

**April Jacobs**

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**From:** aernstmeyer@gmail.com  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 03, 2019 6:19 PM  
**To:** April Jacobs  
**Subject:** Opposed to Acosta

I am writing this email to inform you that I oppose the appointment of Dante Acosta to the SCV Water Board.

Thank you, Alyssa Ernstmeyer  
Sent from ~Alyssa~

## **April Jacobs**

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**From:** Jeanette Vosburg <saveballona@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 04, 2019 3:19 PM  
**To:** April Jacobs; firstdistrict@bos.lacounty.gov; fourthdistrict@bos.lacounty.gov; kathryn@bos.lacounty.gov; seconddistrict@bos.lacounty.gov; Sheila@bos.lacounty.gov  
**Subject:** I object to the Kathryn Barger's appointment of Dante Acosta to Water Works District 36 seat to replace Dean Efstatiou. Dean Efstatiou is a true subject matter expert with NO controversy attached to him or his name.

Dear Commissioners and A Jacobs;

Dean Efstatiou has occupied that board seat since 1992. He is also a member of the Association of California Water Agencies. His work experience included directing the activities of the Los Angeles County Waterworks Districts for 10 years. He has also served as the Public Works representative to the Los Angeles County Regional Planning Commission. I think it is safe to say that he is the resident expert.

Please rescind the appointment of Dante Acosta and reinstate Dean Efstatiou. We need proven representatives on all water related seats.

Sincerely,

Jeanette Vosburg  
310-721-3512

## **April Jacobs**

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**From:** tp2815@aol.com  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 05, 2019 2:06 PM  
**To:** April Jacobs  
**Subject:** No on Acosta

He is not qualified, barely did anything for Santa clarita

## **April Jacobs**

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**From:** Fred Eisler <fred.eisler@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, January 06, 2019 8:20 AM  
**To:** April Jacobs  
**Subject:** SCV Water Agency Board

I strongly oppose the nomination of Dante Acosta to the SCV Water Agency Board. It seems highly inappropriate to add someone who seemingly has little in the way of qualifications, and comes off as cronyism.

Thank you,  
Fred Eisler

## April Jacobs

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**From:** Kat <kathleenslp@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, January 06, 2019 6:13 PM  
**To:** April Jacobs  
**Subject:** Re: Dante Acosta

My feelings about this possible appointment still stand. I hope the board makes the right choice tomorrow and rejects anyone unqualified, such as Dante Acosta.

**\*\*Kat\*\***

On Tue, Dec 18, 2018, 12:16 PM April Jacobs <[ajacobs@scvwa.org](mailto:ajacobs@scvwa.org)> wrote:

Your email has been received. Thank you.

**From:** Kat [mailto:[kathleenslp@gmail.com](mailto:kathleenslp@gmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 18, 2018 11:51 AM  
**To:** April Jacobs <[ajacobs@scvwa.org](mailto:ajacobs@scvwa.org)>  
**Subject:** Dante Acosta

Hello,

Unfortunately I am sick so I will not be able to make tonight's meeting.

Dante Acosta has an abysmal record with environmental groups, voted against a water conservation bill as Assemblyman, and has zero experience in this area.

This possible appointment is a complete farce and unacceptable.

If Dean Efstathiou has volunteered to leave the board then someone with his credentials should replace him. Dante Acosta nowhere near fit that's bill.

Thank you,

Kathleen Walker

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## April Jacobs

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**From:** Matt Stone  
**Sent:** Monday, January 07, 2019 7:06 AM  
**To:** April Jacobs  
**Subject:** Fwd: Acosta - Board of Directors

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** David Barlavi <[taxlyr@gmail.com](mailto:taxlyr@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** January 7, 2019 at 12:07:34 AM PST  
**To:** <[mstone@scvwa.org](mailto:mstone@scvwa.org)>, <[scole@scvwa.org](mailto:scole@scvwa.org)>, <[kmartin@scvwa.org](mailto:kmartin@scvwa.org)>, <[ccare\\_nwd@scvwa.org](mailto:ccare_nwd@scvwa.org)>, Law Office of David Barlavi <[yinvest@pacbell.net](mailto:yinvest@pacbell.net)>  
**Subject:** Acosta - Board of Directors

Dear Water Board:

I oppose the anointment of Dante Acosta to our water board. Acosta has announced that he will run against Christy Smith again in 2020. Now, the republican LA County Supervisor for our district has "fired" the existing, highly qualified member of our local water board in order to replace him with the unqualified Acosta. Why? Presumably, so Acosta won't have a "gap in service" for his 2020 bid against Christy Smith. Incredibly, this water board position runs through 2022, so they know that Acosta will be abandoning his post 2 years early - and they still nominated him.

Monday night, our local water board members, a supposedly non-partisan body, will vote to collude and conspire in this House of Cards political scheme of corruption and cronyism - poised to degrade and demean our crucial water board to a hyper partisan political springboard.

If you capitulate to this dastardly scheme, we will vote you all out of office in 2020!

Vote no on Acosta then appoint a non political, qualified and committed candidate.

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David Barlavi, Esq.  
[www.TaxLyr.com](http://www.TaxLyr.com)

## April Jacobs

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**From:** Ccare NWD  
**Sent:** Monday, January 07, 2019 11:36 AM  
**To:** April Jacobs  
**Subject:** FW: Acosta - Board of Directors

FYI – Delivered to Newhall Customer Care email.

Thanks,

Robert McLaughlan  
Customer Service Supervisor  
Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency  
Phone: 661-259-3610 x 214



**From:** David Barlavi [mailto:taxlyr@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, January 07, 2019 12:08 AM  
**To:** Matt Stone <mstone@scvwa.org>; Steve Cole <scole@scvwa.org>; Kathie Martin <kmartin@scvwa.org>; Ccare NWD <ccare\_nwd@scvwa.org>; Law Office of David Barlavi <yinvest@pacbell.net>  
**Subject:** Acosta - Board of Directors

Dear Water Board:

I oppose the anointment of Dante Acosta to our water board. Acosta has announced that he will run against Christy Smith again in 2020. Now, the republican LA County Supervisor for our district has "fired" the existing, highly qualified member of our local water board in order to replace him with the unqualified Acosta. Why? Presumably, so Acosta won't have a "gap in service" for his 2020 bid against Christy Smith. Incredibly, this water board position runs through 2022, so they know that Acosta will be abandoning his post 2 years early - and they still nominated him.

Monday night, our local water board members, a supposedly non-partisan body, will vote to collude and conspire in this House of Cards political scheme of corruption and cronyism - poised to degrade and demean our crucial water board to a hyper partisan political springboard.

If you capitulate to this dastardly scheme, we will vote you all out of office in 2020!

Vote no on Acosta then appoint a non political, qualified and committed candidate.



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## April Jacobs

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**From:** Stacy Fortner <s\_fortner@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 07, 2019 11:43 AM  
**To:** April Jacobs; Sup Kathryn Barger; tbell@bos.lacounty.gov  
**Cc:** Sup Hilda Solis; Los Angeles County; Sup Sheila Keuhl; Sup Mark Ridley-Thomas; Executive Office  
**Subject:** I would like to enter this into the record for tonight's meeting - Jennifer Van Laar  
**Attachments:** Here's What Happened When I Spoke Up Against Harassment.pdf

Board Members,

While it has become increasingly obvious that Dante Acosta's appointment may sail through this evening's proceedings, I would like to enter this into the board minutes. This is an important issue that women face, and in light of the Friday evening "party" in which 3 of the current board members attended I feel it is a necessary course of action. I am attaching the Jennifer Van Laar blog post regarding her ongoing retaliation for the reporting sexual misconduct by Dante Acosta. This cannot be dismissed, explained away, or de-legitimized by this board, the community, or the electeds that serve us. This is a reality that victimized women face every day, and a large part of the reason that victimized women fail to come forward at all.

<https://www.redstate.com/jenvanlaar/2017/10/27/heres-happened-spoke-harassment/?fbclid=IwAR3OjAOB8hCbmUeVdqibNcDevC6srZjRfZ8Z3fPB2JGqvgZp3t8DdBvduY>

By seating Dante Acosta on the SCVWA Governing Board, you become complicit in a cover up, and condone the retaliation against this woman (and all women), whose livelihood, reputation, and credibility has been negatively impacted by Dante Acosta and the Republican party in Santa Clarita.

I became aware that invitations went out for a Friday night strategy session, and several GOP strategists were brainstorming related to the public concerns and how to address them in order to "save" Dante's appointment. I was made aware that 3 sitting board members were in attendance as well as Scott Wilk, Steve Knight, and Katie Varner, Steve Knight's former campaign manager. Each of the public concerns was to be addressed with strategic talking points that will be repeated, even parroted by members of the public this evening and that handouts with specific counter arguments will be made available this evening.

