



Written by [Larry Elder](#) on June 6, 2024

California: Where Common Sense Goes to Die

The circus came to California a long time ago, and there are no signs it's packing up any time soon. Some recent examples: California lawmakers set up a reparations panel for "black descendants of slaves" even though California was never a slave state. California has a budget deficit of close to \$50 billion, and some put the price tag of the panel's reparations recommendations at \$800 billion.

A former soap opera actor recently was shot and killed in downtown Los Angeles. He interrupted thieves attempting to steal the catalytic converter from his car. In response, a Democrat Los Angeles City Council member — there are no Republicans — blamed the automaker for failing to make the catalytic converters harder to steal. Councilwoman Nithya Raman said: "In this case, I think one of the things that infuriates me, is that we have a company — whatever, Toyota — who makes the Prius, that essentially has a device on their cars which is super easy to remove. It's basically the value of a MacBook, right?"

At a gay pride parade in West Hollywood, some "indigenous queer people" marched waving a Mexican flag with a Palestinian flag on the bumper of their truck. A gay man in Gaza told i24News: "If you are gay, you should be hiding. It's so hard. I was so scared. Scared from everything you know? Scared of getting hit, of getting kidnapped. I was so afraid. I was afraid Hamas would find out I was gay."

California voters in 1996 banned the use of race and gender in government hiring, government contracts and admission to state colleges and universities. Yet, the University of California, Los Angeles medical school dean of admissions, Jennifer Lucero, a proponent of "diversity, equity and inclusion," ignores the law and lowers standards to admit "underrepresented" students. According to The Washington Free Beacon: "Within three years of Lucero's hiring in 2020, UCLA dropped from 6th the 18th place in U.S. News & World Report's rankings for medical research. And ... more than 50 percent of students failed standardized tests on emergency medicine, family medicine, internal medicine, and pediatrics."

In 2018, California lawmakers passed and the governor, a Democrat — there are no Republicans holding any statewide office — signed a law requiring publicly traded corporations headquartered in California to have at least one woman on their boards of directors. In 2020, lawmakers passed a law requiring publicly traded corporations headquartered in California to have one member from an



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“underrepresented community,” defined as “individuals who self-identify as Black, African-American, Hispanic, Latino, Asian, Pacific Islander, Native American, Native Hawaiian, or Alaska Native, or who self-identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender.” California courts struck down both laws as violations of the equal protection clause of the California Constitution.

In April, California’s \$20 hourly minimum wage went into effect for fast-food workers. UCLA economist Lee Ohanian estimates the law, so far, has cost the state 10,000 fast-food jobs. The law also incentivizes the use of automation. California last year had the lowest job growth of any state. As of April 2024, California, at 5.3%, had the highest rate of unemployment of any state.

When the governor signed the fast-food law, two major California Pizza Hut franchisees promptly let go more than 1,200 delivery workers. Rubio’s Coastal Grill, a fish taco chain, just closed all 48 California locations. The company said: “The closings were brought about by the rising cost of doing business in California.” Note that most franchise operators are “mom-and-pop” owners, with just one location running on thin profit margins. So, this 25% hike in the minimum wage bites hard. As for the law’s sticker shock, Wendy’s increased its prices 8%, Chipotle 7.5% and Starbucks 7%.

But things could have been worse. Democrat U.S. Senate candidate Barbara Lee advocates a \$50 hourly minimum wage.

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