



Life In Brief

Current Title: Governor

Political Party: Democratic Party

Born: October 10, 1967

Birthplace: San Francisco, CA

Religion: Catholic

Ethnicity: White/Caucasian

Marital Status: Married

Education:

- Santa Clara University (CA), BA, 1989

Family:

4 children

Work History:

- Real Estate Assistant, Shorenstein & Company
- Founder, PlumpJack Wineshop, 1992-CURR
- President in Absentia, Airelle Wines, Inc.

Quick Summary

Progressive politician who has established a reputation of advocating for marginalized groups such as racial minorities and the LGBT community through unorthodox means. Effectively leveraged family connections to jumpstart career

- Embraces forging his own path on progressive issues; publicly goes against the status quo
- Fights for what he believes is right through unconventional means; as Mayor of San Francisco, broke the state law to support same-

sex marriage, putting his reputation at risk with the broader Democratic Party

- Shifted from the private sector to politics after working for Willie Brown
- Working for Jerry Brown allowed him to learn tools of the trade and become his successor
- Well connected to CA political and philanthropic elites; Speaker Nancy Pelosi is his aunt and political mentor, and he is friends with Sen. Kamala Harris and the Getty family
- Advocates for constituents to engage with their government, using technology to participate

Approach and Motivations

His working-class background instilled the value of public service. Sees political issues through a feminist lens

- His mother's fostering of underprivileged children and his father's tendency to give his wealth to others in need inspired his values of public service and generosity
- Credits his Jesuit education for growing into an independent thinker who questions orthodoxy
- Identifies as a feminist; discusses role of gender in political issues, such as toxic masculinity's role in shootings
- Was bullied during his childhood for his dyslexia, likely prompting his empathy for others who are marginalized

Policy Position and Areas of Focus

Newsom focuses on policies aimed to address poverty, criminal justice reform, LGBT equality, and environmental protection



Diversity and Inclusion: *Early supporter of LGBT equality; supports criminal justice reform to address race-based inequities*

- Directed the city clerk to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples, despite the state prohibition, while mayor of San Francisco
- Vocal opponent of capital punishment, believing it to be a race-based system of discrimination; issued a 2019 moratorium on capital punishment for the remainder of his tenure
- Offered clemency in 2019 to several immigrants with criminal records facing deportation
- Endorsed Proposition 47, which decriminalized nonviolent drug and property crimes in 2014

Addressing Poverty: *Supports wide range of housing and health care services*

- As mayor, implemented several programs to provide aid to the homeless, like the Care Not Cash initiative and Project Homeless Connect
- As governor, he threatened to withhold state infrastructure funding for communities that fail to construct affordable housing
- Supported expanding eligibility for Medi-Cal, California's Medicaid program, to low-income undocumented youth; this was implemented in California's 2019 budget

Environment: *Has championed CA's environmental policy; at odds with Admin*

- Supports Attorney General Xavier Becerra's lawsuits against the Trump Administration for environmentally harmful policies
- Examples of such policies include revoking California's right to set pollution limits on cars, altering existing legislation to impede wildlife protection, and opening public land to drilling

Core Communities

Newsom's core communities include prominent Democratic Party figures, as well as his family's relationship with the Getty family

Democratic Party Politicos: *Has forged close relationships with senior Democratic figures*

- Speaker Nancy Pelosi is Newsom's aunt by marriage and has been a political mentor; her son Laurence was Treasurer for Newsom's mayoral campaign
- Met Sen. Kamala Harris years ago through working for former San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown; the two have stayed friends, and Newsom endorsed her 2020 presidential campaign
- Has been endorsed by Bill Clinton, Al Gore, and Jesse Jackson

Getty Family: *His father's work as an attorney for Getty Oil enabled the Newsoms to become close friends with the Gettys*

- Newsom's father was close with the powerful Getty family, and Newsom was childhood friends with billionaire Gordon Getty's children
- Founded PlumpJack Winery along with Gordon Getty's son, Billy Getty, using Gordon's funds

Staff: *Former staff members have moved on to work for other prominent political figures*

- Advisor and former communications director Peter Ragone has advised Al Gore, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, and New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio
- Former Chief of Staff Chris Garland is now political director for former Facebook executive Sean Parker; Parker is involved in advocacy for progressive causes such as gun control
- Former campaign manager Addisu Demissie worked on both of Hillary Clinton's presidential



campaigns, as well as Sen. Cory Booker's (D-NJ) 2020 presidential campaign

Political History

- Member, CA State Lands Commission
- President, City of San Francisco Parking and Traffic Commission, 1996-1997
- Member, City of San Francisco Board of Supervisors, 1997-2003
- Mayor, City of San Francisco, 2004-2011
- Lt. Governor, CA State, 2011-2018

Relevant Financial Information

Receives most contributions from California-based labor unions and businesses

Biggest Industry Donors (2009-2020)

- General Trade Unions: \$3.4 million
- Lawyers & Lobbyists: \$3.2 million
- Real Estate: \$2.5 million
- Securities & Investment: \$1.9 million
- Public Sector Unions: \$1.9 million

Biggest Donors (2009-2020)