Our concerns are very real concerns, and should not be easily dismissed. I am making it my personal responsibility that this Friday night "party" be daylighted, and to assure the rest of the board that I/we have not partaken in any such meetings, and feel it isn't necessary because the concerns I/we have are not partisan. It is very obvious there is an agenda other than the one posted publicly for the board meeting this evening. The question is WHY? Why Dante? Why now? He is so wrong for this job. Is this a retrenching? A political favor to a friend? A soft landing?

Dante is very wrong for this position, EVERYONE knows it, and seating him will open this board, and its membership to scandal and further scrutiny. I feel obligated to inform you that there is a very real possibility that Dante's accuser will be in attendance this evening. I encouraged her speak up. I am not sure that she will, but she wanted to at least make an appearance to watch this debacle in person. I stand in solidarity with Jennifer, and victimized women everywhere, and I wish you would reconsider this appointment.

Blessings,  
Stacy Fortner

# How to Find the Right Person for the Job

by Stacy Fortner

10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100



The first step in finding the right person for the job is to clearly define the job requirements. This includes identifying the necessary skills, experience, and personality traits for the role. Once you have a clear understanding of what you need, you can begin to search for candidates. This can be done through various channels, such as job boards, social media, and networking. It's important to reach out to a large number of potential candidates to increase your chances of finding the right person. Once you have identified several candidates, you should conduct thorough interviews to assess their qualifications and fit for the role. This may include asking behavioral questions, presenting hypothetical scenarios, and involving other team members in the process. Finally, once you have selected a candidate, it's important to clearly communicate the job offer and expectations to ensure a successful start.

Stacy Fortner is a professional speaker and author who focuses on helping businesses and individuals improve their performance and productivity. She has over 15 years of experience in the field of business development and sales. Her book, "The Art of the Deal," is a best-selling guide to negotiating and closing deals. She is also a frequent speaker at industry conferences and seminars.

# Here's What Happened When I Spoke Up Against Harassment

Posted at 4:46 pm on October 27, 2017 by Jennifer Van Laar

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Share On Twitter



*"She should have said something. This happened how many years ago? Think of how many victims would not have had to suffer if these people had just spoken up!"*

So goes the script of righteous indignation aimed at the women who were sexually harassed by Harvey Weinstein and stayed quiet.

Actually, plenty of women said something over the years. The *New York Times* wouldn't have been able to expose harassment lawsuit settlements had women not said anything. Some men said things as well – to Weinstein himself. Other women, seeing what happened to the women who said something or who didn't "play ball," kept quiet.

*"But – but – but still! We have laws in place to keep them from being retaliated against. If they came forward, they'd be protected!"*

No, they wouldn't. They'd be shamed and retaliated against. And of the victim were a Republican woman making accusations against a Republican man, the retaliation and shaming would be particularly harsh.

## TRENDING

- 1 **Triple-Amputee Veteran Goes to Nancy Pelosi to Collect Her Promised \$1 for His Border Wall** [GoFundMe](#)
- 2 **An Inconvenient Truth Rep. Alexandria Ocasio Cortez Can't Dance Around**
- 3 **More Left-Wing Incivility -- Elected Democrat to Vice President Pence: "F\*\*\* You"**
- 4 **Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez Lives In A World Of Fact-Free Politics**
- 5 **Lindsey Graham on FIRE Over the Wall: We're Not Gonna Give in to this Radical Left, EVER**



**An Inconvenient Truth Rep. Alexandria Ocasio Cortez Can't Dance Around**

GBenton



**Susan Collins: Shutdown Is a "Matter of Getting To A Compromise"**

Sarah Lee

In an earlier piece this week about the conservative response to #MeToo, I referenced my own experience with speaking up about sexual harassment and the retaliation to which I was subjected. Inspired by [Amy Swearer's piece](#), I am sharing more of the story here. I am not naming names in this piece for a few reasons, one being that the people who know, know.

A few years back, as my first paid political gig, I worked on an underdog campaign – and we won big. Over the course of the campaign, I worked quite a bit with a local elected official, whom I'll call Jim, who was volunteering. To make a very long story short, he propositioned me under the guise of meeting with me about his next political campaign. I laughed it off politely, saying that I don't mix business and pleasure. I still chatted with him about politics, but ended the meeting as quickly as possible and called one of my then-best friends – who was also in local GOP leadership – and told her about his advances.

I stayed in professional contact with Jim, despite feeling uncomfortable, because I figured interactions like that were just part of being a woman working in politics and because, as a Republican in California, there is not a lot of political work. I couldn't afford to burn that bridge.

Over the next 15 months or so, we were in intermittent contact, either at political events or texting when either of us had news about seats that might open up for an upcoming election. He didn't proposition me again, but when I saw him at events he'd make inappropriate comments about my appearance or how my dress fit, and look me up and down.

At one event, after I was pulled away from a conversation by a client, he watched me walk away and asked my male colleague, "Are you hitting that?" When the colleague, shocked, replied in the negative, Jim said, "I don't see how you can be around that all day without wanting to just... mmm" (implying sex).



#### TRENDING

**WATCH: Sarah Sanders Has Sour News for Democrat Rashida Tlaib On Her Claim that Trump Will Be Impeac**  
Brandon Morse



#### *Lindsey Graham on FIRE Over the Wall: We're Not Gonna Give in to this Radical Left, EVER*

Alex Parker



#### *The 76th Golden Globes Live Feed*

Brad Slager



#### *Triple-Amputee Veteran Goes to Nancy Pelosi to Collect Her Promised \$1 for His Border Wall GoFundMe*

Alex Parker



#### *No Bible: Rashida Tlaib Becomes First Congresswoman to Swear in on a Quran, & it Wasn't Jefferson's*

Alex Parker



Eventually, Jim ran for higher office, in a four-way race where I was working with one of his competitors. A few weeks before the primary I was informed that people on the Democrat side had heard Jim make sexual comments about me and other women and they were ready to go to the press about the issue.

Knowing that two politicians I considered friends had endorsed him, I decided to warn my friends so they could protect themselves and the party.

I called the wife of one. She was also a friend and was involved in community nonprofit work with me. It was extremely difficult, but I shared my experience with her. She empathized with what had happened to me and said she hated that I had to put up with that but told me I should not say anything to anyone, ever, because it would hurt the politician's wife. She said that this should be handled within the party, then angrily told me I should have said something sooner so it could be "handled."

I told her I would try to quash the story and I'd get back to her, but I was taken aback by her attitude.

I contacted the other elected official – the one whose winning campaign I'd worked on – directly. He was shocked, saddened, and extremely supportive, and wished I had told him earlier. He asked what he could do to help make things right. I told him that I didn't need him to do anything because I wasn't a victim, that I just wanted him to know what happened because I didn't want someone else's transgressions to reflect poorly on him.

I did what I could to get the story quashed, then sent my friend an email reiterating what I'd relayed to her and added my fear that Jim would continue this behavior throughout his political career and that he could do great damage to our party. I cc'd her husband and my other friend, who were the two highest ranking GOP officials in our area, saying, "I've now informed the party leadership."

The story didn't come out in the primary and we all moved on with our lives.

Fast forward five months. Jim and the Democrat candidate were two weeks out from the general election, and my email was made public. I said nothing to the press and, at first, Jim didn't either. Days later, bolstered by a few of his

“consultants” and minions, Jim went on a scorched-earth offensive against me to the LA Times, local television, Politico, local newspapers, and social media.

He held a press conference claiming I “aggressively pursued” him, portraying business text messages sent to him as some kind of obsession. He claimed I was a scorned woman – because he “didn’t hire me” for that campaign. (I wasn’t – I was already working with another candidate when Jim filed his candidate papers.)

He claimed he was the victim of “dirty politics” and shamed me – that my claim was “disgusting and hurtful” to him (HIM!), to his family, and to every woman “who is *actually dealing with sexual harassment.*”

Instead of dealing with the incident where he propositioned me – which the statement from his campaign does not deny – he produced an incomplete record of our text messages and claimed this vindicated him and challenged me to produce contrary information or shut up, basically.

He had his wife send out a mailer to the whole district saying the allegations were false and that “the text messages don’t exist.”

The woman who had been one of my best friends at the time of the indecent proposal – the one I relayed the incident to as soon as it happened – was now one of Jim’s campaign consultants. She went out in the community calling me a liar and opportunist.

