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111

CALIFORNIA ELECTIONS

Trump casts shadow on AG race

Bonta relishes battles with president, but Gates embraces MAGA policies

By **Robert Salonga**
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Democratic state Attorney General Rob Bonta and Republican challenger Michael Gates are offering sharply different visions of the job: Bonta has made opposing federal overreach a central focus, while Gates argues the state's top prosecutor should prioritize crime. The divide reflects a broader

clash over the role of California's attorney general, with Bonta overseeing upward of 70 lawsuits against the president's administration, preserving federal funding and the state's independence on issues ranging from environmental regulation to immigrant relief.

Gates, a former Trump Justice Department attorney, has pursued voter identification requirements and defied state housing laws, and says his

opponent's focus on battling the White House is a wrong-headed diversion. He has framed his campaign as a referendum on Bonta, who is seeking a second full term, following his initial appointment by Gov. Gavin Newsom in 2021 and subsequent election a year later.

How deeply voters will delve into those issues is a fair question based on the Democratic leanings of the state and Bonta's status as an incumbent, said Dan Schnur, a political science professor at UC Berkeley and the



Rob Bonta



Michael Gates

See **POLITICS** on Page A5

BAY AREA HOMELESSNESS

Crackdown on RVs push residents across borders



Large tree logs are placed along a curbside parallel to a line of recreational vehicles that are parked at a homeless encampment on Poplar Street in West Oakland on Wednesday. The logs were transported there a few years ago to prevent people from living in their vehicles and from parking in front of businesses. **RAY CHAVEZ — STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER**

Oakland is latest city to toughen rules on people living in vehicles on street

By **Grant Stringer**
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People who live in cars and RVs throughout the Bay Area are moving between cities as crackdowns on street encampments ramp up, a trend that pushed Oakland officials to adopt a new policy speeding up tows over concerns the city is becoming a "destination" for displaced residents.

Advocates for homeless people and some experts are horrified at the regional crackdown. Margot Kushel, a physician and UC San Francisco researcher who leads the largest study of homelessness in the U.S., said Bay Area cities are competing in a "race to the bottom" to pass stronger restrictions on encampments than their neighbors.

The consequences are disastrous for those priced out of the housing market, she said. When forced to move repeatedly, residents often lose shelter, critical paperwork and medications. Outreach workers can't find their clients. And doctors lose touch with patients, driving worse health outcomes in a population already at risk.



A San Jose police officer prepares to examine the inside of a trailer that has been designated for towing in December 2025. **SHAE HAMMOND — STAFF ARCHIVES**

"You would hope there would be some better way to handle this than treating people as something to throw out and push away, as opposed to our neighbors," Kushel said.

The scale of homelessness in the Bay

Area is massive. The most recent estimates clocked 9,500 homeless people in Alameda County and 10,700 in Santa Clara County, most commonly living in

See **RV** on Page A5

BIG SILICON VALLEY ISSUE

Rich have two bills to counter wealth tax

Foes of ballot measure say they have enough signatures to weaken or block the levy

By **Ethan Baron**
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Opponents of the proposed California Billionaire Tax Act ballot initiative say they have collected more than enough signatures to qualify two countermeasures that could weaken or block it, setting up a big-dollar November fight over further taxing the Golden State's richest residents that has divided Silicon Valley and the state's political class.

The billionaire tax, proposed by the Service Employees International Union-United Healthcare Workers West, would impose a one-time 5% levy on the net worth of California residents with more than \$1 billion in assets, with the money aimed at helping the state generate \$100 billion for healthcare in the face of federal cuts. The union said late last month that it had collected enough signatures to put the tax proposal before voters in November.

One of the countermeasures, the Retirement & Personal Savings Act, could effectively cancel out the billionaire tax if both measures passed and the savings measure received more votes. The proposal would ban retroactive taxes and new state taxes on personal assets.

Fighting against the tax proposal is a who's-who

See **TAX** on Page A5

A TEMPORARY MOVE

Access to abortion pill gets restored in high court order

By **Mark Sherman and Geoff Mulihill**
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court on Monday restored broad access to the abortion pill mifepristone, blocking a lower-court ruling that had threatened to upend one of the main ways abortions are provided across the nation.

The order signed by Justice Samuel Alito temporarily allows women seeking abortions to obtain the pill at pharmacies or through the mail, without an in-person visit to a doctor.

Those practices had been permitted for several years until a federal appeals court imposed new restrictions last week.

See **ABORTION** on Page A5

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WEATHER
H: 64-66 L: 51-55
Full report on **B8**



INDEX

Business C7
Classified A8, B5
Comics/TV B6
Local B1
Lottery A2
Obituaries B4

Volume %vol%, issue %issue%

Puzzles B2, C5
Sports C1
Weather B8



6 40493 00001 1