



Guadalupe Cano

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Today is the first day of early/absentee voting, and this election, I have very strong feelings about one race in particular, so here are my thoughts. Just as a reminder, I am a registered Independent.

About a year ago, a very dear friend, who is a law enforcement officer, had a conversation with me about the state of our judicial system and the issues that his department has because of the current District Attorney. What he didn't know as he shared this is that I'd already spoken to two other police officers who had shared the same concerns. The difference this time is that I was speaking to someone I respect and care deeply about, so the conversation concerned me even more. He also started talking to me about a candidate he was supporting that was planning to run against the incumbent.

He said that he supported [Norm Wheeler](#) 100%, and he was hopeful that I would, too. I told him I needed to learn more about him. We'd never met before, but I was willing to educate myself so I would make a good decision by the time the general election rolled around.

Around the same time, another really good friend told me a story about how he'd been dealing with the DA's office for months regarding a homeless guy who had been terrorizing his family. The guy had been trespassing on his property, and tried to break into his home more than once. The last time he'd shown up, my friend's wife was driving up to the house at the time with their daughter in the car. The man tried to get into the vehicle to assault them and ended up causing damage to the vehicle and just causing mayhem (again). The entire incident was caught on video. Even with that evidence, the DA's office refused to prosecute, saying they couldn't definitively say it was the same guy they'd had all the problems with before (and who the police had arrested more than once).

My friend shared his frustrations with the DAs office, and his concerns over his child being traumatized by the whole situation. Sadly, his story wasn't an isolated one. I have spoken to several victims of various crimes who have identical stories. This is a daily occurrence because of our current district attorney and the way the office is being run.

The first opportunity I got to listen to Norm Wheeler speak, I went. I left absolutely convinced that for the safety of our community, he is the person we need in office. Norm understands the law extremely well, and he isn't afraid of a courtroom. He WANTS to prosecute criminals and he expects to do his job to make sure that those who need to be are punished for their actions.

The biggest thing that Norm has been stressing is the need for the police, DA, and judges to work together to keep violent repeat offenders behind bars when appropriate. Instead of pointing fingers at the police and the judges, he recognizes the responsibility of the District Attorney's office to do their part to make sure this is done. That alone is enough of a change to garner my support.

So like I said, it's been a year or so. And in that time, I've gotten to know Norm pretty well, I think. He's not someone I'd call a politician. He's definitely not concerned with party loyalty or being polished and perfect. He's more like that sort of old- fashioned, straight-shooting lawman type that is going to tell you the truth, whether you want to hear it or not. He's not doing this for the glory or to gain political power or as a stepping stone. He's running because he sees a problem and wants to have a part in making our communities safer for all of us. He

doesn't care if someone is a Democrat, Republican, or Independent, he's just concerned with whether you understand the law and are following it. That's a nice change.

[Patricia Cano](#) and I have been concerned for a long time about the way the judicial system is functioning(or not) in this community. What is happening now is NOT working, so we decided it's time for a change. We are both voting for Norm Wheeler, and we hope you will, too! Thank you.