

Radical change is necessary



THE WREN COLLECTIVE, LLC

have worked with
elected **prosecutors**
all over the country

do this work without
any billing or publicity

These policies will
be yours, not ours

that's important
to **our funders**

could very easily mobilize massive
community action to support you

OUTSOURCING JUSTICE

How donors and activists control
progressive prosecutors and corrupt
the criminal justice system from within.



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Several prosecutors and their staff were especially helpful, transparent, and forthright in fulfilling their obligations under open records laws and deserve accolades for their cooperation.

ABOUT US

The Law Enforcement Legal Defense Fund (LELDF) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit dedicated to supporting and defending the law enforcement profession and those law enforcement officers who have devoted their lives to upholding the Constitution and serving the United States and its citizens while enforcing its laws. We also seek to educate the public about the many risks and threats to law enforcement personnel in order to build a more informed, respectful, and appreciative society.

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≡ **THE HILL**

National groups flooding local prosecutor races with money

LOCAL NEWS

Did DA Joe Gonzales violate campaign finance laws through relationship with Wren Collective? Expert weighs in.

Gonzales did not disclose campaign advice from Wren Collective on campaign finance reports

“If you’re thinking about changing the criminal legal system, you’re going to have to spend money.”

– Jessica Brand, founder of the Wren Collective (June 1, 2022)

Part 1

Introduction

Introduction

More than 100 progressive prosecutors were elected over the past decade (2015-2024). Of these, at least 60 district attorneys' campaigns received substantial financial backing from left-wing billionaire donors. George Soros alone spent over \$50 million on prosecutor races either as direct contributions or through independent expenditures while other progressive donors have spent tens of millions more to remake the criminal justice system.

But prior to taking office, many of these DAs had never managed an office, prosecuted a criminal case, developed organizational policies and procedures, worked with law enforcement partners, or had to communicate with the public or media.

If these progressive prosecutors aren't experienced in or particularly qualified for their roles, who is "guiding" their policies, actions, public relations strategies, and personnel decisions?

In dozens of America's largest cities and counties, this report finds these progressive district attorneys ("reform prosecutors") have outsourced core parts of the American criminal justice system to activists and political donors – taking direction and advice on everything from staffing decisions and communications strategy to prosecutorial policies and, in some instances, decisions on specific criminal cases.

While these district attorneys' links to donor-affiliated groups like Fair and Just Prosecution and Vera Institute are publicly known, one little known and secretive consultancy, The Wren Collective LLC, exerts undue influence on the criminal justice policies of these district attorneys – controlling messaging, writing policies on everything from bail to police involved shootings, and even interfering in homicide and police misconduct cases. Wren offers its consulting services to prosecutors for "free" because it is funded by the same donors who bankrolled their client-prosecutors' campaigns.

Based on public information requests (totaling over 50,000 pages of emails and text messages), campaign finance filings and tax documents, this study demonstrates a handful of left-wing social justice organizations, with significant ties to campaign donors, hold immense influence over these prosecutors through The Wren Collective's consulting service.

Records: Wren Collective behind controversial Portland protest policy

Policy that dismissed hundreds of charges against protesters instituted 18 days after Wren forwarded it to Multnomah County district attorney

The Wren Collective drafted Portland DA Mike Schmidt's policy to not prosecute rioters [via KSAT TV, March 22, 2024]

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Jessica Brand <jessica.brand@wrencollective.com>

Date: December 9, 2020 at 5:13:01 PM CST

To: rachael rollins > "A. Donell"

> Lawrence Krasner
 Marilyn Mosby
 > Mike Schmidt
 > Stephanie
 Morales > Pansa Taff
 John Creuzot
 Joe Gonzales
 Brian Middleton
 Jose Garza
 Chesa Boudin
 George Gascon
 Jody Owens
 Beth McCann

"Dougherty, Michael"
Subject: Amicus Brief Filed- and thank you

Wren thanked Soros-backed DAs for signing onto its amicus brief. Copied is "A. Donnell" (Orlando's Aramis Ayala) whose husband sits on Wren's board.

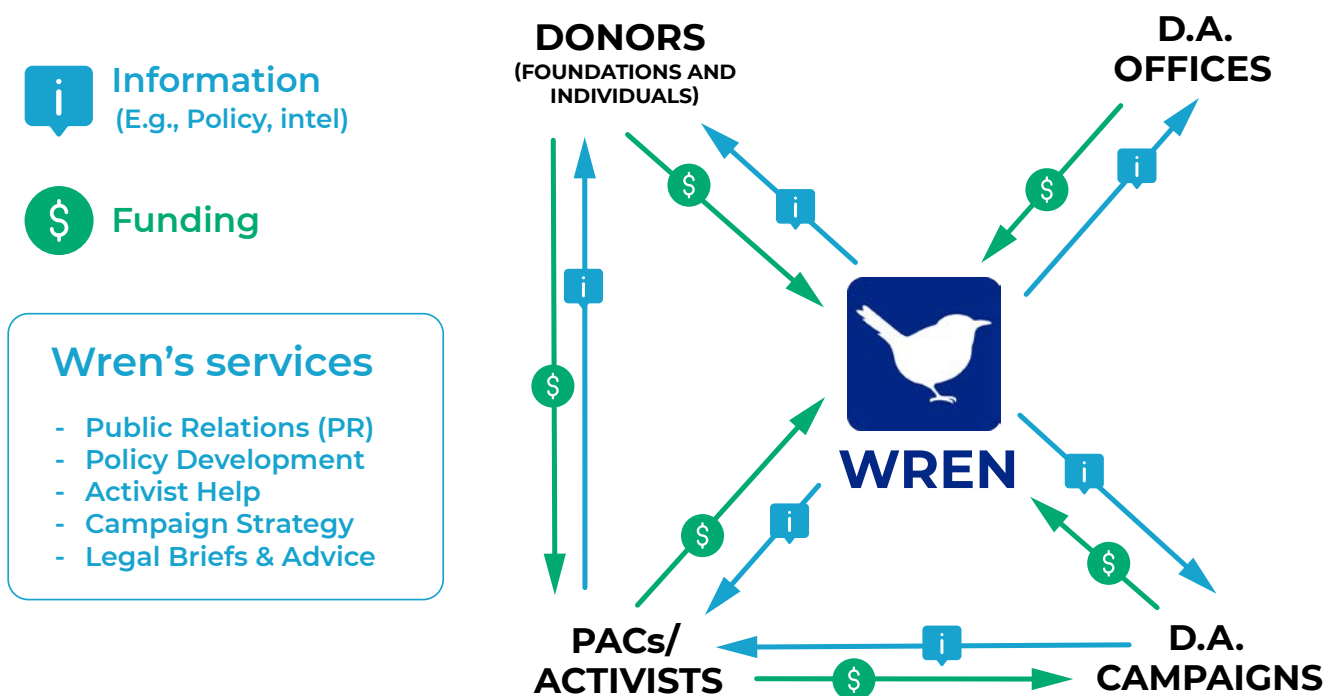
Findings

Donors and activists exert behind the scenes control over the offices of 40 progressive prosecutors – shaping their policies, public communications, and legal decisions. The private consulting group The Wren Collective LLC provides “free” policy, media, and legal support to district attorneys underwritten and recommended by the same prosecutors’ campaign donors and political allies. Wren then drives the donors’ criminal justice policy agenda.

