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NEWSOM'S SECOND AD CONVENIENTLY GLOSSES OVER ADDITIONAL 'ACCOMPLISHMENTS' AS MAYOR

LOS ANGELES, CA – Gavin Newsom's campaign for governor has released its second television ad — called "Phyllis" — that conveniently glosses over so many of the accomplishments Newsom achieved as mayor of San Francisco, including skipping out on work, weakening immigration protections, overseeing a rising housing and homelessness crisis, and leaving the city with a \$380 million deficit.

"If Gavin Newsom wants to brag about his tenure as mayor of San Francisco, he shouldn't forget to mention what he's really known for: a spotty attendance record and fiscally mismanaging the city's budget," said Fabien Levy, Deputy Campaign Manager and Communications Director for John Chiang's campaign. "Maybe Gavin didn't want to show up for work because he didn't know how to confront the spiraling deficit or couldn't decide which programs had to be axed, or maybe it's just Gavin's natural inclination to avoid work since his poor attendance record continues today as lieutenant governor. No matter the case,

Californians can't trust a leader who is more interested in showboating, than showing up and getting the job done."

Between 2004 and 2009, Newsom spent the equivalent of more than nine months traveling outside California — not including frequent trips to Sacramento and Southern California. This led to Newsom being called a "frequent-flier" mayor, something he never denied. Newsom's pattern of skipping work has continued as lieutenant governor. According to an investigative report by the Los Angeles Times, Newsom attended just 54% of UC Board of Regents meetings, 34% of Cal State Trustees meetings, and 57% for state lands commission meetings between 2011 and 2018. According to the Times, "Membership of the three panels is the most prominent duty of a lieutenant governor, a post considered to be largely ceremonial."

Throughout his tenure as mayor of San Francisco, Newsom's fiscal irresponsibility led to projected budget deficits year after year, as high as \$575 million in 2009. Newsom even left the city with a \$380 million deficit when he left office in 2011.

Newsom was also responsible for turning over undocumented juveniles to federal authorities from Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE), after he had already weakened San Francisco's sanctuary city policy. And his failure to address the city's homelessness problem is well known, leading to him to bus much of the city's homeless population out of town.

Newsom's second ad follows [a fact-check by Politifact](#) last week that gave a key piece of Newsom's first ad a "**False**" rating for claiming that he was "the first to take on the National Rifle Association." Politifact points to several other California politicians who took on the gun lobby before Newsom ever did,

including former San Francisco Mayor and now-U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein.

Levy added, “John Chiang is the only person in this race with a track record of showing up for work and managing California’s finances with a steady hand. As the only person in California history to hold the state’s three elected financial offices, he’s the only candidate voters can trust to act fiscally responsible and manage the state’s budget.”

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Background:

Newsom was missing from San Francisco for more than nine months as mayor. From 2004, when he became mayor, to early-2009, Newsom “spent the equivalent of more than nine months traveling outside of California,” not including “frequent in-state trips to Sacramento or Southern California.” Records showed that Newsom demonstrated a trend of increasing absenteeism:

The mayor has been out of the state about 280 days since he was first elected, according to calendars and other documents requested by The Chronicle. In 2004, he only left the state for seven days, compared with 80 days in 2008 and 21 days already in the first two months of this year.

...

Newsom was out of the state for more than 20 percent of 2008, "and that's going to go up," said David McCuan, an associate political science professor at Sonoma State University. [[San Francisco Chronicle, 3/15/2009](#)]

Newsom was called a “frequent-flier S.F. mayor.” Newsom’s constant trips out of town — and out of state — led to him being called a “frequent-flier” mayor. And the “jet-setting schedule” wasn’t something Newsom exactly

denied:

"I've learned the schedules for Virgin, Southwest, United. There are many flights leaving up and down the state. You won't even know some days that I wasn't in the city because I'm back a few hours after I leave." [\[San Francisco Chronicle, 4/22/2009\]](#)

Newsom skipped out on city duties for campaign events, despite a looming budget crisis. Newsom's increasingly-regular absences during his failed campaign for governor were especially notable in that they "coincided with ever-worsening news about the city's budget deficit." Department heads, tasked with making deep budget cuts, reportedly felt abandoned:

Department heads have complained of feeling abandoned by the mayor at a time when they're being asked to make deep budget cuts, and Newsom was criticized last month for not attending budget meetings organized by David Chiu, the freshman president of the Board of Supervisors. [\[San Francisco Chronicle, 3/15/2009\]](#)

Mayor Gavin Newsom has been increasingly absent from San Francisco, and his decision to officially enter the 2010 race for California governor prompted speculation he'll spend even less time at City Hall, as the city copes with one of its worst budget crises in history. [\[San Francisco Chronicle, 4/22/2009\]](#)

But there are serious questions about whether he can conduct a statewide campaign while effectively addressing San Francisco's looming \$522 million budget deficit, a 10 percent unemployment rate and a shortfall at the Municipal Transportation Agency that has led to labor strife, increased fares and threats of even more service cuts. [\[San Francisco Chronicle, 3/14/2010\]](#)

Newsom repeatedly created massive structural budget deficits. Though San Francisco's mayor is statutorily required to balance the budget each year, Newsom's spending choices consistently led to the city facing massive budget deficits year-after-year, with the amounts often climbing into the hundreds of

millions of dollars:

