

L.A. District Attorney Steven Cooley Drops Marijuana Charges Against Temple 420

LOS ANGELES, Calif., March 15 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – Former candidate for mayor and founder of ProfitfromPot(.com), Pastor Craig Rubin, was arrested at temple on October 22, 2009 for a second time in what was a “politically motivated” police action. The District Attorney’s office had been pushing to put Pastor Rubin behind bars for years now, claims Rubin. Months later DA Cooley has decided to drop all charges because Rubin is going to jail anyway – unless he can get the public’s help. Rubin had permission from the trial judge to sell cannabis at a marijuana dispensary – additionally from the probation department – yet, any time a person on probation is arrested, it is a “probation violation.”

That is how the State of California wastes billions of dollars locking up people for marijuana offenses without classifying individuals as “marijuana prisoners” – they are listed as “probation violators.”

Rubin was arrested at Temple 420 the first time on November 8, 2006 after briefly appearing as the owner of the “Bohdi Sativa” medical marijuana club on Showtime’s “Weeds” series. In the 2006 case Rubin was given 3 years probation. In that case Officer Tracye Fields-Black, an LAPD undercover narcotics officer, joined the Temple; but her membership agreement was not allowed to be shown to the jury, nor was Rubin allowed to mention “medical marijuana” at trial to the jury.

ABC-TV Los Angeles video link:

abclocal.go.com/kabc/story?section=news/local/los_angeles&id=7137520.

Fields-Black was the only LAPD officer to testify at trial. However, the LAPD did pay a detective for three full-time days to sit next to the prosecutor and assist the officer with her testimony. In the two cases against Rubin law enforcement has used over 50 agents, hundreds of police man-hours and countless other department resources to arrest and prosecute Pastor Rubin. The current case was scheduled to go to trial.

Rubin’s defense attorney subpoenaed Officer Fields-Black and Asha Greenberg, Assistant City Attorney to Carmen Trutanich, it was then that the DA’s office decided to drop all charges. Greenberg had written Rubin saying the City would not investigate permit issues and the following day, according to Officer Mangrum’s sworn testimony, Greenberg ordered Rubin be arrested over a permit issue. “I just want to clear my name,” says Rubin, the former candidate for Mayor of Los Angeles, who claims to have never broken the law. “If the LAPD officer had not committed perjury at the trial I would have never been convicted and on probation in the first place.”

One of the reasons Rubin ran for mayor against Villaraigosa last March was to

curb the waste, fraud and abuse taking place within the LAPD Narcotics Division, according to Rubin. While the other candidates argued for harsher penalties and longer mandatory minimums; Rubin advocated for lower taxes to create jobs and employ the locals stating, "Because our current policies discriminate against the poor People of Los Angeles we need new leadership."

This case is a huge waste of taxpayer dollars. There has never been a victim or one complaint against Rubin by a citizen in these so-called "crimes" that the pastor is charged with. In both cases it was THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA v. RUBIN. Rubin, a Bible teacher and father of seven, doesn't see why Cooley finds him such a threat that he needs to be locked away for years. More significantly, Rubin wonders why the County of Los Angeles allocates the alleged millions upon millions of local tax dollars trying to lock him away for selling a grand total of 4.5 grams. It is like the I.R.S. sending out two agents to collect four cents. In 2006, Rubin's church clinic provided Fields-Black with 3.5 grams of cannabis and in 2009 Officer Mangrum entered Rubin's church facility with a valid doctor's note from a licensed California M.D.; and after receiving religious services and instructions Mangrum was then provided one gram of cannabis.

"On both occasions I never broke the law," states the pastor. He says that California law 11362.7(d)(1) allows clergy running specialty clinics where patients stay less than 24-hours. "We are legal under the California law that allows us to collect a fee for our services. It is all covered in the Business and Professions Code, but the judge in this case ignored the law and based his ruling on the Mentch case."

The factual circumstance are extremely distinguishable because Mentch was selling medical marijuana from home, without a business license, was not paying sales taxes and sold excess cannabis not to patients directly, but to medical marijuana clubs. Mentch had no consistent hours of operation and provided only sporadic services for patients under his care, according to court documents. The Mentch case applies to individuals and not facilities because Rubin is a licensed clergy member running a licensed clinic with permits from the City of Los Angeles that allow him to "sell medical marijuana." Rubin kept consistent hours of operation, provided consistent services regulated under the law, paid taxes and only provided cannabis at his licensed clinic to qualified patients after they were verified.