Based on more than 20 public record request disclosures, tax forms and campaign filings, this report demonstrates the nature, scale, and scope of The Wren Collective’s corruptive influence on justice policy under progressive prosecutors.

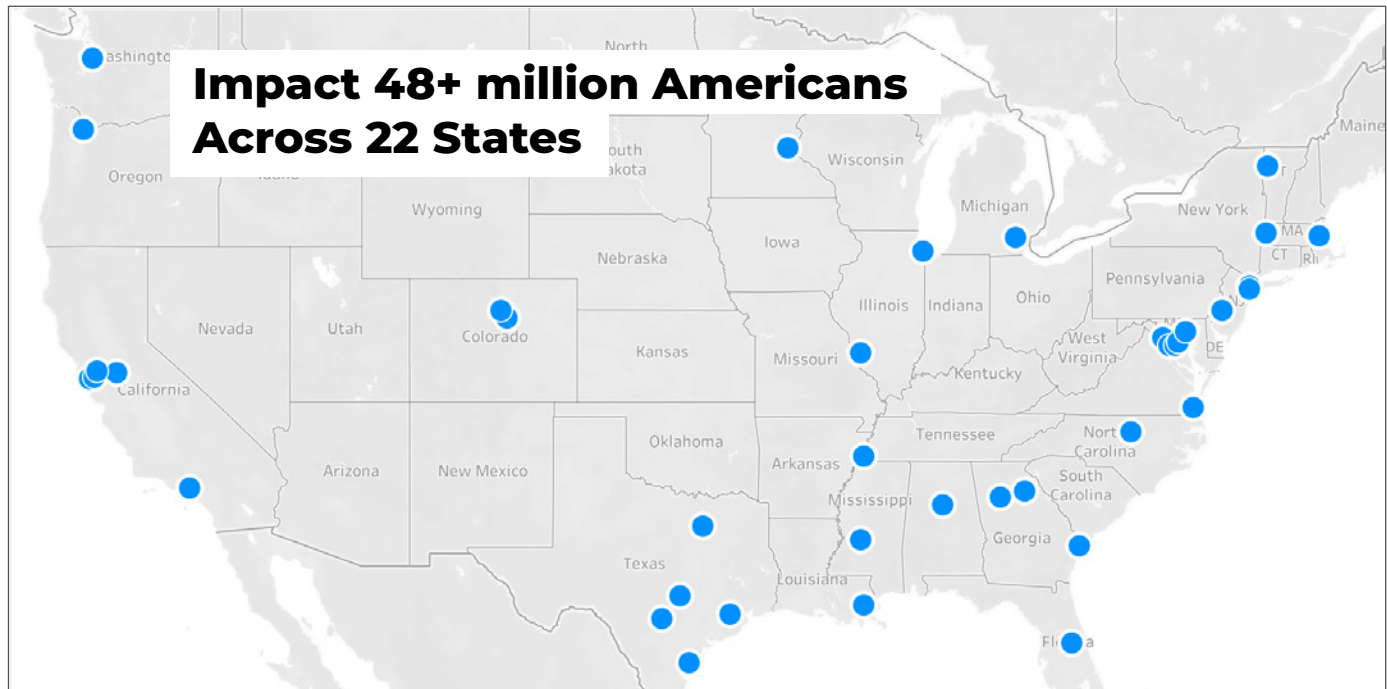
The Wren Collective LLC:

- Exerts influence over 40+ elected district attorneys 22 states, impacting 48 million Americans;
- Consults with prosecutors in secret, working “without publicity or billing”;
- Coordinates prosecutors’ policies and legal strategies with shared donors and activist supporters;
- Serves as campaign consultant to prosecutors and their allied PACs;
- Develops and implements prosecutorial policies on sentencing, probation, death penalty etc.;
- Crafts public and media communications including press releases, op-eds, and interviews;
- Intervenes in criminal case decisions and drives legal strategies;
- Earns millions in grants and fees from activists, campaigns, and left-wing billionaires; and
- Accepts taxpayer-funded sole-source contracts after previously offering “free” services.



Wren's Hatchlings:

40 Wren Collective-Linked Progressive Prosecutors



Steve Mulroy
(Memphis, TN)

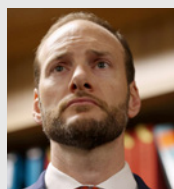
Listed Wren Collective as part of his "Partnerships+Collaborations" in his 2022-23 annual report.



Sarah George
(Burlington, VT)

Worked with Wren to "mimic" its model policy decriminalizing prostitution.

*Prosecutors identified via direct contact with The Wren Collective or its forerunner (The Justice Collaborative) where official staff received communications, policy, or legal strategy advice.



Chesa Boudin
(San Francisco, CA)

Held weekly "comms huddle-up" calls with Wren, donors, and official staff.



George Gascon
(Los Angeles, CA)

Hired Wren for \$180,000 in 2023 after Wren provided "donated services" in 2022.

See methodology section for more information on sources.

See Appendix for full list.

Population estimates based on 2020 US Census data for each jurisdiction.



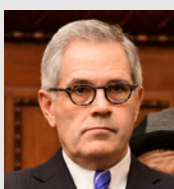
Mary Moriarty
(Minneapolis, MN)

Paid Wren \$150,000 as communications consultant to fight "misinformation."



José Garza
(Austin, TX)

Entered into a non-disclosure agreement to work with Wren in 2022. It was signed by Garza's top deputy and Brand's former colleague, Trudy Strassburger.



Larry Krasner
(Philadelphia, PA)

Paid Wren as an advisor to his campaign, and official office while Wren worked for Real Justice PAC, which was later fined for illegally coordinating with both of Krasner's campaigns.



Monique Worrell
(Orlando, FL)

Allowed Wren to access confidential case files on a murder case, including witness statements. Worrell then declined charges.

About The Wren Collective LLC

- Operates as a privately-held company run by former public defender Jessica Brand.
- Launched in 2020 as successor to Brand's prior consultancy, The Justice Collaborative (TJC).
- Utilizes a former pro-Soviet film charity to obscure funding sources.
- Works as a campaign and PAC consultant for progressive prosecutors' races.
- Provides "free" policy, communications, and legal advice to district attorneys' offices.
- Embedded in at least 40 prosecutors' offices as outside consultants.
- Received grants from prosecutors' campaign donors and allies to drive official acts including prosecutorial policies, media and public relations, and legal strategy.
- Funded by foundations and groups backed by billionaires George Soros, Cari Tuna, John Arnold, and Stacy Schusterman.



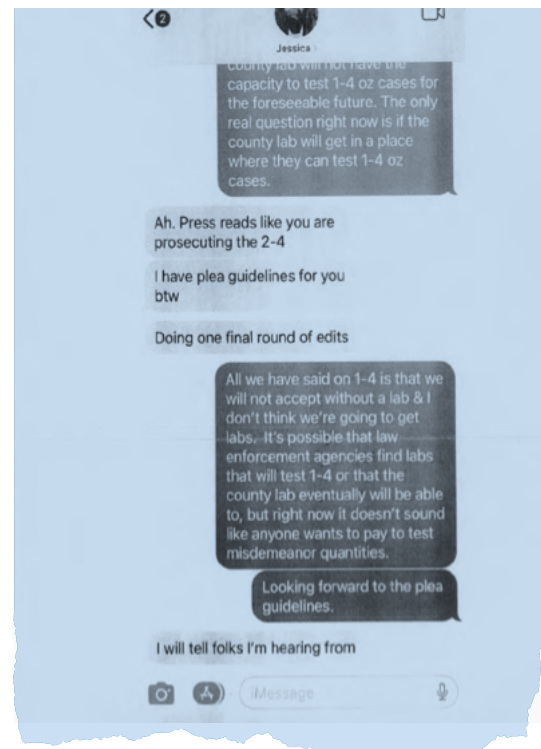
Former public defender Jessica Brand founded for-profit consultancy The Wren Collective LLC in 2020.