My other “friend” told the LA Times she’d never believed me, that it “didn’t ring right,” but it made her sick to her stomach, and she thought it was “politically motivated.”

Her husband said he felt it was “inappropriate” that he was included on the email, though his wife said “party officials” should handle it. He didn’t stop there – *he denied even knowing me.* This is a man who a month before would cross a crowded room at an event just to say hello to me.


People I’d worked with in local GOP politics who wanted to be more involved in the machine went after me and my associates on Facebook. I’ll just share two:


Jennifer Van Laar remember that time you framed a remarkable candidate via BS sexual harassment for political gain? I do...and I'm disgusted. I hope your career tanks, you lose all your friends, and whatever man considers you trustworthy takes a second look into your eyes I have never been more disgusted by someone I've shaken hands with. Yeah it's a small town and ur trying to be big city... Keep trying #inspectorgadget this message will self destruct in 5 minutes

Part of the message:


“Remember that time you framed a remarkable candidate via BS sexual harassment for political gain? I do..and I’m disgusted. I hope your career tanks, you lose all your friends, and whatever man considers you trustworthy takes a second look into your eyes.”


This guy even lied about talking to me about it.

 [REDACTED] I looked into it, talked with the accuser, and it's fake because she's mad he didn't hire her. She's blocked now and wondering why this backfired on her.  
Like · 12 hrs

 [REDACTED] My immediate priority was to ensure that she was safe. I listened to her version of events and offered my assistance," [REDACTED] said, adding that he respected Van Laar's wishes when she told him she didn't want to contact police or take legal action.

... See more

Like  1 · 12 hrs · Edited

 [REDACTED] if it were REAL, it would have already been handled, wouldn't it.  
Like · 12 hrs

I wasn't the only one targeted. In the weeks leading up to the election, my close friends or business associates were also threatened and intimidated. I am sure I don't know the full extent, but here's a sampling:

- One colleague was called by a party boss and told if they don't disavow me and give a statement calling me a liar, that they would lose their job.
- Another was the target of an anonymous report to DSS claiming that their children were being molested.
- Another colleague, who was facing an accusation of their own (which has since been disproven and dismissed) was contacted by reporters and when they refused to talk about my situation the reporter intimidated they'd be doing a story about them instead.

The only thing I said directly to the press was that I stood by my story and was disappointed in Jim.

Fortunately, the friend whose campaign I had worked on, the one I had told directly about the harassment, supported me. Knowing that he and his wife supported me lessened the hurt somewhat.

I sought legal advice since my character was being maligned in all manner of outlets, and those advisers wanted me to do a televised Allred-style press conference. Anyone who knows me knows that I detest the "victim" culture and am not a fan of third wave feminism – but I considered doing the press conference. I eventually decided against it, partly because I




am not one to do a weepy press conference, and partly because the constant attacks, constant calls from reporters wanting me to talk, had worn me down. I hadn't slept more than two hours at a time for weeks. I was constantly emotional, unable to eat, and missing work to deal with the barrage. By then, I just wanted to be out of the spotlight.

To protect my reputation I filed a defamation suit against Jim and others, which I withdrew a few months later when my dad was diagnosed with advanced leukemia. I focused on being with my family. But while this case was pending, Jim's intimidation didn't stop. Just after his swearing-in, I started getting Instagram notifications that his new official account was following me or that he had "liked" my pictures. It was a not-so-subtle, "I've still got my eye on you."

My dad has since passed away and I am grateful I got to spend those last months with him and move on from the hell Jim and his associates put me and my family through. Only because of the Weinstein scandal and #MeToo (and seeing my "friend," the politician's wife, post a simple #MeToo on her Facebook page) have I decided to tell my story. People are calling for people like me to "name names." I'm not naming names in this piece because I am still afraid that they'll resume the scorched-earth campaign against me and others.

It's important for people who haven't dealt with this type of behavior, or who think it's easy for people who have been subjected to it to speak up, to realize that speaking up is just the beginning. Retaliation is swift and harsh from men in positions of power and prevents others from coming forward.

This has to end. Enough.

 Share On Facebook

 Share On Twitter

TAGS: HARVEY WEINSTEIN RETALIATION

January 7, 2019 ▶ 7:00 am » Rep. Katie Hill discusses government shutdown with constituents at first town hall

# The Proclaimer

## SANTA CLARITA VALLEY

(<https://proclaimerscv.com/>)



Dante Acosta defends himself against criticisms during the Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency board meeting on Dec. 18. Mai Nguyen Do / The Proclaimer

I had planned to ignore the nomination of Dante Acosta to the Santa Clarita Valley Water Board.

Even after my phone blew up on the night of Dec. 14 with messages about the night's proceedings, I thought the easiest and most peaceful course of action would be to go about my life and let success be my response. It likely would have been.

I thought about it a lot over the holidays, though, and realized that when Acosta stood there saying that he shouldn't have to keep answering for the allegations against him and making the deceptive claim that "every one of these allegations have been proven demonstrably false

(<https://twitter.com/ProclaimerSCV/status/1075235812613054464>),” he was retaliating against me yet again. And, since the retaliation – and its consequences – continues, why shouldn’t he have to keep answering for it?

When someone has the ability to lie that easily and effortlessly, it should frighten us all.

It’s rumored that Acosta will again use the “demonstrably false” statement at Monday night’s Water Board meeting. Since multiple instances of his (and his surrogates’) retaliatory and defamatory behavior are public knowledge and/or have been corroborated by an outside investigator, his contention is a joke. A harmful, untruthful joke, but a joke nonetheless.

I’ll outline those instances in a moment, but first need to clear up a misconception. The complaint I filed with the Assembly in December 2017 did not accuse Acosta of sexual harassment. The complaint very specifically alleged that Acosta improperly used Assembly resources to intimidate and harass me and that he and members of his campaign coordinated with others to retaliate against me and my former business partner, Scott Hounsell.

December 20, 2017

The Honorable Ken Cooley  
Chair, Assembly Rules Committee  
State Capitol Room 3013  
Sacramento, CA 95834  
Via email

Dear Assembly Member Cooley:

I am writing to report that Assembly Member Dante Acosta improperly used Assembly resources to attempt to harass and intimidate me in February 2017, while a defamation suit I filed against him was pending. In addition, he participated in a coordinated effort with Senator Scott Wilk and others to defame me and destroy my career.

I am not intending to share every detail or witness in this letter, but here is a brief overview of what happened and some background.

In late May and early June 2016 I had phone conversations with Rep. Steve Knight and (then-Senate employee) Vanessa Wilk about then-candidate Acosta’s inappropriate behavior toward me and my concerns for his fitness for office in light of that behavior. During those conversations I told them about an incident in January 2015 in which Acosta propositioned me while we were meeting in Washington DC about his future political plans and my role in those campaigns. Acosta was an employee of Knight in May 2016, and both he and then-Asm. Wilk had endorsed Acosta in his Assembly campaign.

Though Acosta’s proposition and the comments he made about my sexuality and physical appearance both to me and to others over the next year or so were upsetting and degrading, I didn’t ask Rep. Knight in that phone call to take any official action against Acosta since my career had not been negatively affected at that time. Rep. Knight was disturbed and upset about what had happened to me and asked me to let him know if he could be of assistance in the future, and I agreed. Within a few weeks, Acosta was dismissed from his job with Rep. Knight.

I recapped the conversations in an email to Vanessa Wilk a day after my conversation with her and copied Rep. Knight and Sen. Wilk. After the conversations and email, nothing was said publicly about the matter until it became public in October 2016.

In October 2016 the email I had sent to both Wilks and Rep. Knight was published in local news reports with some identifying information redacted, including my name and email address. Within hours of that news report a consulting contract my business partner had with a legislative candidate was canceled under pressure from Sen. Wilk, and my partner was told that outstanding invoices could not be paid.

Acosta’s campaign gave the media my name and contact information, and I started receiving calls from the LA Times, ABC News, and other outlets asking for comment. With no regard for my safety or privacy (or the safety or privacy of my children), Acosta’s campaign provided reporters screenshots of text messages for publication that had my full name and phone number clearly visible. (These screenshots were live online until I was alerted by a friend to their existence. I had to call the news outlet myself to demand that they be taken down or my private information redacted.)

Acosta [appeared](#) on television calling me a liar and looking for revenge, and characterizing our business relationship as me “aggressively pursuing” him. He held a press conference in which he blatantly lied about others being present during one of his phone calls to me. His campaign created and [released videos](#) on social media featuring “testimonials” from women I don’t know calling me a liar.

