



Gubernatorial Candidate John Cox Brings Bear, Draws Protest To San Diego Campaign Stop

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By John Carroll



PHOTO BY ROLAND LIZARONDO

Above: North County businessman and gubernatorial candidate John Cox appearing with Tag the bear at a campaign stop in Shelter Island, May 11, 2021.

Republican gubernatorial candidate John Cox made a stop in San Diego on Tuesday, with a Kodiak bear in tow. Animals activists called the use of the bear a shame.

The theme of **Republican John Cox**'s campaign is splashed across his campaign bus. "Meet The Beast."

The Rancho Santa Fe resident is framing himself as the beast. But he had a real one there too; a Kodiak bear named Tag.

"The reason the bear is here is to demonstrate that we're gonna have to be a beast to tackle these special interests," Cox said at the event held on Shelter Island.

Cox said Gov. Gavin Newsom is captive to special interests.

He pointed to Newsom's dinner at the exclusive French Laundry restaurant last November with two lobbyists from the **California Medical Association**. Newsom apologized... he said attending the dinner was a mistake.

Cox ticked off a number of issues he said Newsom has failed to address.

But Cox had company for this news conference. Animal activists from **Lions, Tigers and Bears** who only had one issue in mind.

"It's time to stand up and be the animals' voice and stop using animals," said Bobbi Brink, the founder and director of the Lions, Tigers and Bears animal sanctuary in Alpine.

"These animals are pulled as babies from their mama and then they're used for nothing more than exactly this — to be trained and carted around from place to place in an enclosed trailer for nothing more than profit and exploitation," she said.

In response to the protests, Cox said, "I'm an animal lover. I believe in taking care of animals. God gave them to us to enjoy this paradise on earth."

Cox said it's time to look forward and move beyond what he said is a failed governor. He said Newsom had mishandled several issues, including homelessness and the state's exposure to wildfires.

But Brink said when it comes to the treatment of animals, Cox is the one living in the past.

"This is the old days and it's the new days. We don't need to use animals for this anymore, and the public doesn't know — thousands of these animals are used like this and then dumped," she said.

California is currently in a 30-day period when people who signed the recall petition can withdraw their signatures. If enough remains after the withdrawal period, the recall election will move forward, probably in November. Five previous attempts to mount a recall of Newsom have failed.