Beat: Politics

California Worst Disasters in History: Mismanagement of Public Administration

Mismanagement of tax-payers funds

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USPA NEWS - The daily struggles of Californians are real and seem to worsen by the second. Essential workers, who form the backbone of society, can barely make ends meet despite their vital contributions. Meanwhile, the rise of corporate profits signals a troubling trend: public administration appears to be abandoning the people in favor of serving capital interests. This growing disparity highlights a systemic failure to address the needs of the working class, exacerbating inequality and fostering a sense of betrayal among those who keep the state's economy running.

Governor Gavin Newsom made national headlines again this month with his latest scandal. Per Bloomberg reports, Newsom gave Panera Bread an exemption to a new minimum wage law in California. Why? Because he went to high school with the owner and didn’t want to see his buddy’s business tank. Assembly Bill (AB) 1228, passed in 2023, mandates that fast-food franchises with at least 60 national branches must pay a minimum wage of $20 per hour to their employees.

The law, however, had a very specific exemption for “chains that bake bread and sell it as a standalone item.”

Panera has 24 locations in California, all owned by Gregg Flynn, Newsom’s friend and billionaire campaign donor. Newsom denies helping his friend out, though the Bloomberg article reports that he and Flynn have a long business relationship with each other, with Flynn apparently bragging to colleagues that he is on a texting basis with the governor. This incident underscores how public administration seems to favor corporate interests over the welfare of the labor class, exacerbating the daily struggles of Californians and deepening the sense of inequality and betrayal among essential workers.

The fact that Governor Newsom tried to take advantage of the labor class by allowing his friend to not pay the minimum wage for workers is a perfect example of public administration working for corporations.

Governor Gavin Newsom is also facing backlash due to his management of public funds in addressing the homeless crisis. Despite intense capital investment from the state, statistics indicate that the problem has only worsened. Newsom’s biggest donors are health insurance companies in California, which raises concerns about conflicts of interest. The California Covered program allows low-income individuals to register with private insurance companies, and a similar approach is taken with the homeless. If a homeless person with no money goes to the hospital, the state or city foots the bill to a private company. This cycle allows politicians like Newsom to profit from the problem, as the state pays low-income hospital bills to private insurance companies, which in turn continue to donate to his campaign. This situation exemplifies how public administration appears to serve corporate interests over the needs of the people, exacerbating inequality and undermining public trust.

Another mismanagement of public funds from the Democratic Party comes from San Francisco, where the current administration is investing $1.7 million in a public bathroom. San Francisco's public bathrooms are notoriously unsafe due to constant drug use, and they are often littered with used syringes either in the garbage or clogging the toilets. With an average homeless population of 8,000 people, the administration's decision to spend $1.7 millions of taxpayers' money to build a toilet, sink, and mirror highlights a misalignment of priorities. This expenditure seems particularly egregious given that drug use and homelessness are among the city's most pressing issues, demonstrating a broader pattern of inefficient and misguided public spending.

Considering these issues, it is crucial to elect representatives who prioritize the interests of the people over those of the elite. The influence of lobbying is a dangerous tactic that often leads to conflicts of interest and undermines the democratic process. When public officials are swayed by corporate donors and lobbyists, they are less likely to address the real needs of their constituents. Making lobbying illegal would be a significant step towards ensuring that government actions are guided by the welfare of the general population rather than by the financial interests of a privileged few. It is essential for the integrity of our democracy that elected officials remain accountable to the people they serve, focusing on policies that genuinely benefit the public.

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