

California Representative Exposes Debate Lies Of Gavin Newsom

The following is a transcript of a speech given by Kevin Kiley (R-CA) from the floor of the US House of Representatives where he responded to a litany of lies from Gov. Gavin Newsom (D-CA) during the latter's debate with Gov. Ron DeSantis (R-FL) and candidate for president. The truly amazing part of Newsom's lies is that he showed the ability to lie with a straighter face than a 5-year old telling the truth.

(Note: this was retyped after an apparent computer creation of the script of Rep. Kiley's speech. Some mistakes were caught and fixed. In some cases, it was difficult to make out what was actually said but we have tried our best to give an accurately transcribed version of the speech. We recommend that you also watch the video of the speech to hear it straight from the representative himself. It's close to half an hour but well worth the time).

Last night, there was a televised debate between the governor of my state and the governor of florida. It was setup as sort of a comparison of the two states models of governments and which is the better model for other states in the country to follow. While it is true Florida has done quite well in a number of areas, really the comparison could have been made between California and virtually any other state in the country, because when it comes to the key metrics of economic performance and quality of life, California is the very worst state in the country. And despite that, we have a governor who went on television and has for months, for years now been trying to claim that California is in fact leading the nation.

He has said time and time again that California is a model for the nation. He said the future happens first in California. And indeed, it is true that the current administration here in Washington (D.C.) has copied any number of California's policies. And in fact has elevated many of California's officials, Julie Se acting Sec of Labor held that position and Vice President Kamala Harris and Secretary Becerra, Secretary Mayorkas. This is a matter of great national concern to look at the facts of what has happened in California. And what the governor of California tried to do was to present a complete alternative reality using false, misleading and delusional assertions about the true nature of life in California.

I wanted to correct some of the misstatements that were made by Gavin Newsom in last night's (Thursday, November 30) debate.

First, there was a discussion of the California exodus. And the governor refused to acknowledge the fact that people are leaving our state in record numbers. He even asserted that more people are moving to California than to Florida. Here's the reality. Between 2019 and 2022, 1 million left California while 730,000 people move to Florida. So many people have been leaving California that the state did run out of U-Hauls and California has led the nation in U-Haul departures. And what is notable about this, California has gained population every year since its founding. We have always been the state that people want to come to and now people can't wait to leave behind.

It was this completely abrupt change. And California continued to grow and suddenly we are leading the nation in departure. And in fact, it is even more stark when you look at San Francisco, the city that Newsom and represented by Congresswoman Pelosi and Vice President Harris is from. These cities are on the verge of collapse. This is a city where businesses are leaving seemingly every day citing the intolerable conditions in that city. In fact, San Francisco is losing residents faster than any major city in United States' history. They are losing residents. And there are more Californians ... going to (Florida) than vice versa.

It was a very – you can do ... a direct comparison: 50,000 more people went to Florida than California. What Gov. Newsom said is the rate of Californians per capita moving to Florida is lower than vice versa. But he did an asymmetrical comparison, using per capita – per capita numbers looking at the state they're departing from but used raw numbers in the state they're going to. If you did it symmetrically, whether per capita ... or straight population, California has more people leaving. But the governor to go on TV and use this nonsensical trick, making it per capita on one side and not the other, shows how willing he is to mislead both his constituents and people throughout our country.

A secondary area where major correction is needed is when it comes to the handling of COVID-19. Here's the real story. California had the single most draconian and longest lasting lockdowns in the country when it came to school shutdowns, business shutdown, church shutdowns, when it came to mask mandates, vaccine mandates, vaccine passports. Each and every steep of the way, California had the highest level of government coercion and control. Yet the governor gets up in last night's debate and says, 'No, Florida was the

lockdown state,' which, you know is truly boggling to the mind that he would stand up and with a straight face make that assertion.

So yes, it is true that basically every state, right when COVID arrived, did take drastic measures, and we didn't know that this was in those first couple of weeks in February and March. But the difference is, some states learned and others did not. Some states looked at the evidence, at how best to handle this public health challenge, and acted accordingly in an evidence-based manner that placed trust in their citizens. Whereas, California never learned and continued a state of emergency until 2023.

In fact, if you look at a direct comparison, Newsom last night claimed Florida shutdown schools. But, in fact, if you look at the facts, Florida ranked third out of the 50 states in getting kids back to school. Where did California rank?