“S.F. budget deficit expected to soar” [[San Francisco Chronicle, 4/3/2010](#)]

“S.F. faces \$575.6 million budget deficit” [[San Francisco Chronicle, 12/9/2008](#)]

“S.F. deficit grows to projected \$338 million” [[San Francisco Chronicle, 3/22/2008](#)]

“Newsom freezes hiring, orders cuts in face of \$229 million deficit” [[San Francisco Chronicle, 11/29/2007](#)]

“\$80 million city deficit forecast / Officials relieved after 3 years of even deeper debt” [[San Francisco Chronicle, 12/7/2005](#)]

Deficits were of Newsom’s own creation. San Francisco’s deficits didn’t exactly come out of nowhere. In 2007 and 2008, the city faced huge projected budget deficits despite strong revenues:

Much of the projected \$229 million budget deficit that now preoccupies San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom was created with his blessing - and with his full knowledge that the city didn't have the dough to cover it.

Newsom and his aides, however, didn't let the cat out of the bag until after his re-election last month.

...

And unlike the governor, who is facing a \$10 billion state shortfall thanks to the housing slump, Newsom can't blame the economy for his troubles. [[San Francisco Chronicle, 12/2/2007](#)]

Unlike many other California cities and counties, San Francisco is taking in boatloads of money - yet it's still sinking in red ink.

Thanks in part to a hiring binge and raises handed out last year with the blessing of Mayor Gavin Newsom, the city is staring at a \$330 million-plus deficit that could lead to layoffs for hundreds of city workers. [[San Francisco Chronicle, 3/24/2008](#)]

Newsom left the city facing a \$380 million budget deficit when he left

office. Newsom left San Francisco facing a projected \$379.8 million budget deficit as he took off for his new gig as lieutenant governor of California. [[San Francisco Chronicle, 12/29/2010](#)]

Newsom weakened San Francisco's sanctuary city policy and turned undocumented children over to ICE. While he now calls himself the “poster child for sanctuary policy,” Newsom actually weakened San Francisco's sanctuary city policy as mayor, unveiling an anti-immigrant policy just a day after announcing an exploratory committee for his 2010 gubernatorial run. Newsom's policy resulted in 167 juveniles being reported to ICE from July 2008 to January 2011, thirteen of which “had only misdemeanor petitions, not felonies.” Newsom's Administration reportedly was actively referring undocumented immigrants to ICE, conducting a review of over 1,000 people in the city's probation database and reporting at least 372 suspected undocumented immigrants. After the Board of Supervisors overturned the policy and overrode Newsom's veto, Newsom simply ignored the board, “continuing to turn juvenile arrestees over to ICE for the rest of his term.” [[Mercury News, 3/20/2018](#)]

Newsom failed to improve San Francisco's homelessness problem and bussed homeless San Franciscans out of town. Newsom calls homelessness in California “out of control,” but he's done nothing as a statewide official to address the problem over the last seven years, and his program to “abolish” homelessness in San Francisco as mayor has failed to make a dent in the population. It also included policies that were “controversial” and “mean-spirited.” One program implemented by Newsom's Administration that bussed homeless San Franciscans out of town was criticized for “merely moving the problem around.” [[San Francisco Chronicle, 12/8/2010](#)]

Despite spending \$1.5 billion over the course of a decade, the “homeless population hasn’t budged.” In fact, it was up 3 percent from 2005 to 2014, including some 2,200 public school students who lacked homes. San Franciscans are “still waiting.” [\[San Francisco Chronicle, 6/26/2014\]](#)

Newsom’s record of skipping out on work continued as lieutenant governor. Newsom’s record of showing up to work didn’t get any better as lieutenant governor of California — it actually got worse. Despite having “limited” responsibilities in the “ceremonial role,” Newsom managed to skip out on “scores of meetings,” missing votes on the few boards of which he was a member:

Newsom, now the front-runner in the governor's race, missed scores of meetings held by the University of California Board of Regents, the California State University Board of Trustees and the California State Lands Commission, according to a Times review of attendance records.

He attended 54% of UC Regents meeting days, 34% for Cal State and 57% for state lands, according to a Times review of attendance records between 2011 and 2018. The Times included in the tally days when Newsom was present for only part of the day, and excluded days when Newsom had no committee meetings or other official business to attend.

Membership of the three panels is the most prominent duty of a lieutenant governor, a post considered to be largely ceremonial. [\[Los Angeles Times, 4/20/2018\]](#)

Newsom derided his role, joked about how unimportant it was. Newsom derided the role of lieutenant governor before ducking out of the governor’s race and running for it himself, saying that it was “a largely ceremonial post ... with no real authority and no real portfolio.” Later, when he had the job himself, he frequently joked about how unimportant his job was, saying, on Jimmy Kimmel, “You wake up every morning, you read the paper looking in the obituaries for the governor’s name. That’s pretty much it.” [\[Los Angeles Times,](#)

[7/15/2013\]](#)

Newsom called his job “dull,” showed up to work just once a week.

Newsom himself has admitted that he barely shows up to work because he finds his job too boring to bother attending. Two years into the job, he confided to a friend — while filming his own TV show, “The Gavin Newsom Show” — how often he even went to Sacramento:

“Like one day a week, tops ... There’s no reason.... It’s just so dull.” [\[Los Angeles Times, 4/20/2018\]](#)

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