Wren Shapes Policy

- Leads monthly “progressive policy calls” with the senior policy staff in 30+ district attorneys’ offices, driving policy decisions and strategy.
- Exerts direct influence, drafting and implementing prosecutorial strategy:
 - **Bail and Pretrial Detention Policy:** Wren wrote the model policy for the progressive Virginia prosecutors (Commonwealth’s Attorneys), drafted the final policy for Texas DAs in Bexar County (San Antonio) and Travis (Austin) and Florida’s Orange-Osceola Counties (Orlando).
 - **Brady Policy:** Wren drafted the far-reaching policy to de facto exclude law enforcement from testifying based on tenuous and unsubstantiated claims of misconduct for Orlando’s prosecutor, Aramis Ayala, who is now head of the progressive prosecutor group and Wren partner, Fair and Just Prosecution (FJP).
 - **Prostitution Policy:** Wren’s model policy, presented to over 50 progressive prosecutors at an FJP conference, was used by district attorneys in Alameda County (Oakland), California as well as Chittenden County (Burlington), Vermont, saying they planned to “mimic” Wren’s language.
- **Protester/Rioter Policy:** Mike Schmidt, district attorney for Multnomah County (Portland), Oregon adopted a Wren-authored policy to not prosecute left-wing rioters in that city despite widespread violence and vandalism.
- **Charging, Sentencing, and Plea-Bargaining Guidelines:** Wren wrote the guidelines for the district attorneys in Austin and San Antonio, both of whose campaigns Wren advised. These guidelines substantially reduced penalties sought and the number of prosecutions in those jurisdictions while crime skyrocketed.
- **Drug Courts, Diversion, and Non-Prosecution:** Wren designed and implemented policies promoting the non-prosecution of drug crimes for the prosecutor in Loudoun County, Virginia.
- **Overturning Convictions:** Prosecutors in Texas consulted with Wren and adopted their approach to releasing convicted criminals via “Conviction Integrity Units” designed to uncover new evidence, undermine previous prosecutors’ integrity, and circumvent the appeals process.



Burlington VT DA Sarah George planned to “mimic” Wren’s policy to decriminalize prostitution in 2023.



Wren’s Jessica Brand texts with top deputy for San Antonio’s DA promising “plea guidelines” and discussing marijuana prosecution.

How One Email Explains It All

On Tue, Jun 16, 2020 at 5:29 PM Amy Weber amy.weber@wrencollective.com wrote:

Mike and Aaron--

It was great speaking with you today.

Attached are two model policies (probation and bail) that we wrote for Virginia commonwealth attorneys.

While these aren't specific to any particular office, they are tailored to Virginia law. We thought these would give you the best idea of what we have to offer. Let me know if you have any questions about it.

In addition to assistance with staffing issues, office organization, and communications support during policy roll-out and in times of crisis, we have written and could help with policies in the following areas:

1. Bail
2. Diversion/Declination
3. Intake
4. Probation
5. Plea guidelines
6. Fines and Fees
7. Prosecutions related to policing
8. Brady (related to officer misconduct) and "do not call" or exclusion lists
9. Conviction integrity or sentencing review units
10. Juvenile transfer
11. Felony and Misdemeanor case backlog

We could also help develop a plan for the Ramos cases, or whatever else you think you will need.

I imagine that Dave will need some information about the scope of our involvement, so let us know what areas you'd like our help with, even potentially.

We should have mentioned this as well -- we do this work without any billing or publicity. These policies will be yours, not ours. We are just here to help you figure out how to implement meaningful changes to the criminal justice system in Portland.

Looking forward to it!
Amy

Email from Amy Weber, a senior attorney under Jessica Brand at the social justice group The Wren Collective, which advises progressive prosecutors on communications, policy, and legal matters.

Multnomah County (Portland) DA-elect Mike Schmidt and chief policy advisor Aaron Knott.

Wren boasts that it wrote the model policies abolishing bail and reducing jail populations adopted by Soros funded DAS (e.g., Fairfax, Arlington, and Loudoun counties).

Wren provides a full suite of back office and core services to prosecutors to implement their prosecutorial agenda.

Wren offers a library of "off the shelf" model policies, which they adapt to the respective jurisdictions on demand for their prosecutor-clients to adopt verbatim.

"Dave" is David Menschel, a campaign donor to Schmidt and allied PACs as well as president of the Vital Projects Fund, a major donor to Wren's fiscal sponsor. In a later email, Wren insists that Schmidt provide a "scope of work" they can give their shared donor Menschel as proof of their role.

Wren conducts its consulting behind-the-scenes and provides its services to prosecutors for "free" but answers to shared donors.

Publicly, Wren disclaims all ownership of its policies but privately Wren advertises its policy influence and touts to prospective clients that it is "embedded ... across the country and looking to expand"

Wren Controls the Message

- Led weekly communications calls with DA offices (e.g., San Francisco's Chesa Boudin).
- Provided crisis communications advice to Loudoun's Buta Biberaj on the high-profile transgender bathroom sexual assault case.
- Managed CNN journalist Audie Cornish's interview with Austin DA José Garza.
- Wrote communications strategies, press releases, talking points, and op-eds for prosecutors in Virginia, Texas, California and Philadelphia.
- Misrepresented itself to the media as outside third-party regarding its client prosecutors.

From: Jessica Brand <jessica.brand@wrencollective.com>
Date: June 6, 2022 at 7:58:08 PM CDT
To: Jessica Brand <jessica.brand@wrencollective.com>
Subject: Talking points on recall

As many of you know, tomorrow is the SF recall. It has been bankrolled by extremely wealthy republicans, but Chesa is in the fight. It is possible we won't know the results tomorrow.

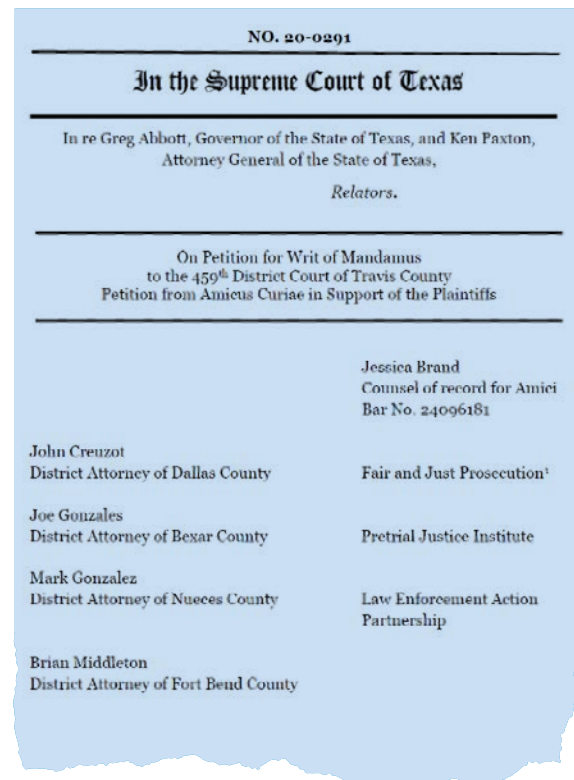
Win or lose, I imagine you will get a number of questions about the recall and its implications. Attached are some suggested talking points for either scenario- win or lose- in case they are helpful. Please let us know if there is anything that you need.

