

Longtime critic of Sheriff, DA files \$10 million claim

By Roger Phillips

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STOCKTON — A staunch longtime critic of the Sheriff's and the District Attorney's offices has filed a \$10 million claim against top officials from the two San Joaquin County agencies.

Frank Gayaldo's claim, filed Wednesday, alleges that Sheriff Steve Moore, D.A. Tori Verber Salazar and Supervising Deputy District Attorney Robert Himelblau have caused him "emotional distress, aggravation (and) PTSD caused by previous county corruption." Gayaldo's claim also alleges that laws protecting his medical privacy have been violated.

On a form filed with the county, Gayaldo writes parenthetically that his \$10 million claim will increase "if Moore kills me."

"I made the figure outrageous so that this had to go to court," Gayaldo said. "I want to go to court. I want to be able to subpoena people so I can prove Steve Moore has been threatening me via a third party."

Gayaldo has sharply criticized the Sheriff and the D.A. over a series of issues in recent years, most recently concerning Moore's handling of his role as the county's Coroner. Speaking at the Supervisors' meeting this week, Gayaldo accused Moore of embezzlement, called for an "outside criminal countywide corruption probe," and said Verber Salazar should be disqualified from involvement in any investigation because she is "compromised."

In his claim, Gayaldo wrote that Moore has threatened him through third parties. "Death threats include 'Torture is worse than death' and 'Vengeance is a dish best served cold,'" Gayaldo's claim says.

After completing his remarks to the Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, Gayaldo continued speaking loudly as he left the Supervisors' chambers.

"Sheriff Steve Moore, I called you out, you're a felon, meet me anytime," Gayaldo said. "You've been threatening me, bring it on. I'm happy to go to jail."

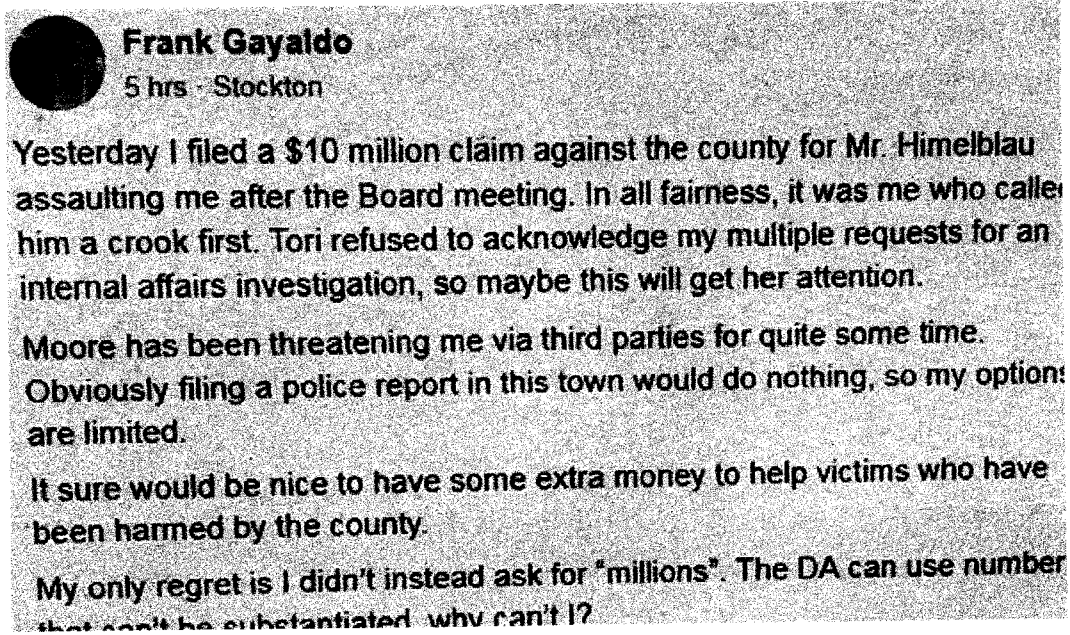
Outside the chambers, there was a brief but heated verbal confrontation involving Gayaldo and Himelblau. Gayaldo provided his version of the argument during his phone interview.

"I was the instigator in this in the sense that I called him a crook," Gayaldo said. "So he responded by turning around and charging me, not quickly, but coming into my personal space and one-half an inch from me."

Gayaldo, a prolific Facebook blogger, said he then told Himelblau, "Let me pull out my phone and let me interview you."

According to Gayaldo, Himelblau turned and walked away. "He walked away," Gayaldo said, "and I said, 'Hey, let me interview you.' And he said, 'You have mental problems.' And a lot of people heard it."

In a Facebook post Thursday, Gayaldo indicated he has a plan for what he will do with some of his \$10 million in the event he prevails in court.



"It sure would be nice to have some extra money to help victims who have been harmed by the county," he wrote.

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