

INTERFAITH COUNCIL URGES COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO ISSUES FACING OAKLAND

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The Interfaith Council of Alameda County will hold a community meeting at on July 11 at Williams Chapel Baptist Church at 1410 10th Ave. to bring political, religious and community leaders together and call for a comprehensive, "working together works," approach to the many issues facing Oakland and Alameda County. The post Interfaith Council Urges Comprehensive Approach to Issues Facing Oakland first appeared on Post News Group.

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By Magaly Muñoz

It's no secret that residents of Oakland have been widely unsatisfied with Mayor Sheng Thao during her 18 months in office but calls for her resignation have soared since her home was raided by the FBI last week for an unspecified investigation.

Thao opponents have held several press conferences and rally's in the week since the raid and the certification of necessary signatures to trigger a recall election against the mayor.

Oakland United to Recall Sheng Thao, headed by Seneca Scott and former Alameda judge Brenda Harbin-Forte, is leading the campaign to oust Thao from office. They are adamant that under the mayor's leadership, Oakland has gone to ruin and her resignation would allow the city to heal once and for all.

"More than 40,000 people signed the recall petitions from all over Oakland. These are citizens who are hurting. They've been hurting for a long, long time," Harbin-Forte said.

The most recent call for resignation came shortly after Thao's first appearance following the news of the FBI investigation. Until that point, Thao had been MIA for four days, only communicating through her former attorney Anthony Brass.

Many interpreted this lack of acknowledgment to the public as an admission of guilt and a sign that she has something to hide.

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Thao emphatically portrayed her innocence at the Monday press conference, stating that she would cooperate in any way she could while continuing her duties to keep Oakland safe.

FBI raids aside, the mayor has long been the blame for many of Oakland's deep-rooted problems including the absence of a police chief for a whole year, rising crime rates, businesses leaving the city, the fiscal crisis, and overall the lack of public safety.

This has ultimately led to her facing a recall election after the recall campaign successfully gathered over 40,000 signatures to get the recall scheduled. But her opponents are instead asking for her to willingly step down so as to not cost the city any additional funds to put this on the November ballot.

The city estimates that the cost of the recall could be \$4.9 million for a standalone election or \$1.2 for a consolidated ballot in November, but recall proponents say it doesn't have to get that far and she can choose to "do the honorable thing" and allow for the people to vote for a new mayor in November.

Harbin-Forte also said that they could've gotten more signatures for the ballot but claimed residents were scared because of alleged threats made by Thao.

"So many did not sign and did not feel comfortable signing because... she had already told people that if anyone supported the recall that their nonprofit was not getting another dime," Harbin-Forte said.

Tuan Ngo, founder of Asians Unite, stated that the mayor was embarrassing Oakland and needed to leave office immediately. He also called on council president Nikki Fortunato-Bas and Carroll Fife to resign, a message that has also been widespread amongst dissatisfied Oaklanders over the last several months.

Although the recall group has not officially endorsed anyone to take over for Thao, Loren Taylor, the candidate who narrowly lost to Thao in the 2022 election, has said that he is preparing to run again. Thao defeated Taylor by just 677 votes.

Despite the mounting pressure for her to step down, Thao assured the public at her press conference that she would not be bullied out of her job and won't allow "billionaires from San Francisco and Piedmont" to buy a fair election out from under the city.

The Oakland City Council is scheduled to discuss the certification of the recall petition on July 2.



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There are no comments yet.