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NEWS TEAM 10 INVESTIGATES

Investigation into gubernatorial candidate John Cox's use of bear during campaign

Cox appeared with 'Tag' at Shelter Island event



By: [Melissa Mecija](#)

Posted at 1:59 PM, May 12, 2021 and last updated 5:38 PM, May 12, 2021

SAN DIEGO (KGTV) -- The San Diego Humane Society is investigating gubernatorial candidate John Cox's use of a Kodiak bear during a campaign stop at Shelter Island on Tuesday, Team 10 confirmed.

According to the Chief of Humane Law Enforcement Bill Ganley, a complaint was filed with the Humane Society following [the campaign event](#). Ganley said that the use of wildlife in such a manner is prohibited under the San Diego Municipal Code.

The code reads: "No person shall offer for sale, give away, bring into or maintain within an area coming within the jurisdiction of this ordinance, any lion, tiger, bear, monkey, wolf, cougar, ocelot, wildcat, skunk," among other animals. A legally operated zoo is allowed, according to the code.

Ganley said once the investigation is completed, it will be handed to the City Attorney's Office.

Some animal organizations were protesting the use of the bear, including Lions Tigers & Bears.

"We so need change in California... but not at the expense of using an animal," said Bobbi Brink, Lions Tigers & Bears founder. "I think the public doesn't realize how many of these animals are used, abused, and dumped."

Team 10 reached out to Cox's campaign this afternoon. His press secretary released this statement:

"Every care was taken to ensure Tag's comfort and safety with the approval of several government agencies. California needs beastly change and that may ruffle some feathers of left wing activists."

Tuesday, Cox claimed the bear, named Tag, is tame, well taken care of, and would die if set free in the wild, City News Service reported.

"It doesn't matter how well trained they are, where they're from, whether they've been involved in the movie industry or not. The municipal code just does not allow for this to happen," Ganley said.

Tag, who has appeared on television shows, comes from the business Working Wildlife, which allows wild animals to be booked for entertainment purposes or events, according to the company's website.