Thanks for all you do,
 Wren

Wren sends mass email directly to progressive DAs with "win or lose" talking points before 2022 Chesa Boudin recall.

Wren Drives Courtroom Decisions

- Intervened directly and advised on specific case decisions (i.e., San Antonio police decisions, an Orlando homicide, and death penalty cases and is provided access to confidential, non-public criminal case files.
- Devises and executes legal strategies for district attorneys to push and defend progressive criminal justice reform in the courts, writing lawsuits, appeals, and amicus curiae briefs, often serving as Counsel of Record on the cases.
 - Prosecutorial Discretion (Los Angeles' George Gascon & Loudoun's Buta Biberaj)
 - Bail Policy (Texas' Travis, Bexar, Dallas Counties etc.)
- Arranged outside counsel for district attorneys' litigation (Bexar, Travis and Orlando).



Soros-funded Texas DAs sign amicus written by Wren challenging Texas bail law.

Wren's Donors Interfere in Prosecutors' Offices

- Prolific donor to progressive prosecutors' campaigns and head of Vital Projects Fund, David Menschel, referred Wren to Portland's Mike Schmidt as policy advisors and required the district attorney to provide him with a "scope of work" before Wren could "get started."
- Real Justice PAC arranged and directed (with Wren's help) the creation of Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation commissions for the district attorneys in San Francisco, Philadelphia and Suffolk County (Boston), Massachusetts – all beneficiaries of Real Justice's campaign support.
- Smart Justice California, a major donor to California's progressive prosecutors George Gascon (Los Angeles), Chesa Boudin (San Francisco), Diana Becton (Contra Costa), directly coordinated on policy with each office and Wren Collective (or TJC).
- Wren directly referred the Schusterman Foundation, whose president is a major Garza donor, to Garza's office to coordinate on the "prosecutor comms project" which Schusterman was funding via Wren.



Wren holds briefing with prosecutor donor groups (Smart Justice), Marxist professor Angela Davis, attorney (Michael Satin) opposing recall petition against Austin DA Jose Garza,

A Revolving Door Between Wren, Donors, Activists, and Prosecutors

- Travis County's First Assistant District Attorney Trudy Strassburger (2021-Present) previously worked for The Justice Collaborative under Jessica Brand who worked on the district attorney's campaign for the Real Justice PAC. Strassburger is now board secretary of Real Justice PAC's parent organization, The Grassroots Law Project, which employs The Wren Collective as a consultant.
- Rebecca Silber is now the Chief Operating Officer at The Wren Collective. Previously, Silber was the criminal justice director at Arnold Ventures which steered over \$500,000 to The Wren Collective under her watch. Before Arnold Ventures, Silber worked for the Vera Institute, a nonprofit that coordinates closely with Wren and progressive prosecutors and often crosses the line into political activity despite being largely funded by taxpayer grants.
- Christian Hendricksen who served as Bexar County District Attorney's Joe Gonzales' campaign treasurer also worked as his chief deputy prosecutor where he regularly coordinated with Jessica Brand and The Wren Collective on policy, legal, and communications decisions. After Gonzales' ties to Wren became public in 2024, the DA blamed Hendricksen and Hendricksen left to be a prosecutor under Strassburger in Austin, Texas.



Bexar County DA Joe Gonzales's top deputy resigned to work under Jessica Brand's former colleague Trudy Strassburger at the Austin DA's office, a fellow Wren client.

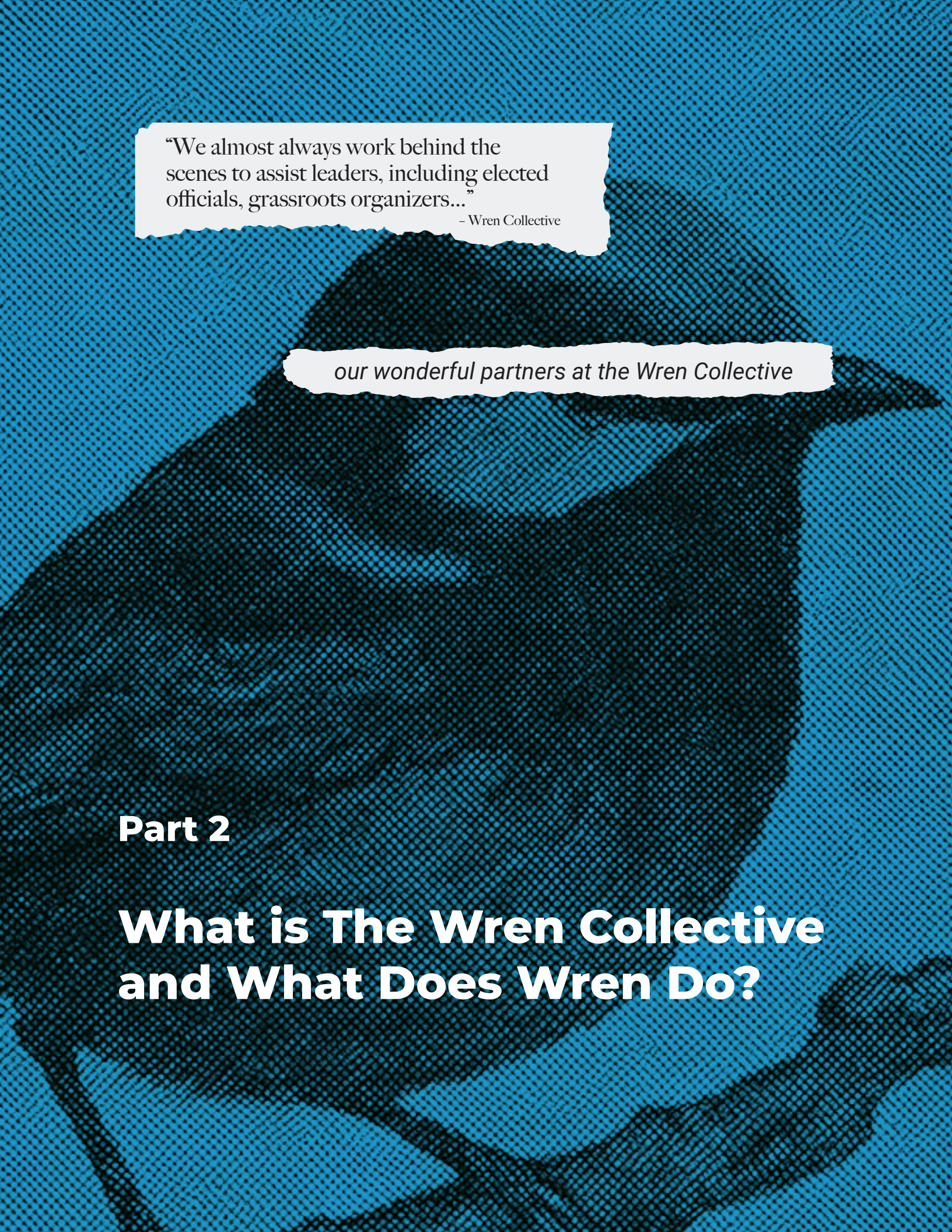
Prosecutors' Offices Block Transparency in Wren Dealings