Because of this behavior and other retaliatory conduct aimed at me and my business associates, coordinated between Acosta and Sen. Wilk, I retained legal counsel and filed a defamation suit ([complaint here](#)) against Acosta and other unnamed defendants on November 3, 2016.

Acosta won the general election and was sworn in to the Assembly in December.

On February 10, 2017, I received a notification on my personal Instagram account that Asm. Acosta was now following me. I clicked on the notification, which took me to Acosta’s official Assembly Instagram account and not a personal account. (Time/date stamped [screenshots available](#).) Asm. Acosta, through his Assembly Instagram account, then began liking pictures of me - not pictures of food or landscapes or inanimate objects, but pictures of me.



By the end of November 2016 I knew that my prospects of working in GOP politics in California were slim, in large part thanks to the actions of Acosta and Wilk to damage my professional reputation, so I started writing for RedState. In February 2017 I was interviewing for an additional position with Townhall.com. While at CPAC in February I attended a networking reception sponsored by the parent company of both RedState and Townhall and posted pictures of myself at the event on my personal Instagram account. Within an hour I began receiving notifications that Asm. Acosta liked photos from the event - photos in which I stated I was representing RedState. I became anxious and fearful about what he might try to do to harm my career and ability to provide



Under a new procedure (<https://www.politico.com/story/2018/02/08/cristina-garcia-california-metoo-398985>) in which all claims that are deemed valid are referred to an outside attorney, the Assembly Rules Committee informed me on Jan. 19, 2018 (right before my Talk of Santa Clarita podcast was released) that they'd hired an outside attorney to investigate the claim.

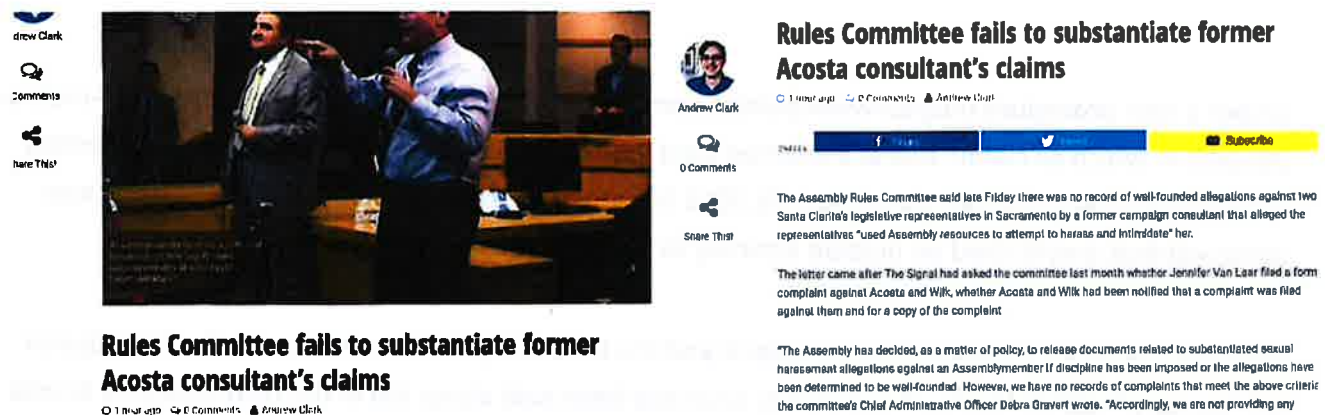
Between the time I submitted the complaint and the time of my first interview with the investigator on February 7, 2018, I learned specifically what had been said about me in the community by Acosta and his surrogates. While recording the ToSC podcast (<https://soundcloud.com/thetalkofsantaclarita/vanlaar>), Stephen Daniels told me that they were saying I was socially awkward, difficult to work with, and that I had misinterpreted Acosta's friendliness as a sexual proposition.

When I finally met with the investigator I told him about those specifics but was told that since they happened before Acosta was in office it was outside their jurisdiction. He also informed me that since he was employed by the Assembly Rules Committee, his attorney/client privilege was with them, not with me or Acosta. He said he was just starting to interview witnesses, that the investigation was confidential and would take a few months to complete, and to refrain from making public comments about the matter.

Just two days later, a reporter from the SCV Signal contacted me for comment on a letter the paper received from the Assembly Rules Committee in response to a Public Records Act request saying that Acosta had been cleared. I was shocked, but soon realized he'd completely misunderstood the letter. The Signal's PRA request asked for documents "pertaining to sexual harassment allegations if discipline had been imposed or if allegations were well-founded." Since the Acosta investigation was ongoing, there obviously wouldn't be any documents to release.

I further told the reporter that I'd met with the investigator just two days prior, relayed everything the investigator said about timing and confidentiality, and said that I couldn't comment on the record about an ongoing investigation.

Still, the reporter printed a story (<https://signalscv.com/2018/02/rules-committee-fails-substantiate-former-acosta-consultants-claims/>) about the non-story, with the provably false headline, "Rules Committee Fails to Substantiate Former Acosta Consultant's Claims."



**Rules Committee fails to substantiate former Acosta consultant's claims**

Andrew Clark

0 Comments

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The Assembly Rules Committee said late Friday there was no record of well-founded allegations against two Santa Clara's legislative representatives in Sacramento by a former campaign consultant that alleged the representatives "used Assembly resources to attempt to harass and intimidate" her.

The letter came after The Signal had asked the committee last month whether Jennifer Van Lear filed a formal complaint against Acosta and Wilk, whether Acosta and Wilk had been notified that a complaint was filed against them and for a copy of the complaint.

"The Assembly has decided, as a matter of policy, to release documents related to substantiated sexual harassment allegations against an Assemblymember if discipline has been imposed or the allegations have been determined to be well-founded. However, we have no records of complaints that meet the above criteria; the committee's Chief Administrative Officer Debra Gravert wrote, "Accordingly, we are not providing any

The story included this retaliatory and defamatory statement:

*"Acosta claimed the letter from the Rules Committee proves what he's known 'all along.'*

*'I am glad that a thorough investigation has determined what I have known all along,' Acosta said in a statement. 'Workplace bullying and sexual harassment are serious problems, and I am working to address them in Sacramento.'"*

The initial story also said simply that I had no comment, not that I couldn't comment on an ongoing investigation. We all know that there is a huge difference between those two statements, and since the story was posted at the beginning of an election season it was particularly damaging to my

career.

After heated phone and email exchanges with the reporter and editor over that weekend, in which they demanded that I prove there was an investigation occurring before they would change the story, the headline was changed and a statement from me added to the body of the story. The update wasn't contained in their print edition and they didn't call attention to the update on their website or social media sites, despite my request, so the impression that Acosta had been "cleared" lingered.

Around that time I learned from multiple sources that Acosta was telling my colleagues that the investigation was over and that he had been cleared. He also claimed that I told the investigator that I had made the whole thing up at the behest of my former business partner. That is categorically false, and is also pretty damn misogynistic. Does he believe I can't think or act for myself?

I was also told that at that in early 2018 colleagues were being warned by Acosta and his surrogates against working with me. Those witnesses, fearing the types of retaliation I'd documented in an October 2017 RedState article (irony?) were unwilling to talk to the investigator.

It's likely, and understandable, that these colleagues wanted to avoid encounters like the one I had with Hunt Braly, Acosta's finance chair in 2016, just a couple of days after I called then-Congressman Knight to tell him about my experiences with Acosta. Only a couple of people knew I'd called Knight: Vanessa Wilk, and two Knight campaign staffers. Somehow Braly had been informed about the call and angrily confronted me, saying, "What the hell are you doing? You're calling people's employers now? You better stop that." Two witnesses shared their recollections of the rest of the encounter with both me and the investigator.

*"I noticed Hunt Braly say something I couldn't make out to Jennifer. Jennifer responded in ... a sarcastic tone. ... Hunt was standing over Jennifer, blocking the exit from the row of seats. His face looked tight, angry, and aggressive. An appearance augmented by his positioning standing in front of and leaning towards Jennifer, who was sitting, and blocking her way out of the aisle as well. ...*

*"Gradually Hunt's voice began to rise with what I made out to be anger and extreme frustration....Hunt continued his loud aggression for several minutes, making me increasingly uncomfortable, feeling trapped by him bodily blocking the exit...At one point his voice dropped, which I assumed meant he had left...he was still there and talking quieter but with a far more aggressive and infuriated expression. He was half leaning into Jennifer and then, in an instant, he huffed and stomped away."*

My recollection of events:

We were at the last debate at a charter school in the Santa Clarita Valley. I was sitting with Jennifer and another friend [REDACTED]. Once the debate was over [REDACTED] I noticed Hunt Brawly say something I couldn't make out to Jennifer. Jennifer responded in what I made out to be a sarcastic tone. When I looked up, Hunt was standing over Jennifer, blocking the exit from the row of seats. His face looked tight, angry, and aggressive. An appearance augmented by his positioning standing in front of and leaning towards Jennifer, who was sitting, and blocking her way out of the aisle as well.