California ranked 50th out of the 50 states in getting kids back to school. We had the longest lasting school shutdowns in the country. And those harms are going to be with us for a long, long time.

Now, Newsom was saying one thing last night but just a few weeks ago he actually admitted, this is a Politico story, he said we would have done everything differently when it came to COVID. He tried to make excuses. He said we didn't know what we didn't know. But that's not true. It's not a matter of hindsight being 20/20, because every other state did a better job.

Here's the perverse thing. Despite everything California did to take away rights of its citizens, shutdown beaches, shut down schools, kept kids out of sports, despite the incalculable damage to our people, our businesses, in the name of public health, California wound up with an excess mortality rate exceeding the national average even though we had the benefit of a relatively young population.

That's why the recent 'Lancet' Study said California had one of the highest standardized COVID mortality rates in the country.

Newsom, of course, ignores that. He accuses Florida of having tens of thousands of lives die unnecessarily, completely ignoring the actual facts of the situation. The reality is, having lived through Newsom's one-man rule in California, at every turn, the governor prioritized getting himself in the headlines and rewarding special interests over the health and wellbeing of Californians ... and he did not learn.

In fact, things got worse as time went on. Even after he had set the records for how long he was keeping kids out of school, on Oct. 1, 2021, the governor announced that California was going to be the first state in the nation to impose a student vaccine mandate for COVID-19. It applies to all grade levels, public and private schools alike without exceptions for religion and personal beliefs. He was the first governor to announce such a mandate. He boasted about being the first governor to announce such a mandate and was the only governor to announce such a mandate.

At the beginning of this year he formally withdrew the mandate without going into effect. Even the World Health Organization now states that COVID vaccines are not needed for healthy kids and teens.

A third issue that came up at last night's debate was homelessness. Newsom claims he spent unprecedented resources on homelessness and got 68,000 people off the streets. Now, the first part is true. The second is preposterous. California has spent \$20 billion on homelessness over the last five years. And the problem has gotten worse.

We spent all that money and it's gotten worse. In recent years, homelessness in California has increased 15 times faster than the country as a whole. Half of all the unsheltered homeless in the whole country now live in California. Newsom himself acknowledged that Californians are, quote, wondering where the heck all their tax dollars are going.

And if you want to do a direct comparison, the federal government has counted over 171,000 homeless in California last year versus 25,000 in Florida. Newsom himself even said when he was in Los Angeles recently that it looked like a third world country. And San Francisco, frankly, is much worse, with one exception of a couple weeks ago when the president of China came to town where there was the APEC Conference.

The APEC Conference with world leaders in San Francisco, the New York Times wrote a story talking about the makeover and beautification efforts that were hastily undertaken. The 'Times' article said San Francisco had the air this week of teenagers frantically cleaning up after a house party with their parents on the way.

The 'Time' continues, perhaps the most obvious change is seen at the Speaker Nancy Pelosi Federal Building. For two years, people ... used drugs in an adjacent alley. Most have seemingly disappeared in a poof.

San Francisco added more than 200 beds in its shelter system just for the arrival of President Xi from China ... Some residents have wondered why San Francisco has been able to fix its notorious problem for the president of China, but not for them.

A fourth issue that came up in the debate was education. Newsom tried to claim that California is outperforming Florida. He cites fourth grade reading. He cites eighth grade math.

Here's the reality. Number one, California spends a lot more money than other states. California spends 45% more per pupil on K-12 education than Florida spends. And what do we get in return for that money?

California has the lowest literacy rate in the country. There are 800 California schools where 75% of students do not read at grade level. California's most recent eighth grade reading scores are the worst of any state in the country that was measured.

Our fourth grade reading scores are the third worst in the country, which is why it was unbelievable to me when last night Newsom asserted that our eighth grade reading scores are somehow indicative of good leadership when we literally have the worst eighth grade scores in the country.

Poor students, by the way, fare worst of all in California's education system. 49th – California has ranked 49th out of 50 states in achievements for state of the unions who are eligible for free and reduced lunch.

The issue of gas prices also came up last night. And Newsom tried to say that Californians are being ripped off. And I agree with him on that. Californians are being ripped off. But he said it's that were being ripped off by the oil companies. The reality is that California has, by far, the highest gas prices of any state in the country right now. Gas prices in California are \$1.58 above the national average. So, if the oil companies are ripping us off, why are they ripping us off so much more in California than any other state?