- 20+ prosecutors utilize personal emails and devices, including in dealings with Wren
- San Antonio's district attorney expressly directed Brand to use his personal email because his staff could read his official emails.
- Numerous prosecutor offices actively obstructed the disclosure of public records by:
 - Excluding known relevant emails which were disclosed in other jurisdictions' releases (Arlington County, Virginia and Hinds County, Mississippi);
 - Denying requests on nebulous grounds (Philadelphia's general counsel claimed the request lack 'specificity' despite other public records staff's written assurance release would be fulfilled);
 - Charging excessive fees for processing (Bexar County changed its cost estimate from \$228 to \$14,478 to fulfill the request);
 - Failing to acknowledge the receipt of a request for weeks, requiring repeated follow-up;
 - Dragging out fulfillment for months via repeated extensions, beyond the statutorily required window (Manhattan's DA missed its own deadlines for extension notice, then extended again despite required fulfillment timelines under state law);
 - Delaying compliance by seeking exemption appeals to state officials (Dallas and Travis Counties requested an Attorney General appeal which resets timelines for review and allows the district attorneys themselves to select "representative samples" for exemption review); and
 - Redacting most or entire email exchanges or withholding documents with third parties (Wren etc.) that are not allowable exemptions.

We have determined that complying with your request will result in the imposition of a charge that exceeds \$40. Therefore, we are providing you with this cost estimate as required by Texas Government Code § 552.2615. In order to comply with your request as written, we estimate that it will cost **\$14,478.00**.

Because the estimated charges exceed \$100.00, Section 552.263(a) allows Bexar County to require a full deposit before starting work on any portion of your request. After the deposit is paid and the work is completed, an updated statement will be prepared showing actual final costs to satisfy your request. If the actual costs are more than \$10 higher than your deposit, then you will be required to pay the full balance of costs owed before you receive the copies. If the actual costs are less than your deposit, then the unused amount will be refunded to you.

Bexar County District Attorney's Office initially estimated a cost of \$228 to fulfill LELDF's request then abruptly changed it to \$14,478 – after receiving first payment.



“We almost always work behind the scenes to assist leaders, including elected officials, grassroots organizers...”

– Wren Collective

our wonderful partners at the Wren Collective

Part 2

What is The Wren Collective and What Does Wren Do?

Finding Wren

In the fall of 2023, Erica Hernandez, a reporter for San Antonio's KSAT television, received a tip to "look into" The Wren Collective's communications with Bexar County District Attorney Joe Gonzales.¹

The subsequent public records request showed that The Wren Collective was in regular communication with San Antonio's prosecutor and his senior staff. Wren coordinated activist groups' support, secured grant funding for office programs, wrote legal briefs and appeals, steered media coverage (i.e., providing press releases, op-eds, and talking points), developed and implemented prosecutorial policies, and pushed for charges in a police shooting and to drop the death penalty in another case. Yet, The Wren Collective did all its work free-of-charge and without a public contract.²

After the story broke in January 2024, Gonzales first feigned ignorance and then downplayed Wren's role, before blaming his top deputy Christian Hendricksen, who departed months later for a more junior role in the Austin prosecutor's office under former Jessica Brand colleague Trudy Strassburger.³

As KSAT and other local news outlets kept digging, the Bexar County commission pressed the issue, the elected sheriff wrote a "cease and desist" to Gonzales for providing his private communications to Wren, judges went public with concerns, and the defense lawyers in the police shooting case successfully petitioned for all related Wren communications.⁴

Gonzales had been elected in 2018 and re-elected in 2022, as a "reform" prosecutor with substantial campaign support from progressive activists' PACs. Meanwhile, Wren and Brand have close ties to, and are funded by, the same Gonzales' donors and supporters, and coordinated with them on the DA's behalf.⁵

Reporters later discovered Wren working closely with other district attorneys' offices in Austin and Portland, Oregon.⁶

According to public records, The Wren Collective is a for-profit company, registered as a limited liability company (LLC) based in Austin, Texas. It is not a non-profit under the IRS tax code and does not have 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(4) status.⁷ Yet, it receives grants from charitable organizations and uses a dot-org web address (wrencollective.org). Wren identifies itself as both a "company" and the "fiscally sponsored project" of a listed non-profit, Social Environmental Entrepreneurs (SEE).⁸

This complicated and sometimes contradictory structure creates confusion as to what exactly Wren is, what it does, and who funds it. Its structure as a for-profit entity means that

Wren's tax filings are not public and as a fiscally sponsored project of the group SEE, Wren's sources of grant funding are obscured since it utilizes a charitable passthrough.

That opacity benefits Wren since its work has gone largely unnoticed since its founding in 2020 by a former federal public defender and criminal justice activist, Jessica Brand. But campaign finance documents, public records requests, and third-party disclosures shine a light on Wren's activities and funding.

In its 2023 application for a sole source contract with the Los Angeles County District Attorney's office, The Wren Collective described itself as "providing research, policy, and communications expertise to elected officials, grassroots organizers, athletes and public figures who are leading the movement to transform our criminal legal system."⁹ That transformation is meant to "dramatically decrease the legal system's footprint" and replace "ineffective and often disingenuous solutions to crime and safety."¹⁰

Wren's website, which once insisted that "radical change is necessary," doesn't spell out those solutions but its founder and former federal public defender, Jessica Brand, has repeatedly called the justice system "racist" and "carceral."¹¹ Both publicly and privately, Brand and Wren have pushed the elimination of bail, mandatory minimum sentences, and the death penalty and non-prosecution of violent protesters, shoplifters, and drug offenses.¹² In interviews, Brand also frequently blames Republicans, police unions, and media scare tactics for any and all criticism of the progressive prosecutors' policies – the same policies Wren helped to develop and implement for its district attorney clients.¹³

Wren grew out of Brand's professional background as a public defender in Washington, DC and Texas, advisor and legal counsel to activist groups including Fair Punishment Project, Fair and Just Prosecution (FJP), The Justice Collaborative (TJC), and consultant to prosecutors' election campaigns.¹⁴

Our system of policing and mass incarceration is deeply flawed and intractably racist. How we address these issues—how we shrink a sprawling system that serves little measurable crime-reducing purpose but causes substantial harm to individuals, family members, and communities—is not an easy question. The Wren Collective is a team of former public defenders with deep technical, research, and communications expertise who help individuals and organizations achieve the changes they seek to criminal justice and policing.

Wren's self-description, posted on its website circa 2021-2023, calls justice system "intractably racist."

A Free Full-Service Consulting Firm

The Wren Collective functions as a boutique management and strategy consulting firm – offering services and advice to its clients ranging from the granular to grand strategy. Unlike McKinsey's and Booz Allen Hamilton's approach, Wren is narrowly focused on its niche sector – criminal justice reform, especially work with progressive prosecutors. Their stable of legal experts – which Brand touted in 2022 as having “over 85 years combined work in the criminal legal system” – offer a suite of services including:

- Public relations and communications work;
- Research and data analysis;
- Coordinating and drafting legal briefs;
- Organizational and staffing management; and
- Policy development and implementation.

