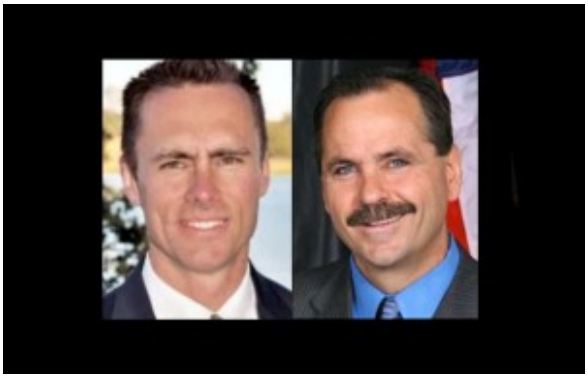
Editorial: Political prosecution in Nutting case



El Dorado County District Attorney Vern Pierson and county Supervisor Ray Nutting have long been adversaries.

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What does a political prosecution look like? Depending on your perspective, it might look like a peace protester thrown in jail for marching in the street. Or an evangelical Christian convicted of trespassing at an abortion clinic. Even the impeachment of a president for lying about cheating on his wife.

It also could look like Ray Nutting. Though the conservative four-term El Dorado County supervisor and timber rancher probably wouldn't enjoy the comparison, he is on trial for transgressions so common among elected officials that they are usually dispatched with a slap on the wrist and a fine.

His real crime appears to be occupying the wrong side of a political divide in this county – one that has deepened with the overzealous and politically motivated prosecution by

District Attorney Vern Pierson. The three-week trial has resulted in untold costs to the defendant – whose political career has been injured, perhaps fatally – the county, the jurors, the taxpayers and even the DA’s own credibility. No one is going to win here, no matter the ultimate verdict.

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