The reason gas prices are so much higher for California is there's a few reasons, but primarily that we have the highest gas tax in the country. We have all kinds of regulations and fees that add much more to the price of each gallon.

So, the reality is that we are getting ripped off but we're getting ripped off by our own government. And, by the way, what do we get in return for this, for paying the highest taxes on gas in the country, money that's supposed to be going to transportation? California generally ranks as having about the second or third worst roads of any state in the country, which people will be sure to tell you if you drive through California for any reasonable stretch of time. That's the sad reality of Gavin Newsom's California. Highest taxes, deepest potholes. We sacrifice the most and get the least in return.

The issue of taxes also came up last night. And Newsom tried to slice and dice the data to say California, for certain people, has a lower tax burden than Florida does.

The reality is that California has the highest income tax in the country. The highest gas tax in the country. When you look at the overall tax burden, in California, total taxes are \$10,000 – are \$10,167 per person and in Florida about half that, \$5,406. But Newsom wanted to talk about the working class.

Here's the reality of life in California for the working class. California has the third highest cost of living in the country. California has, by far, the highest gas price in the country that to extremely regressive taxes. California has the third worst inequality in the country. California has the highest poverty rate in the country.

California leads the nation in the real poverty rate. Last year, California had the lowest wage growth in the country. Wages went up less in California for workers than any state in the country, which explains the California exodus. When you think of all the people leaving, it's not just people who are well off who want to escape the very high income tax rates.

It's actually working people who just cannot afford to get by in our state, who are not allowed to pursue their career, who are unable to buy a home because of the skyrocketing home prices. That is the reality of life in California under Gavin Newsom.

There was also discussion of the economy, both nationally and in California. Newsom said something very interesting. He said the nation's current

unemployment rate is a sign of a booming economy. He said the unemployment rate is pretty low nationally. So, that's the link he drew: low unemployment rate, good economic stewardship. So, the first response to that is that that is a mirage.

On the national level, given the work force participation rate has gone down significantly, any small business owner will tell you they still, to this day, are having a hard time getting workers. But if we take Newsom at his word that a low unemployment rate is a sign of good leadership, when we can look at California's unemployment rate to assess his leadership. ON THE And, as it turns out, California has the second highest unemployment rate in the entire country.

If you want to do direct comparison between California and Florida, just to pick one example, since January of 2019, employment has increased by over one million – 1,041,000 in Florida. It's declined by 85,000 in California. And if you ask Californians themselves who they think the economy is doing, 71% of Californians expect bad times over the course of the next 12 months. 71%! That is a majority of Democrats, Republicans and Independents believe the economy is on the wrong track and expect things are going to get worse in California.

And a final point. You know, the governor was just a few months ago boasting about how California had had a surplus the last couple of years and how that was, again, a great sign of positive governance, of economic stewardship. You didn't hear him mention that last night and the reason why is that California has a massive deficit right now – a \$31.5-billion deficit which is out of step with what's happening last year. Right now, Florida has a \$17.7-billion surplus.

Now it came to immigration and the border. Governor Newsom made a truly outlandish claim. He said that it is Congress and not President Biden that is responsible for the border crisis. Let's just look at the basic facts. From 2014 until the beginning of the Biden administration, there were only four months in that whole span of six-plus years that had more than 100,000 encounters along the Southern border.

So, only four months, out of all those months for six years where there were more than 100,000 encounters at the border. Under the Biden administration, there were 29-straight months with more than 100,000 border encounters. So, if you ask what changed between one administration – between the time before Biden took office and the time he did take office, it wasn't Congress.

The president had a Democrat Senate and Democrat House for the first two years of his administration. And the total numbers now is we have had 6.4-million illegal crossings at the Southern border.

There were 1.7-million known Got-Aways. This administration set a record. In fiscal year 2022, the administration broke that record. In 2023, the administration broke that record. This is another area where Newsom's grasp (a) distorted and alternative reality.

When he did his initial interview with Hannity, he said, 'No, Biden is doing a great job. Illegal crossings are down 70%. There was a blip in June.' He didn't use that last night.

Illegal border crossings have been off the charts and in September of this year, we set an all-time record for a single month – 269,000 crossings across the Southern border.

And there was a mention of sanctuary policies in the debate last night and Newsom has tried to mislead about exactly what these policies do.