And Wren is no McKinsey, which has clear conflicts of interest policies to prevent “any perceived or actual conflict” including institutional, business, financial, staffing, and hiring conflicts. In fact, The Wren Collective's conflicts (“connections”) of interest are its business model.¹⁶

In its private business pitches to prospective prosecutor-clients, Wren bragged it has “already embedded in several offices across the country” and “worked with elected prosecutors all over the country.”¹⁷ To date, Wren (and its forerunner, TJC) can count at least 40 elected prosecutors as clients.

But prosecutors' offices are not Wren's true “clients.” District attorneys are the tools Wren uses to attain the ends of its donor-activist benefactors. That true purpose, “to transform the criminal legal system,” is achieved by shaping or altogether promoting, defending, and implementing a preferred policy agenda through prosecutors' actions. In fact, Wren's activities, as it has claimed, do make it a “unique” consultancy (“the only company in the United States with this depth of experience”) in the sense that it so directly coordinates prosecutors' campaigns and offices with nonprofit and political donors, outside activist groups, and political action committees.

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE QUARTERLY DONATED GIFTS REPORT FOR SECOND QUARTER 2022

Date	Donor Name	Donor Address	Donation Description	Amount	Total Value
April	The Wren Collective, a fiscally sponsored project of Social and Environmental Entrepreneurs	23564 Calabasas Road, Suite 201 Calabasas, CA 91302	Research and communications support	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
April	Hogan Lovells US LLP	Columbia Square 555 Thirteenth Street, NW Washington, DC 20004-1109	Professional Services, Filing Fees, and Reprographic Charges	\$21,079.00	\$21,079.00
May	The Wren Collective, a fiscally sponsored project of Social and Environmental Entrepreneurs	23564 Calabasas Road, Suite 201 Calabasas, CA 91302	Research and communications support	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00

Wren “donated” its research and communications support to George Gascon's office in 2022 for \$5,000/month before seeking a contract for \$15,000/month in 2023.

“Wren is the only company in the United States with this depth of experience in the criminal justice system coupled with their experience providing this specified support on communications issues”¹⁵

Wren Proposal for sole source vendor contract with LA DA George Gascon (2022-2023).

Loudoun County (Virginia)

On June 13, 2022, an attorney named Amy Weber wrote an email soliciting work from a prospective client. But the email was not addressed to a business or even a government contracting office but directly to Buta Biberaj, the elected prosecutor of Loudoun County, Virginia. The controversial Ms. Biberaj had been elected in 2019 with the help of billionaire George Soros, whose political action committees spent over \$900,000 backing her election.¹⁸

Stranger still, Weber was offering to “assist reform-minded prosecutors with communications and messaging,” adding “this help comes at no cost to you or your office” because Weber’s organization The Wren Collective received a grant to do so.

Weber noted, “We are already embedded in several [prosecutors’] offices across the country and are looking to expand.”¹⁹

So, The Wren Collective, a for-profit limited liability company (LLC), sought new “clients” for its free services by boasting that it was already ensconced in several other district attorney offices around the United States.

Three months later, another attorney at The Wren Collective renewed their pitch to Loudoun County’s prosecutor “wondering if you would like some communications support?” regarding the Scott Smith case – the father whose daughter was sexually assaulted in a girls’ high school bathroom by a biological male in a dress and vocal critic of Ms. Biberaj’s approach to the case.²⁰ Biberaj was removed from prosecuting Mr. Smith’s disorderly conduct charges for impartiality concerns.²¹

Biberaj replied, “Yes, I would.” Then Wren and Biberaj set up a phone call the next day and subsequently agreed to partner on policy programs.

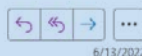
But who was funding Wren’s work and why?

The answer paints a picture of a justice system corrupted by money, influence-peddling, and conflicts of interest. Prosecutors’ campaign donors are paying outside consultants to drive their radical criminal justice agenda inside district attorneys’ offices – determining and executing communications strategy and designing and implementing legal and policy decisions.

[EXTERNAL] Communications assistance?



Amy Weber <amy.weber@wrencollective.com>
To: DEPT-COMMATT-COMMONWEALTHS_ATTORNEY



6/13/2022

You forwarded this message on 6/13/2022 2:31 PM.

Dear Commonwealth Attorney Biberaj:

I'm hoping you remember me -- we met when I was an attorney at The Justice Collaborative. TJC sponsored a retreat for all the newly-elected CAs in Virginia back in December of 2019, where we all talked about policy and other issues for a couple of days. My colleague at TJC, Jessica Brand, and I are now working at a new organization, The Wren Collective.

Wren currently has a grant to assist reform-minded prosecutors with communications and messaging. We are already embedded in several offices across the country and are looking to expand. The help comes at no cost to you or your office. We'd like to work with you if you think it would be helpful.

Let me know if you are interested in exploring the opportunity. You can email me at this address or call or message me at the number listed below. I can set up an initial meeting with you and our team to discuss what services we may be able to provide.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon,
Amy

Amy Weber
The Wren Collective
wrencollective.org
(305) 793-7321

On Sep 19, 2022, at 1:51 PM, Henna Khan
<henna.khan@wrencollective.com> wrote:

Hi Buta,

I hope you're doing ok. We saw the news around the Scott Smith case and were wondering if you would like some communications support? Please let us know if there is anything we can do to help you at this time.

Sincerely,
Henna

Already “embedded” across the country, Wren’s Amy Weber solicited prosecutor-client Buta Biberaj, offering help “at no cost to you or your office.” A grant paid for their work.

Wren’s Henna Khan offers crisis communications help to Loudoun’s Biberaj for the transgender bathroom rape case. Biberaj was prosecuting the victim’s father (Smith).

How Wren Drives Prosecutors' Messaging

Wren usually describes itself as a communications firm – aiding criminal justice reform groups and leaders with public image and media relations matters. But the extent of the media services that Wren provides is staggering – ostensibly at “no cost” to prosecutors and the taxpayers.

In San Antonio's Bexar County, Jessica Brand, first while at TJC until 2020 and then with Wren, acted as district attorney Joe Gonzales' shadow communications director and senior advisor – despite others holding those roles on public payroll.

Based on what media outlets and this report obtained via public records requests, Brand exchanged thousands of text messages and hundreds of emails with Gonzales and his chief deputy, Christian Hendricksen, who doubled as his campaign treasurer.²²

The documents show that Brand frequently devised media opportunities, drafted op-eds, orchestrated press conferences, managed print and television interviews and even backchanneled to reporters as an unofficial representative of Gonzales. Brand offered advice on how to spin the news about San Antonio's rising crime (homicides rose dramatically in Gonzales' first term). She then drafted an op-ed boosting Gonzales, which was later printed in the *San Antonio Express-News* as if it were the organic product of the political activist and donor group that Wren tasked with “authoring” the puff piece.

Wren also helped organize office-specific communications strategy calls with its various prosecutor clients – holding a regular “Weekly Huddle Up Call” with San Francisco's Chesa Boudin and his team and holding frequent meetings with prosecutors and their senior staff on communications issues in various jurisdictions (e.g., Austin, San Antonio, Philadelphia, and across Virginia) writing op-eds, press releases, and making press introductions.