At first his words were hard to make out, but I could hear Jennifer speaking in a calm voice, explaining to him she had responded sarcastically. Gradually Hunt's voice began to rise with what I made out to be anger and extreme frustration. It rose enough for me to begin to make out some of the words over the noise of the room. He was accusing her of attacking "his candidate" and warning her to back off her pointless attacks. Jennifer responded stating that the voters deserve to know the truth and if what a candidate is advertising is false, and she knows it, she has a duty to correct the record. She did not state, however, that any of what Hunt had accused her of was true or admit to any of his accusations. Everything stated was in a hypothetical situation to my understanding. Hunt responded with a statement expressing that the truth was irrelevant or unnecessary for the election. [REDACTED]

Hunt continued his loud aggression for several minutes, making me increasingly uncomfortable, feeling trapped by him bodily blocking the exit. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] At one point his voice dropped, which I assumed meant he had left, and turned to Jennifer to find he was still there and talking quieter but with a far more aggressive and infuriated expression. He was half leaning into Jennifer and then, in an instant, he huffed and stomped away.

*"Hunt Brawly came up ... unprovoked, and flat out threatened you! That whole, 'if you knew what's good for you, you would sit down and shut up with your words' was so unprofessional, especially coming from a lawyer."*





Jennifer Van Laar <jennifer@[REDACTED]>

---

**Drama in the SCV**

---

Sat, Nov 5, 2016 at 12:00 PM

To: "jennifer@[REDACTED]" <jennifer@[REDACTED]>

Hey Jen,

I can't believe all the horrible things being said about you, and how maliciously untrue they are!

[REDACTED] at that debate when Hunt Braly came up [REDACTED] afterward, unprovoked, and flat out threatened you! That whole, "If you know what's good for you, you would sit down and shut up with your words" was so unprofessional, especially coming from a lawyer. I know he mentioned that you were saying things about his friends, but come on. How hard is it to be professional towards people you disagree with, or even don't believe?

I know how hard this could be to hear, but hang in there. The world isn't a fair place and people in power will do almost anything to hold on to it. Just look at the Clinton's.

Best wishes,

[REDACTED]

That email also notes the "horrible" things that were being said about me in Santa Clarita.

The investigator corroborated multiple instances of retaliatory behavior, defamation, and intimidation by Acosta and members of his campaign through oral and written witness statements.

The investigator was also able to determine that Acosta and another witness either misled or lied to the investigator about a couple of issues.

For example, Acosta told the investigator that on the night he and I met for drinks in DC, that it wasn't late at night, that he had expected me to have my son with me, and that he was surprised when I showed up alone. However, I had gone to dinner with a colleague who lived in the area (and her sons), and provided the investigator with screenshots of my communications with the friend that day arranging a time and place for dinner. I also provided a date and time stamped receipt from the restaurant, which was not in walking distance to the hotel and showed the purchase of a kid's meal. Since I was talking business with the colleague, I'd saved the receipt for my taxes.

In addition, one witness claimed that the Instagram incident was just a big mistake, that an intern in SCV was building out Acosta's social media presence on his new Assembly account and just following people in the community, and that the intern didn't know who I was or that I had a pending

defamation suit. The intern the witness named was someone I'd worked with on the Knight campaign and I sent the investigator a screenshot listing dozens of email exchanges with this intern. He absolutely knew who I was. That also doesn't answer the question of why three photos of me were "liked" by his Assembly account weeks later.

**Gmail** Jennifer Van Laar [REDACTED]

**Documents/Screenshots**

Jennifer Van Laar [REDACTED] Sat, Mar 31, 2016 at 2:26 PM  
To: "Webster, Benjamin L." [REDACTED]

Ben -

I have attached a few things and should have the rest by you tomorrow.

- Receipt from my dinner with my friend [REDACTED] on Jan 7, 2015. She and two of her sons picked my son and me up at our hotel and we went to dinner. One is the credit card receipt showing my name and how I paid, and the other is the restaurant receipt itself with the date and time. (I still had the receipt because [REDACTED])
- Screenshots from my Facebook messenger conversations with [REDACTED] that day setting up the dinner. (3 photos)
- Screenshot showing the one Instagram like that is still on my account from Dana's Assembly account [REDACTED]
- Screenshot of Nathan Imhoff posting the video Acosta's campaign made defaming me
- Screenshot of Stark Social post showing Nathan Imhoff and Gwen Sims in Sacramento for their client Scott Wain's Senate swearing-in [REDACTED]

I believe [REDACTED] phone number is highlighted on the phone records I sent you. I'm still looking for my 2015 phone records because I would have had some with him [REDACTED] when we were recruiting for an assembly seat.


Jennifer Van Laar

20 attachments

- [REDACTED] FB message1.png 28K

- [REDACTED] FB message2.png 44K
- [REDACTED] FB message3.png 44K
- [REDACTED] FB message4.png 47K

Acosta Like still on IG.png 644K



Video0022916.JPG 89K



Courtyard Marriott receipt.jpg 634K



Hope Receipt 2.jpg 371K



Hope Receipt1.jpg 459K



Gmail from Christine Mal-Duc.pdf 191K



FB messages with Daria.pdf  
154K



**Gmail**

Jennifer Van Laar [redacted]

**Circling back**

Jennifer Van Laar [redacted] > Mon, Mar 26, 2016 at 3:30 PM  
To: "Webster, Benjamin L." [redacted]

It's working. Yay!

On Mon, Mar 26, 2016 at 3:28 PM, Webster, Benjamin L. [redacted] > wrote:  
OK, we'll give it a try! Thu.

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 26, 2016, at 3:24 PM, Jennifer Van Laar <[redacted]> wrote:

My phone is having massive issues right now - it isn't even booting up. Hopefully it will come to its senses before 3:30.

On Sun, Mar 25, 2016 at 6:55 PM, Webster, Benjamin L. [redacted] wrote:  
Thanks for the quick reply. I'll try your cell then; if you don't pick up, I'll know you're tied up on the sanctuary stuff. Regards -Ben

Benjamin L. Webster, Office Managing Shareholder  
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/benwebster1>

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From: Jennifer Van Laar (mailto:[redacted])  
Sent: Sunday, March 25, 2016 6:53 PM  
To: Webster, Benjamin L.  
Subject: Re: Circling back

That should be okay. Tomorrow is kind of crazy because my biggest client right now is working on [redacted] But let's plan on it.

On Sun, Mar 25, 2016 at 6:46 PM, Webster, Benjamin L. [redacted] > wrote:  
Hi--Sorry for my delayed response to your Friday email. Thanks for the info about Wyatt. I think by now you have given me copies of all relevant documentation, but if you have any other copies of text messages,

emails, etc. that have a bearing on your complaint, please provide. I'd like to shoot for a final(?) phone call with you tomorrow (Monday afternoon, maybe at like 3:30 if convenient)? Regards -Ben

Benjamin L. Webster, Office Managing Shareholder  
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/benwebster1>

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From: Jennifer Van Laar (mailto:[redacted])  
Sent: Friday, March 23, 2016 2:27 PM  
To: Webster, Benjamin L.  
Subject: Re: Circling back

I meant to reply to this before - I'm completely booked up today but I do have some time Monday or Tuesday of next week.  
I know I did have a few more questions/information for you, but don't have my list in front of me. I have attached a screenshot from my email where I searched for Wyatt Woodson, showing the numerous emails he and I exchanged in 2014 when he was Scott Witt's campaign manager/2014 Assembly GOP data guy and giving the Knight campaign PDI data. Since I was over Ben's, he would interact with me.

I think it's safe to say between that and everything that happened in 2016, where he was again the 39th Assembly GOP data guy, he knew who I was.

On Tue, Mar 20, 2016 at 9:25 PM, Webster, Benjamin L. [redacted] > wrote:  
Hi. Would you have a bit of time this Friday, 3/23, for a phone call? I'm tied up mid-day, but maybe in the afternoon? Many thanks. -Ben

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 9, 2016, at 3:42 PM, Jennifer Van Laar [redacted] wrote:  
Hi Ben,

I still haven't found that January 2016 phone bill. I moved a couple of times since then and have different computers. I thought I had it on a thumb drive but can't find the thumb drive. Here is the unredacted email.