In Iowa, I want to read to you something he said in 2018. Newsom said, 'California is a sanctuary state. Let me be clear, California is a sanctuary state. We have defied and resisted the Trump policies at every turn and,' he said, 'we will do it again.' He even signed a law closing I.C.E. detention facilities. That was overturned by the 9th Circuit as unconstitutional.

The evidence is clear that we have a crisis at the Southern border and this administration has refused to take any solutions and made our own situation in our own state (worse). And to blame the House where in the House, we passed the Border Security Act earlier this year, the most robust security bill that has pass the House in a long, long time, maybe ever, which would make a huge difference in the crisis at the border which is contributing to fentanyl and potential national security and terror threats.

And in the House of Representatives, we pass that bill. What has happened since?

It has been gathering dust on Chuck Schumer's desk. And (it's) well past time for action on this.

The ninth are where the governor completely misled, he said crime is down in California. F.B.I. data shows violent crime in California increased 13% the last few years as it has gone down across the country. California has seen a string of high profile businesses leave the (state) and all cited the crime problem as the reason.

In Los Angeles, police have advised residents not to go outside wearing jewelry. If you want to do a direct comparison between Florida and California when it comes to crime, from where a few figures that were cited ... one that is telling is motor vehicle thefts. Why is this telling?

In California, crime isn't reported because it won't be prosecuted. These laws have legalized retail theft, legalized open-air drug use and other laws that have downgraded a lot of offenses. And cities have defunded police and progressive prosecutors ... refused to prosecute crimes for laws on the books.

Businesses will be robbed in broad daylight and won't file a police report because they know nothing is going to happen. You can't look at reported crimes as an accurate gauge of how much criminal activity there is. But when it comes to vehicle thefts, that's different because there is an insurance claim. We get realistic, accurate numbers.

How does that compare? In 2022, reported vehicle thefts were 250% higher in California than Florida. And that will be no surprise for anyone who has been to San Francisco.

The advice is roll down your windows when you leave your parked car so they won't break them when they are trying to break in.

Finally, one final issue, the 10th and final issue, and there are plenty of others where the governor of our state made a completely false and misleading characterization of what life is like in California. Personal freedom.

The governor called California 'the freedom state.' But the Cato-Institute ranked California as the 48th most free state. Just look at what happened during the COVID lockdowns. California had the highest measure of government control, the least measure of personal choice and freedom. But it began long before that.

California has, every year, continued to erode the rights and freedoms of its resident when it comes to economic freedom. He signed ... law(s) which have

deprived people of their right to earn a living ... and his former secretary is trying to do the same thing through the regulatory process here in Washington, D.C. Or look at things like bans on straws, bans on gas-powered leaf blowers and bans on chopsticks. Bans even on gas-powered vehicles by 2035 if Gavin Newsom has his way.

And for him to claim we are 'the freedom state' is a delusion of the highest order.

I want to close by making this point, though Mr. Speaker, which is that California, I believe is the greatest state in the country. It's the state where everyone wanted to come to. We have everything to offer and there are many great things about our state – the amazing people and diversity and cultures and world-leading companies in California. We have great universities in our state.

We have so many great things going and we still have parts of our state the people are moving to and want to live in. Specifically, my district.

My district is one of the few parts of California that is growing right now. In fact, while the state as a whole has, for three straight years, led the nation in U-Haul departures, my district was second in U-Haul arrivals.

Why are people moving to our area and leaving other parts of California? The reason is we have fought against the failed governance model that the governor has tried to impose on the state ... and advanced in San Francisco.

In the COVID year, we fought to allow our communities to live their lives as they saw fit. We got our kids back to school sooner than any other part of California. We ended up having better COVID-19 outcomes because we focused on the things that would make a difference on disease control rather than population control. Rather than taking the personal freedoms of our residents.

And before COVID and, at least since, we have moved away from that paradigm. We continue to chart a different course than California as a whole has taken. We support small businesses in our communities rather than attacking them. We support law enforcement in our communities rather than defunding police and rather than contributing to a false and misleading narrative, negative narrative. We have led the entire nation in going after fentanyl dealers and charging them with murder so we don't have kids continuing to be victimized.

When the governor said California is a model for the nation, nothing could be further from the truth. But I am proud to represent our district (and show) how California can become the Golden State. I would encourage everyone who watched the debate last night to take a close look at the facts because there is an increasing tendency for California's failures to be national failures. And, as a representative from California, I will be fighting in every way I can to make sure that doesn't happen.

Thank you and I yield back.