- California State Pipe Trades Council: \$160,000
- California Professional Fire Fighters Association: \$120,000
- California Department of Forestry Fire Fighters Local 2881: \$110,000
- California School Employees Association: \$110,000
- California Teachers Association: \$110,000

Biggest Individual Donors (2009-2020)

- Laib Greenspoon, CEO of Laibco, LLC (Gardena, CA): \$87,600

- Diane B. Wilsey, CEO of A. Wilsey Properties (San Francisco, CA): \$85,000
- John H. Scully, Chairman of SPO Partners & Co. (Mill Valley, CA): \$85,000
- Regina Kulik Scully, Self-Employed Filmmaker (San Francisco, CA): \$85,000
- Lynda Rae Renick, Vice-Chair and Co-Owner of The Wonderful Company (Los Angeles, CA): \$84,400

Political Donations: *Has contributed nearly \$60,000 to numerous Democratic campaigns across many states since 1998*

- Largest contributions were \$10,500 to Sen. John Burton's (D-CA) 2000 Senate campaign and \$4,100 to Matt Deabneh's 2013 California Assembly campaign
- Other contributions were \$250 to \$2,500

Miscellaneous

- Estimated net worth of ~\$10 million
- His 2018 income tax filing revealed an income of \$1.2 million for that year

Publications, Media and Speaking

Makes regular media appearances using widely-received outlets to primarily discuss social issues and issues pertaining to labor

Publications: *Wrote a book on the relationship between government and technology; writes op-eds on environmental, labor, and social issues*

- *Citizenville: How to Take the Town Square Digital and Reinvent Government*, 2013
- "California Must get past Differences on Water. Voluntary Agreements are the Path Forward," *Cal Matters*, February 4, 2020



- “On Labor Day, let’s Pledge to Protect Workers and Create Paths to Union Membership,” *The Sacramento Bee*, September 2, 2019

Media: *Has made frequent appearances on national outlets since becoming Governor*

- Preferred Outlets: National cable news such as CBS, MSNBC, and PBS; talk shows like *Late Night with Seth Meyers* and *The View*
- Favorite Subjects: Lawsuits against the Trump administration, criminal justice, immigration, environmental issues
- Social Media Habits: Very active on social media, has 1.5 million followers on Twitter

Speaking: *Speaks about technology and diversity/inclusion; started speaking about COVID-19 to constituents in February 2020*

- Favorite Subjects: Diversity, LGBT rights; how technology can impact/improve government; since February 2020, the COVID-19 outbreak
- Preferred Audience: Universities; tech groups
- Spoke at the Stanford HAI 2019 about the effects that technology could have on labor
- Spoke at UC Berkeley Law’s 2017 commencement about the value of diversity
- Discussed his book at the UC San Diego Revelle Forum and Talks at Google in 2013
- Holds regular press conferences to discuss possible solutions to issues affecting California residents, such as ongoing wildfires, and the COVID-19 pandemic

Professional Affiliations

- Founder, Project Homeless Connect

Family and Personal Background

A native of San Francisco who embraced the value of public service in his youth

- Father was William Alfred Newsom III, a state appeals court justice and attorney for Getty Oil
- Fourth generation San Franciscan
- Struggled with dyslexia while in school
- Was an accomplished athlete during his youth; was drafted to the Texas Rangers out of high school but chose to attend college instead
- Parents were divorced; his mother worked two jobs to support the family
- Grew up with little money, as his father had a habit of giving his money away to others in need
- His mother fostered several children in their home, which Newsom says instilled his value of public service
- His mother passed away in 2002 from assisted suicide while battling cancer; although assisted suicide was illegal in California at the time, Newsom and his sister provided her the drugs to end her life
- Newsom’s aunt was married to Ron Pelosi, Speaker Nancy Pelosi’s brother in law

Criticisms and Controversies

Newsom’s push for same-sex marriage as Mayor attracted criticism throughout both of his terms; an affair with a subordinate also attracted public criticism

Same-sex marriage

- Gained national attention in 2004 by directing San Francisco city clerks to issue marriages to same-sex couples, despite the state prohibition



- Opponents of same-sex marriage were critical of Newsom, with Newsom receiving death threats
- Democratic Party leaders such as Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) criticized Newsom for pushing too far and possibly hurting the party's chance of victory in the 2004 election
- While campaigning against the Proposition 8 ballot initiative to prohibit same-sex marriage in the state Constitution, Newsom attracted criticism after he released an ad depicting himself officiating a same-sex wedding, with Proposition 8 opponents fearing it would prompt backlash among Proposition 8 supporters
- Proposition 8 passed in the 2008 election

Affair with appointments secretary

- In 2007, news broke that Newsom had an affair with his appointments secretary, who was married to his campaign manager and friend, Alex Tourk
- The affair was apparently short-lived, and occurred in 2005 while Newsom was divorcing his then-wife, Kimberly Guilfoyle
- Tourk resigned from his position after his wife confessed to the affair as part of substance abuse counseling; Newsom had also experienced substance abuse issues during that time
- Newsom issued a public apology and expressed remorse for what had happened, and pledged to address his own substance abuse issues