On Tue, Mar 8, 2016 at 10:19 PM, Webster, Benjamin L. [redacted] wrote:

JENNIFER--Hi. Thanks again for taking the time to meet with me last week. I was looking back over the notes of our conversation and wanted to see if you were able to track down your phone/text records from January 2016? Also, could you send me an unredacted copy of your 6/2/16 email to Knight et al. I'm hoping that I can do one more follow up phone call with you, perhaps before the end of this week. Regards. -Ben

Benjamin L. Webster, Office Managing Shareholder  
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/benwebster1>

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Jennifer Van Laar

<Gmail - Follow up on Tuesday's conversation.pdf>

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Jennifer Van Laar

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Jennifer Van Laar

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Jennifer Van Laar

Jennifer Van Laar

Unfortunately, since the incidents the investigator corroborated occurred before Acosta took office the Rules Committee had no jurisdiction. In addition, they couldn't substantiate the allegation that the Instagram incident was intentional intimidation or harassment, or that it was an improper use of Assembly resources.

I was informed that since the attorney was employed by the Assembly, I am not entitled to the "Confidential Investigation Report," or even to know the names of the six witnesses interviewed.

Acosta's retaliatory comments to the Signal in Feb. 2018 did fall under their jurisdiction, but they said they couldn't substantiate that he had the intent to defame me or retaliate when he made the statement.

So, it's true that the Assembly Rules Committee didn't substantiate the allegation... that while an Assemblyman, Acosta attempted to intimidate, harass, and retaliate while using Assembly resources. Any claim that a thorough investigation proved that there was no sexual proposition, no degrading sexual statements, no defamation, no retaliation and no intimidation is absolutely false.

It's time for Acosta's continued retaliation against me, in the form of untrue and defamatory statements, to stop.

Document – Complaint, Dante Acosta, Rules Committee (<https://proclaimerscv.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Document-Dante-Acosta-Rules-Committee.pdf>) Download (<https://proclaimerscv.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Document-Dante-Acosta-Rules-Committee.pdf>)

Document – Hunt Braly, Redacted (<https://proclaimerscv.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Document-Hunt-Braly-Redacted-2.pdf>) Download (<https://proclaimerscv.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Document-Hunt-Braly-Redacted-2.pdf>)


Document – Email Nov. 5, 2016 (<https://proclaimerscv.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Document-Email-Nov.-5-2016.pdf>) Download (<https://proclaimerscv.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Document-Email-Nov.-5-2016.pdf>)

Document – Email to Investigator Re Documents, Mar 31 (<https://proclaimerscv.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Document-Email-to-Investigator-Re-Documents-Mar-31.pdf>) Download (<https://proclaimerscv.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Document-Email-to-Investigator-Re-Documents-Mar-31.pdf>)

Document – Emails to Investigator Re Woodson, Redacted (<https://proclaimerscv.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Document-Emails-to-Investigator-Re-Woodson-Redacted.pdf>) Download (<https://proclaimerscv.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Document-Emails-to-Investigator-Re-Woodson-Redacted.pdf>)

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7

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Summary



**Article Name** Jennifer Van Laar | Dante Acosta continues retaliation against accuser

**Description** Columnist Jennifer Van Laar calls on former Assemblymember Dante Acosta to cease retaliation against her for accusing him of sexual harassment.

**Author** Jennifer Van Laar

**Publisher Name** The Santa Clarita Valley Proclaimer

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## April Jacobs

---

**From:** Robbie Gonzalez <gonzalezrobbie@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 07, 2019 1:26 PM  
**To:** Sheila@bos.lacounty.gov; seconddistrict@bos.lacounty.gov; kathryn@bos.lacounty.gov; fourthdistrict@bos.lacounty.gov; firstdistrict@bos.lacounty.gov; April Jacobs  
**Subject:** Dante Acosta IS NOT QUALIFIED NOMINEE 😊😊

Dear Janice Hahn, Hilda Solis , Mark Ridley-Thomas, Shiela Keuhl, April Jacobs, Kathryn Barger

What in the world is Kathryn Barger thinking in nominating Dante Acosta to the SCV Water Agency? The LA County Supervisor could not have found a more comically unreliable and inexperienced person short of nominating Homer Simpson.

As the board is well aware, their work is critically important to the future of this community as we face dwindling water resources and a surging population. It requires careful, educated, and ethical management — words that no one applies to Mr. Acosta.

The seat is currently held by Dean Efstathiou, whom most residents of SCV never heard of before — because he's a quiet, diligent worker, not a showboater or opportunist.

Efstathiou worked for 38 years managing LA County's public water system, has a bachelor of sciences degree in civil engineering from Cal State-Northridge, and is a board member of the Southern California Water Committee and the Urban Water Institute, among his other impressive credentials.

Acosta shrivels in comparison.

He not only didn't graduate from college, but as a politician he made headlines for wasting public funds on deceptive junk mail, and even voted AGAINST a water conservation bill when he was in the State Assembly.

Voters rejected him for a reason. The SCV Water Agency must do the same or see their own work and reputations follow his career down the drain.

Robert Gonzalez

Santa Clarita, CA

Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone



## April Jacobs

---

**From:** Clare Montagna <mindunlmt@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 07, 2019 2:54 PM  
**To:** April Jacobs  
**Subject:** Objection to Dante Acosta be put on water board.

I object to Dante Acosta serving on our water board as a paying customer.

X Assembly person Dante Acosta!

He is trying for a seat on the SCV Water Agency board of directors, it certainly looks like a political favor for him. Well he needs a job because he lost the election, he lost for a reason, he doesn't have the right stuff. He wants this job but should this man serve, he doesn't even live in the district he will be serving, or have any ties to our district. I remember this man as a local car salesman, he doesn't even have a bachelors degree, just some college. He attended but never finished. Well the people on this board are all well educated pillars of our community, they sure know their stuff. A car salesman with no formal education is not someone I want to make decisions in SCV about my water.

Sincerely,

Clare Montagna,  
a concerned customer

Sent from my iPhone

Sent from my iPhone

## April Jacobs

---

**From:** Renée Page <renee@scvalleyhomes.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 07, 2019 4:29 PM  
**To:** April Jacobs  
**Subject:** NO to Dante

Given this,  
<https://www.redstate.com/jenvanlaar/2017/10/27/heres-happened-spoke-harassment/?fbclid=IwAR3OjAOB8hCbmUeVdgibNcDevcC6srZjRfZ8Z3fPB2JGqvgZp3t8DdBvduY>  
I CANNOT believe DANTE is being considered.  
Given Dante is NOT qualified, I can't believe he's being considered either.

**Renée Page - Realty Executives**  
*text ReneeP to 87778*  
*for my free home search app!*  
661.296.7178  
from my samsung

# Here's What Happened When I Spoke Up Against Harassment

Posted at 4:46 pm on October 27, 2017 by Jennifer Van Laar

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*“She should have said something. This happened how many years ago? Think of how many victims would not have had to suffer if these people had just spoken up!”*

So goes the script of righteous indignation aimed at the women who were sexually harassed by Harvey Weinstein and stayed quiet.

Actually, plenty of women said something over the years. The *New York Times* wouldn't have been able to expose harassment lawsuit settlements had women not said anything. Some men said things as well – to Weinstein himself. Other women, seeing what happened to the women who said something or who didn't “play ball,” kept quiet.

*“But – but – but still! We have laws in place to keep them from being retaliated against. If they came forward, they'd be protected!”*

## TRENDING

- 1 **BREAKING. President Trump Planning to Address the Nation Tomorrow Night and It Won't Be Routine**
- 2 **Triple-Amputee Veteran Goes to Nancy Pelosi to Collect Her Promised \$1 for His Border Wall GoFundMe**
- 3 **An Inconvenient Truth Rep. Alexandria Ocasio Cortez Can't Dance Around**
- 4 **President Trump Heads Toward 2020 With Solid Support From a Surprising Constituency**
- 5 **Is China Getting Ready to Take Off the Gloves? Maybe They Already Have**



**RedState's Water Cooler - January 7, 2018 - Open Thread: Dan Crenshaw Coins A New Term, Germany Bribes Migrants to Leave & A Henry Ford Story**

Elizabeth Vaughn



No, they wouldn't. They'd be shamed and retaliated against. And if the victim were a Republican woman making accusations against a Republican man, the retaliation and shaming would be particularly harsh.

In an earlier piece this week about the conservative response to #MeToo, I referenced my own experience with speaking up about sexual harassment and the retaliation to which I was subjected. Inspired by [Amy Swearer's piece](#), I am sharing more of the story here. I am not naming names in this piece for a few reasons, one being that the people who know, know.

