Attorney General."