

Statement By Hari S. Lal on Defamatory Articles (Prop Tax Disputes)  
09/23/22

On the evening of September 13, 2022, a conservative blogger by the name of Matthew Cunningham published a defamatory article regarding my property taxes. He did not attempt to contact me beforehand, though he claimed in the article that he did. I have emails from him that are timestamped after the first version of the article was published.

It must be noted that Matt Cunningham's wife, Laura Cunningham, is the President of the Anaheim Chamber of Commerce - the vehicle at the epicenter of the recent "Cabal" corruption scandals in Anaheim. My campaign is based on rooting out graft - to obliterate the Cabal and their corporate backers. I have since come to understand that the Cunninghams have no limits when it comes to protecting their masters; they are a special class below anything I have ever encountered before. This conflict goes well beyond partisan politics.

First, Mr. Cunningham's article was slanted as a character assassination piece. It was never intended to be a fair and unbiased investigation.

Second, I was "doxxed" by Mr. Cunningham. His thumbnail and first (main) image was of my house, with personal details far beyond what is considered public record. This appeared to be a malicious attempt to threaten my family and incite vandalism towards my property. It succeeded: my mailbox was spray painted that night. I hold Mr. Cunningham directly accountable for this.

Third, I was called on my personal cell phone that evening by a blocked number; the caller identified himself as "Cunningham, of course!". I repeated my demand that the article be removed. He mocked me and - in a reference to hundreds of my campaign signs in Anaheim Hills being destroyed, stolen, or having swastikas painted on them - shouted: "We have flattened your signs and we will flatten you!" This was a direct threat to my life! It is now a matter for the Anaheim Police.

I grew angry at these events and, in my haste, erred by attempting to explain things: I forgot the class of character I was dealing with in Mr. Cunningham. I also wish to state that I dictate 99% of my notations and that there are often errors, typos, or broken sentences due to the software. In more than one case, my comments were taken out of context and further misapplied to the new article.

The original article was taken down hours after I warned Mr. Cunningham. On September 15, 2022, Mr. Cunningham reposted a revised version of the same misleading article. The new article removed some of the excess personal information on me and incorporated (incorrectly) comments that I had made.

Here are the basic facts.

1. It is my position that the property taxes were in dispute. Since Mr. Cunningham's article was published, the matter has been resolved.

2. California Prop 60, passed in 1986, allows a homeowner over the age of fifty-five in California to transfer the base tax assessment of their original home to a new home if purchased in the same county. The new replacement property must be of equal or lesser value than the original property sold, and this must happen within two years of the original sale.

3. I bought my current home in 2015. I sold my original primary residence. Both are in Orange County. The new home cost less than the original. I was over fifty-five at the time of the sale and at the time I filed the paperwork. Therefore, I am entitled to the benefits of Prop 60.

4. I acknowledge that I made an error when I stated initially that it was Prop 19 that applied, which has since replaced Prop 60 effective April 2021. Prop 19 is the same basic concept but allows for the new property to increase in value; it permits the transfer anywhere in CA; it also brings the disabled and those whose homes have been damaged by wildfires into eligibility.

5. I did apply for a reassessment under Prop 60. For reasons unknown to me, the application was not granted, and the case was set aside to be adjudicated. This adjudication never occurred, due in part to COVID-19.

6. At that point, since I was being charged a far higher base tax than I should have been, I chose not to pay until the amount was corrected. I was being ripped off. Under Cal. RTC § 3691, you have up to five (5) years to get current on property taxes (with penalties and interest) before the government has the power to sell your property. I was willing to risk major monetary penalties to do the right thing.

7. This strategy backfired. But I live by my values, and this was worth it.

8. If you're wondering why I would do this - and most would not - I would rather burn my house to the ground than accept an injustice. If you ever have to fight me, know that I'm going all the way.

9. The case is now pending appeal for a declaratory relief regarding my eligibility for Prop 60/90. I intend to right this situation and fight on.

I ask that this statement be published in full, not in part, or not at all. I will have no further public comments on this issue or Mr. Cunningham during the campaign. Thank you.

Sincerely,

*Hari S. Lal esq*

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