When CNN reached out to interview Austin DA José Garza in November 2022, Garza told his official team “Happy to do it and we should loop in Jess [Brand of Wren Collective] asap.”²³ Brand then led Garza's interview preparation.

Months after Fairfax County Virginia's Commonwealth's Attorney Steve Descano won a contested primary in 2023, all but securing his re-election in the deep blue county, his communications director reached out to Wren's Jessica Brand hoping to get penciled in for the “last spot” available to consult with Wren. Despite being in such high demand, Brand managed to pencil in Descano's team. Together, Descano and his senior leadership team joined Wren to sketch out a policy and communications strategy for the progressive prosecutor's second term. Wren's plan included placing an op-ed in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* on his legislative priority to ban ‘ghost guns.’ It was printed – on schedule – in January 2024.²⁴

From: Jessica Brand <jessica.brand@wrencollective.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 28, 2023 11:09 PM
To: Birnbaum, Laura <Laura.Birnbaum@fairfaxcounty.gov>
Subject: Re: CA Descano - meeting on second term planning

Of course. Do you want to send over some times the week of July 10th?

On Wed, Jun 28, 2023 at 9:44 AM Birnbaum, Laura <Laura.Birnbaum@fairfaxcounty.gov> wrote:

Hi Jessica,

I hope you're doing well. I'm working with Ben Shnider and Kyle Manikas on planning for Steve Descano's second term. Now that the filing deadline has passed and we are running unopposed in November, we have a real opportunity to plan creatively and hope to make the most of it.

Can we find time to meet to discuss some of these plans and initiatives? We would appreciate your input as well as other recommendations for big and bold ideas.

Let me know a few times that might work for you in the coming weeks.

Thanks so much,
 Laura

The communications director for Fairfax VA's Soros-funded prosecutor Steve Descano seeks a meeting for “big and bold ideas” on policy and communications.

Call: Chesa Comms Huddle Up call

When **Changed:** Weekly from 11am to 12pm on Thursday from Thu Jan 21 to Wed Jan 27
 Los Angeles

Where 415-524-4320 no pin ([map](#))

Calendar kelsey.russom@sfgov.org

Who

- anne@smartjusticeca.org - organizer
- amy@smartjusticeca.org - creator
- chesaboudin@gmail.com
- amy.weber@wrencollective.com
- kelsey.russom@sfgov.org
- newmandan@gmail.com
- rachel.marshall@gmail.com
- kosha.tucker@wrencollective.com
- jessica.brand@wrencollective.com
- kate.chatfield@thejusticecollaborative.com
- irene@smartjusticeca.org

San Francisco's DA Chesa Boudin (using his personal account) held weekly communications meetings with Wren, his donors (Smart Justice), and official staff.

Wren Talks to Press About Its Clients But Fails to Disclose Ties

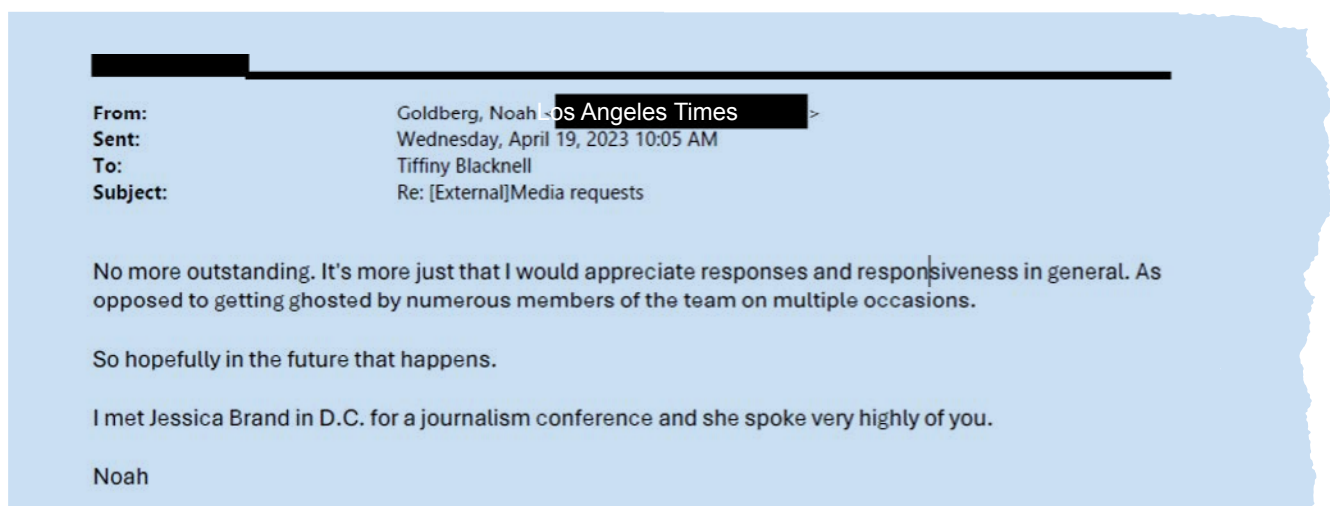
Even as Wren actively consulted with a specific progressive prosecutor, they would write op-eds and give media interviews as if they were not involved in the day-to-day operations of the prosecutor's campaign or office. Despite being embedded in Chesa Boudin's office, Brand gave repeated interviews to local media about the San Francisco district attorney without disclosing her relationship to Boudin, even filing a bar complaint against his political adversary and successor, with The Wren Collective being described simply as "an education and policy organization made up of former public defenders."²⁵ Other outlets identify Wren as "advising reform prosecutors" but almost never specify whether the prosecutor in question is also a Wren client.²⁶

And Brand occasionally allows these sins of omission to veer into sins of commission like when NPR identified Brand as a "former prosecutor and founder of The Wren Collective, a criminal justice nonprofit."²⁷ In fact, Brand has never been a prosecutor. And that 2022 interview on Texas' abortion law omitted that Brand was busy drafting legal challenges to the statute to be signed by her prosecutor clients.²⁸

Similarly, the *Orlando Sentinel* interviewed Brand as an "expert" regarding Monique Worrell and Florida Governor Ron DeSantis' feud, without disclosing she was privately advising her.²⁹



Brand texts Bexar County DA office, offering to blame national GOP for the prosecutor's woes to reporter "on background" to influence coverage. Staff gives a "thumbs up."



LA Times reporter relates how Wren praised Gascon's communications director, oblivious that Brand was on the DA's payroll, hired by Blacknell herself.

“Wonderful Partners” To a Progressive Prosecutor Network

Wren’s one-on-one services (free or otherwise) also frequently came to the attention of progressive prosecutors through Fair and Just Prosecution who engaged Wren on dozens of projects and initiatives, including as frequent featured speakers at their quarterly progressive prosecutor conferences. Wren and Brand, who drafted and served as counsel on dozens of FJP legal briefs on behalf of progressive prosecutors including her direct clients, provided Fair and Just Prosecution with its public relations and communications expertise so often that FJP’s founder and executive director Miriam Krinsky took to referring to The Wren Collective as “our wonderful partners” in his mass emails to its progressive prosecutor network.³⁰

Wren also acted as a stage manager for FJP projects including organizing photoshoots and interviews surrounding a new book series profiling progressive prosecutors. Burling-

ton, Vermont’s Sarah George coordinated with Wren’s Brand and Amy Weber to produce her publicity materials for the FJP profile.³¹

In other instances, Krinsky employed Wren Collective to lead projects on behalf of FJP. In 2022, Wren wrote talking points for Virginia prosecutors pushing back on the GOP governor’s moves to limit the prosecutorial discretion (of Wren’s clients).³² Wren followed up by producing op-eds to be signed by FJP’s other Virginia prosecutor-members and eventually drafted and submitted amicus briefs backing progressive prosecutors’ powers to choose what laws to enforce – all under the FJP umbrella.