"In Judge Windham's brilliant legal mind," says Rubin, and confirmed by the judge's ruling, "the factual circumstances for myself and Mentch are identical. Therefore, by Cooley dropping the charges in the current, one gram, case the facts are never to be heard by a jury." That is how Rubin is being sent to jail without a trial.

Roger Mentch had this to say about it, "This prosecution of Craig Rubin is another attempt to punish patients, providers, medical marijuana activists. The war on drugs (medical marijuana) has turned into a war on the people. They are destroying the lives of law abiding citizens with incarceration and creating severe financial hardships to the families. Destroying American lives is the real crime."

Rubin is being sent to jail for “violating probation” despite permission from the trial judge and the probation department to operate a medical marijuana clinic. Rubin feels like a rape victim because he has been loudly proclaiming his innocence for four years and has refused to settle with the City over his life’s savings that was seized illegally. “This time they took my wife’s hard earned money, from her store and did it without a warrant. The cops are criminals in this case.”

Rubin points out the economic impact. Rubin and his wife were home owners for over ten years prior to the arrest and seizure of their assets. Their business helped to keep 17 full-time people employed. Their rent was over \$10,000 per month, they paid taxes and their facility contributed to better the lives of many people as the Temple worked to get homeless kids and prostitutes off of Hollywood Blvd.

In comparison, the prosecution of this political figure has cost the County of Los Angeles tax revenue, jobs and millions upon millions of dollars. Rubin says, “You can expect this kind of waste, fraud and abuse to continue if Cooley is elected our State’s Attorney General.” The conservative Rubin doesn’t hold back his words when it comes to speaking about fellow Republican and W.C. Fields look-a-like Steven Cooley, “In my opinion the City and District Attorneys are aiding and abetting the Narcotics Division’s criminal activity instead of investigating it. Officers within that division are abusing drugs and skimming money from people they arrest.”

“It appeared to me,” Rubin goes on, “based on the testimony, that there is some type of collusion between the judge who is sentencing me on this probation violation and the District Attorney’s office, because the judge ruled I violated my probation before the hearing began and he knew the prosecutor’s ‘Mentch argument’ before Deputy DA even mentioned it.” Rubin points out “Trutanich and Cooley have been pushing the idea that Mentch outlaws lawful clinics. They are wrong.”

Rubin, who uses a comedic approach to teaching the Bible, joked, “The judge in this case was very well groomed. The type of phony guy that gets a weekly manicure and won’t eat a chicken that has been raised in a cage, but has no problem locking a human being in a tiny cage for an ‘illegal’ plant God created; welcome to California where chickens are treated better than people.”

The only chance Rubin has of clearing his name is if he receives a pardon from President Obama, Governor Schwarzenegger, or possibly the current Attorney General Brown who is running for California Governor, who can look into the matter.

Rubin is praying to God that people care enough about his case that they call the Governor’s office at (916) 445-2841. “Push #6 to get an operator,” urges Rubin as he asks people to help keep him out of jail. “Even if you don’t live in California you can act now, take one minute and register your support for medical marijuana,” because Rubin is enlisting the public to help clear his name as no one should be punished because of medical marijuana in this day in age.

The United States has five percent of the world's population and twenty five percent of the world's prisoners. The "War on Drugs" is really a war on marijuana because 85 percent of all drug arrests and 33 percent of all arrests are for hemp; this non-toxic plant that provides so many natural resources for industry. The government says no one goes to jail for pot and statistically that is true because our prisons are filled with "probation violators."

"Please, stop the waste by calling the Governor's office now," pleads Rubin, "because my life depends on your action today; tomorrow it could be your life on the line. That freedom call you make today will be the difference, so call now." (916) 445-2841 ext. 6 to speak with Governor Schwarzenegger's office.

Additional news about Pastor Craig Rubin and Temple 420:
http://profiles.send2press.com/Craig_X_Rubin.shtml .

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