A few years back, as my first paid political gig, I worked on an underdog campaign – and we won big. Over the course of the campaign, I worked quite a bit with a local elected official, whom I'll call Jim, who was volunteering. To make a very long story short, he propositioned me under the guise of meeting with me about his next political campaign. I laughed it off politely, saying that I don't mix business and pleasure. I still chatted with him about politics, but ended the meeting as quickly as possible and called one of my then-best friends – who was also in local GOP leadership – and told her about his advances.

I stayed in professional contact with Jim, despite feeling uncomfortable, because I figured interactions like that were just part of being a woman working in politics and because, as a Republican in California, there is not a lot of political work. I couldn't afford to burn that bridge.

Over the next 15 months or so, we were in intermittent contact, either at political events or texting when either of us had news about seats that might open up for an upcoming election. He didn't proposition me again, but when I saw him at events he'd make inappropriate comments about my appearance or how my dress fit, and look me up and down.

At one event, after I was pulled away from a conversation by a client, he watched me walk away and asked my male colleague, "Are you hitting that?" When the colleague, shocked, replied in the negative, Jim said, "I don't see how you can be around that all day without wanting to just... mmm" (implying sex).

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Alex Parker



Alex Parker

Eventually, Jim ran for higher office, in a four-way race where I was working with one of his competitors. A few weeks before the primary I was informed that people on the Democrat side had heard Jim make sexual comments about me and other women and they were ready to go to the press about the issue.

Knowing that two politicians I considered friends had endorsed him, I decided to warn my friends so they could protect themselves and the party.

I called the wife of one. She was also a friend and was involved in community nonprofit work with me. It was extremely difficult, but I shared my experience with her. She empathized with what had happened to me and said she hated that I had to put up with that but told me I should not say anything to anyone, ever, because it would hurt the politician's wife. She said that this should be handled within the party, then angrily told me I should have said something sooner so it could be "handled."

I told her I would try to quash the story and I'd get back to her, but I was taken aback by her attitude.

I contacted the other elected official – the one whose winning campaign I'd worked on – directly. He was shocked, saddened, and extremely supportive, and wished I had told him earlier. He asked what he could do to help make things right. I told him that I didn't need him to do anything because I wasn't a victim, that I just wanted him to know what happened because I didn't want someone else's transgressions to reflect poorly on him.

I did what I could to get the story quashed, then sent my friend an email reiterating what I'd relayed to her and added my fear that Jim would continue this behavior throughout his political career and that he could do great damage to our party. I cc'd her husband and my other friend, who were the two highest ranking GOP officials in our area, saying, "I've now informed the party leadership."

The story didn't come out in the primary and we all moved on with our lives.

Fast forward five months. Jim and the Democrat candidate were two weeks out from the general election, and my email was made public. I said nothing to the press and, at first, Jim didn't either. Days later, bolstered by a few of his "consultants" and minions, Jim went on a scorched-earth offensive against me to the LA Times, local television, Politico, local newspapers, and social media.

He held a press conference claiming I "aggressively pursued" him, portraying business text messages sent to him as some kind of obsession. He claimed I was a scorned woman – because he "didn't hire me" for that campaign. (I wasn't – I was already working with another candidate when Jim filed his candidate papers.)

He claimed he was the victim of "dirty politics" and shamed me – that my claim was "disgusting and hurtful" to him (HIM!), to his family, and to every woman "who is *actually dealing with sexual harassment.*"

Instead of dealing with the incident where he propositioned me – which the statement from his campaign does not deny – he produced an incomplete record of our text messages and claimed this vindicated him and challenged me to produce contrary information or shut up, basically.

He had his wife send out a mailer to the whole district saying the allegations were false and that "the text messages don't exist."

The woman who had been one of my best friends at the time of the indecent proposal – the one I relayed the incident to as soon as it happened – was now one of Jim's campaign consultants. She went out in the community calling me a liar and opportunist.

My other "friend" told the LA Times she'd never believed me, that it "didn't ring right," but it made her sick to her stomach, and she thought it was "politically motivated."

Her husband said he felt it was "inappropriate" that he was included on the email, though his wife said "party officials" should handle it. He didn't stop there – *he denied even knowing me*. This is a man who a month before would cross a crowded room at an event just to say hello to me.


People I'd worked with in local GOP politics who wanted to be more involved in the machine went after me and my associates on Facebook. I'll just share two:


Jennifer Van Laar remember that time you framed a remarkable candidate via BS sexual harassment for political gain? I do and I'm disgusted. I hope your career tanks, you lose all your friends, and whatever man considers you trustworthy takes a second look into your eyes. I have never been more disgusted by someone I've shaken hands with Yeah it's a small town and ur trying to be big city Keep trying #inspectorgadget this message will self destruct in 5 minutes

Part of the message:

"Remember that time you framed a remarkable candidate via BS sexual harassment for political gain? I do..and I'm disgusted. I hope your career tanks, you lose all your friends, and whatever man considers you trustworthy takes a second look into your eyes."

This guy even lied about talking to me about it.

 I looked into it, talked with the accuser, and it's fake because she's mad he didn't hire her. She's blocked now and wondering why this backfired on her.  
Like · 12 hrs

 My immediate priority was to ensure that she was safe. I listened to her version of events and offered my assistance," said, adding that he respected Van Laar's wishes when she told him she didn't want to contact police or take legal action.

^... See more

Like ·  1 · 12 hrs · Edited

 if it were REAL, it would have already been handled, wouldn't it.  
Like · 12 hrs

I wasn't the only one targeted. In the weeks leading up to the election, my close friends or business associates were also threatened and intimidated. I am sure I don't know the full extent, but here's a sampling:

- One colleague was called by a party boss and told if they don't disavow me and give a statement calling me a liar, that they would lose their job.
- Another was the target of an anonymous report to DSS claiming that their children were being molested.
- Another colleague, who was facing an accusation of their own (which has since been disproven and dismissed) was contacted by reporters and when they refused to talk about my situation the reporter intimated they'd be doing a story about them instead.

The only thing I said directly to the press was that I stood by my story and was disappointed in Jim.

Fortunately, the friend whose campaign I had worked on, the one I had told directly about the harassment, supported me. Knowing that he and his wife supported me lessened the hurt somewhat.

I sought legal advice since my character was being maligned in all manner of outlets, and those advisers wanted me to do a televised Allred-style press conference. Anyone who knows me knows that I detest the "victim" culture and am not a fan of third wave feminism – but I considered doing the press conference. I eventually decided against it, partly because I am not one to do a weepy press conference, and partly because the constant attacks, constant calls from reporters wanting me to talk, had worn me down. I hadn't slept more than two hours at a time for weeks. I was constantly emotional, unable to eat, and missing work to deal with the barrage. By then, I just wanted to be out of the spotlight.

To protect my reputation I filed a defamation suit against Jim and others, which I withdrew a few months later when my dad was diagnosed with advanced leukemia. I focused on being with my family. But while this case was pending, Jim's intimidation didn't stop. Just after his swearing-in, I started getting Instagram notifications that his new official account was following me or that he had "liked" my pictures. It was a not-so-subtle, "I've still got my eye on you."



My dad has since passed away and I am grateful I got to spend those last months with him and move on from the hell Jim and his associates put me and my family through. Only because of the Weinstein scandal and #MeToo (and seeing my "friend," the politician's wife, post a simple #MeToo on her Facebook page) have I decided to tell my story. People are calling for people like me to "name names." I'm not naming names in this piece because I am still afraid that they'll resume the scorched-earth campaign against me and others.

It's important for people who haven't dealt with this type of behavior, or who think it's easy for people who have been subjected to it to speak up, to realize that speaking up is just the beginning. Retaliation is swift and harsh from men in positions of power and prevents others from coming forward.

This has to end. Enough.

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## April Jacobs

---

**From:** Brooke Salaz <brooke.salaz@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 07, 2019 4:41 PM  
**To:** April Jacobs  
**Subject:** opposing Acosta on Water Board

Dear Ms. Jacobs,

I am writing as a long time resident of and voter in Santa Clarita (zip code 91354) to voice my strong opposition to the appointment of Dante Acosta to our Water Board. The voters have spoken in rejecting his representation in the state assembly and we do not need to live with his priorities impacting us via this important seat on the Water Board.

Thank you for registering one voter's opinion.

Sincerely,

Brooke Salaz

[brooke.salaz@gmail.com](mailto:brooke.salaz@gmail.com)

Ph (310) 980-5423

## April Jacobs

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**From:** DiananShaw <dianashawhouse@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 07, 2019 4:42 PM  
**To:** April Jacobs  
**Subject:** Water Board Appointment for January 7 Meeting

I'm sorry to learn that despite the reasonable alternatives and strongly voiced objections by the community, Mr. Acosta's purely political appointment to sit on the Water Board will likely move forward tonight (notwithstanding that he's already drawn papers to run for Assembly). As a long time resident of Santa Clarita, I do want to voice my objection to this appointment for the record. It reeks of corruption and cronyism. I therefore request that:

- 1) That this appointment be rescinded, and;
- 2) that Dean Efstatiou, not only highly qualified, but embarrassingly so when compared to Mr. Acosta, be allowed to remain in his position until the seat is eliminated by the provisions of the new law created via SB634 in 2023, or that;
- 3) THE POSITION BE ELIMINATED ALTOGETHER.

Sincerely,

Diana Shaw

## April Jacobs

---

**From:** Fern \* <fernoutside@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 07, 2019 4:46 PM  
**To:** April Jacobs  
**Subject:** For so many reasons, Dante Acosta should not take a place on the Water Board this evening.

Dear Ms. Jacobs,

It is not clear to me why Ms Barger is pushing for Dante Acosta to be on the Water Boards when he does not live in the district and has no qualifications for the position. The Signal also ran an article about Mr. Acosta opening a committee to run for State Assembly again.

Perhaps Mr. Dean Efstatiou, who held the position since 1992 and has the experience should be appointed instead.

Thank you,  
Fern Zalin Jones  
Valencia, CA

## April Jacobs

---

**From:** Gmail <judynewhoff3@gmail.com> <judynewhoff3@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 07, 2019 5:01 PM  
**To:** April Jacobs  
**Subject:** Acosta

Dear Ms.Jacobs

This message is being sent to strenuously object to the appointment of Dante Acosta to the water board that will affect my community. As a 45 year resident in the Santa Clarita valley, I have been a conscientious voter and wish to continue to have my voice heard. This person is not one who has demonstrated the confidence of local voters.

Respectfully, Judy Newhoff, zip code 91387



## April Jacobs

---

**From:** Sandra Cattell <sumcatt@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 07, 2019 5:28 PM  
**To:** April Jacobs  
**Cc:** Supervisor Kathryn Barger  
**Subject:** Barger Appointment to Water Board

Dear SCVWA Board,

The Sierra Club asks you to reject the nomination of Dante Acosta for cause. His nomination was not properly publicly noticed, denying the community a chance to take issue with this appointment.

We also believe the appointment by the Supervisor should continue to be a water expert, or at the very least an environmentalist, who would work to safeguard both the water supply and the environment. Dante Acosta, during his tenure as an Assemblymember, was at 17% and 18% on the Sierra Club Scorecard over the past 2 years, and does not fit the profile of an environmental guardian.

Thank you,  
Sandra Cattell  
Chair, Sierra Club Santa Clarita Group



## **Gavin Tate's Statement of Fact and Suspicions**

Hello, My name is Gavin Tate. I am a lifelong resident of Val Verde and since July 2018, I have been investigating the cause of my mother's breast cancer. My mother's first encounter with breast issues occurred in 2012 and her issues have recurred in 2018 as breast cancer. Her genetics have been mapped by UCLA Health and it was concluded that she has no cancerous markers, meaning her cancer derives from her environment .

**LACWD District #36** supplies the residents in the district with Primary Drinking Water that is a 50/50 mix of imported water and water pumped up from the local aquifer.

**Over the past 9 months, I have gathered evidence that suggests the Chiquita Canyon Landfill(CCL) a subsidiary company of Waste Connections, may have polluted the aquifer that exists under the areas of the CCL, Val Verde, Hasley Canyon and the Newhall Ranch with Heavy metals and other minor elements from electronic and automotive waste.** These elements include Arsenic, Beryllium, Cadmium, Lead, Mercury, Uranium, Aluminum, Lithium, Nickel, Tin, Barium, Bismuth, Rubidium, Platinum, Thallium, Vanadium, Strontium, Titanium, Tungsten, Zirconium, and other possible elements or compounds.

The evidence that suggests this is two HTMA toxin analysis tests performed on my mother and my dog(Spike) along with 15+ preliminary tests performed in the homes of residents throughout district #36 using TEST ASSURED HEAVY METALS IN WATER TEST STRIPS. My mother's HTMA test concluded that she has had long-term exposure to heavy metals and Spike's test concluded that he has heavy metal poisoning. Spike has lived his life in a concrete run with an exclusive diet of unfiltered hose water, and pedigree dog chow.

The current Water Quality test reports for the Aquifer & District #36 conducted by Eurofins-Calscience(LACWD's) and RTFA Geological(CCL's) state that the water in the aquifer and the water supplied to the residents is clean enough to drink and consume by all. *My evidence suggests that these tests are false.* And people are dying because of it.

On December 10, 2018, I submitted a digital copy of my evidence to District #5 Supervisor Kathryn Barger's office and received a helpful attitude and assurance that the issue would be looked into. **Nothing has happened since then except** Barger's organization has stopped returning my calls, on December 14th, she nominated Dante Acosta to be head of Water District #36, and I have noticed and documented an increase in the number of Wastewater Management trucks coming and going from CCL.

This combined with the fact that supervisor Barger took money for her campaign from the CCL has raised hostile concerns and suspicions in my mind. My opinion is that Barger does not hold her seat to help the people but rather for the benefit of herself, her companions, and larger Corporations. This is not something I can prove, it is solely my opinion based on what I know.



SCV Water Agency Board Members

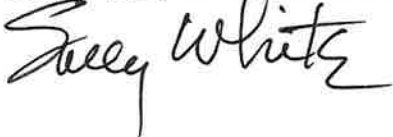
January 7, 2019

I strongly oppose the appointment of Dante Acosta to the SCV Water Board for the following reasons:

- Dean Efstatiou has occupied that board seat since 1992. He is also a member of the Association of California Water Agencies. His work experience included directing the activities of the Los Angeles County Waterworks Districts for 10 years. He has also served as the Public Works representative to the Los Angeles County Regional Planning Commission. I think it is safe to say that he is the resident expert. When SB634, which was opposed by the Sierra Club, was adopted into law, the Waterworks District 36 seat was slated to be absorbed by the newly formed agency in 2023. Dean should be re-appointed to maintain this seat for the last 4 years of its existence, not someone who is not at all familiar with the history and details of this district.
- Dante Acosta has no connection to the community that is to be represented, (Water Works District 36), and the community itself was apparently not contacted. Also, Acosta has already opened a committee to run again for state office in 2020, so it seems as though he does not care much about serving for a 4 year term on the water board.

These are both very strong considerations; the customers of the SCV Water Agency must be able to have a say in who represents them on utility agencies. Please hear our pleas and suggestions. We are the ones who live here and are affected by such decisions as are made by this board.

Sally White - 26242 Park View Road - Valencia 91355 - 661-259-9407





ANTELOPE VALLEY DISTRICT OFFICE  
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# California State Senate

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JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE ARTS

January 7, 2019

Board of Directors  
Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency  
27234 Bouquet Canyon Road  
Santa Clarita, CA 91350

Dear President Cooper & the Board of Directors

I support Los Angeles County Supervisor Kathryn Barger's nomination of Dante Acosta to the Board of Directors of SCV Water.

After careful consideration of numerous candidates, the Supervisor selected Mr. Acosta to be the County's representative and I believe she made the best choice.

Acosta's background and experience are unique and would add value to an already accomplished board.

First, having served in the California State Assembly, he's well acquainted with state water policy. Acosta served on the Assembly Resources Committee during his tenure where he was immersed in all aspects of water sustainability. Additionally, I can attest that Mr. Acosta is well-liked and respected by his former colleagues in the Legislature. This will serve the agency well as we see new water policy initiatives from the in-coming Governor. The Agency will benefit from having a board member that already has personal relationships with Sacramento policy decision-makers.

Additionally, Mr. Acosta was co-author of my bill, SB 634, which became the law that created the SCV Water Agency. Mr. Acosta participated in many of the stakeholder meetings, provided insightful input throughout the process and was by my side as a partner from inception until Governor Brown signed the measure into law. Acosta is well versed on the vision for the new agency and I know he's committed to the principles put forth in SB 634.

I'm appreciative of Supervisor Barger's thoughtful selection process, and wholeheartedly support the nomination of Dante Acosta to the Board of Directors of SCV Water. I respectfully ask that you confirm her appointment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Wilk". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Senator Scott Wilk

21<sup>st</sup> Senate District