Wren also wrote network-wide talking points on topical issues for FJP district attorney members if asked by the media, including a December 2021 memo pushing back on concerns about the rise in retail theft and organized crime,

All,

With apologies for the barrage of emails this week, we’ve heard from many of you that you’re dealing with misinformation linking decreases in felony theft thresholds and other reforms to recent [highly publicized \[t.col\]](#) incidents of organized retail theft. With those concerns in mind, our terrific team (with particular thanks to Liz Komar and Rebecca Blair, and also to the Wren Collective and Jessica Brand and Amy Weber for their assistance) drafted talking points that are available [\[app.box.com\]here \[app.box.com\]](#) in the FJP Resource Library. These talking points seek to refute many of the most common myths regarding shoplifting, distinguish shoplifting from *organized retail theft*, and which make the case for an evidence-based approach to responses to theft incidents.

We know that many of you are already highly engaged in this conversation, and hope that this additional resource will be of use as you continue to have these important conversations in the media and with your communities. And do let us know if you have thoughts, have issued statements on this issue that others might find useful, or have other resources to share with the network on this topic.

Best wishes,
Miriam, Alyssa, Rebecca, Liz, and the FJP team

Miriam Aroni Krinsky

Founder and Executive Director

Fair and Just Prosecution

From: Miriam Krinsky <krinskym@krinsky.la>
Date: April 11, 2022 at 12:54:26 PM CDT
To: Jessica Brand <jessica.brand@wrencollective.com>
Cc:
Subject: RE: Document shared with you: "Copy of Proposed Statement for five DAs"

Joe, Jose:

We are playing with this a bit and will get you and the rest of the Texas gang a revise shortly!

Miriam Aroni Krinsky
Founder and Executive Director
Fair and Just Prosecution
Email: krinskym@krinsky.la

Wren worked directly with Fair and Just Prosecution to write and distribute talking points and press releases for Wren’s client prosecutors and FJP members. FJP used a password protected filesharing service to store Wren’s work for DAs to use.

which, Krinsky informed her elected members, would be available on FJP's password protected "Resource Library" filesharing site hosted on Box.com.³³

Krinsky abruptly resigned in September 2024 after internal turmoil at FJP when anonymous staffers emailed elected prosecutors directly alleging the FJP head was a racist and abusive boss.³⁴ In April 2024, Wren client and former Orlando prosecutor Aramis Ayala succeeded Krinsky in 2025.³⁵ Meanwhile, Ayala's husband, David Ayala, has been on The Wren Collective's board since at least 2021.³⁶ It is likely that Wren will remain FJP's "wonderful partner" under its new leadership.



 The Wren Collective

Our Board



David Ayala

David Ayala is celebrated as a leader in the restoration of voting rights and champion for the people. He worked tirelessly on the Florida Second Chances Campaign which resulted in the restoration of voting rights for over 1.4 million citizens in Florida. David served as the first President of Florida Rights Restoration Coalition's Central Florida Chapter, created the first chapter of its kind, and set the standard for communication and education for all 20 chapters that followed.

Wren's board member David Ayala is married to Wren client then Orlando prosecutor Aramis Ayala, now executive director of Fair and Just Prosecution.

Jose Garza

Wednesday, February 10

- 9:00am - 9:30am Meeting w/ Judge Herman re: Mental health in Travis County (Microsoft Teams Meeting) - Henry Kellison
- 10:00am - 10:30am Meeting re: Special prosecutions update (Microsoft Teams Meeting) - Jose Garza
- 11:30am - 12:00pm Meeting w/ Roger Jefferies re: Community Justice Coordinating Committee (Microsoft Teams Meeting) - Jose Garza
- 12:00pm - 1:00pm Meeting w/ Guillermo's team re: Shaughnessy homicide case staffing (Microsoft Teams Meeting) - Jose Garza
- 2:30pm - 3:00pm Call w/ Jess Brand re: Second Look Bill - Jose Garza
- 3:00pm - 3:30pm Meeting w/ Judge Urrutia, DA Garza (Microsoft Teams Meeting) - Jose Garza
- 4:00pm - 4:30pm Meeting w/ Judge Needles, DA Garza (Microsoft Teams Meeting) - Jose Garza

Alert: Communications Team Meeting with Jessica Brand. Attending: Joe, Philip, Christian, Laurie, Lauren and Nicole

Tuesday, May 24, 2022
from 3 PM to 4 PM

2 PM **Joe**
3 PM **Gonzales**

From: Jessica.brand@wrencollective.com
Date: June 17, 2023 at 8:42:53 AM CDT
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Invitation: [REDACTED] John Cruzot
(CDT) [REDACTED] Texas Meeting @ [REDACTED]
Reply-To: jessica.brand@wrencollective.com

Join Zoom Meeting
us02web.zoom.us/j/87322169352?pwd=
ID: 87322169352
passcode: 217196
Join by phone
(US) +1 301-715-8592
passcode: 217196

**John
Creuzot**

Henna Khan <henna.khan@wrencollective.com>
To: Bethany Young; Amy Weber; Thompson, Zaida

Can you please add my colleagues Amy Weber and Thompson, Zaida to the list?

Wed 10/19/2022 12:12

Can you please add my colleagues Amy and Bethany? They will also be attending
amy.weber@wrencollective.com
bethany.vivian@wrencollective.com

On Wed, Oct 19, 2022 at 10:45 AM Hargrove, Theresa <Theresa.Hargrove@scdag.com> wrote:
district.attorney2@scdag.com is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.
 Please let me know who else needs an invite to this meeting.

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83652640446?pwd=MFZlMmMlM040a1M2ZlZlZlYU9UZWZOGlZkdz09>
 Meeting ID: 836 5264 0446
 Passcode: 824454

**Steve Mulroy and
Buta Biberaj**

From: Jessica Brand <jessica.brand@vremcolleative.com>
To: Rachel Rollins <roline.ma.us>, Christine Cleary (DAT) <dcleary@sf.gov>, Desmond Meade <desmond@berkeleys.org>, Jose Guaza <jose.p.guaza@gmail.com>
Cc: Christine Deberry <crystine@deberry.net>, Marshall, Rachel (DAT) <rachel.marshall@sf.gov>, Santos, Toshihisa (DAA) <toshihisa.santos@state.ma.us>
Subject: Checking in for Monday
Date: Sat, 09 May 2020 20:31:27 +0000
Importance: Normal

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources

You should all have received the script along with the log-in for Monday. Please let me know if there is anything else you need.

Also, if you wouldn't mind sharing with your preeps, here's a link
<https://twitter.com/RealJusticePA/status/1258782063711304297?s=20>

Rachael Rollins and Chesa Boudin

Thursday, January 12

2:00pm - 3:00pm Pam Price!
(https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83616670489?pwd=eU5TaVZlZGhZbkxvcm9KazFtSlk4dz09) - jessica.brand@wrencollective.com

Pamela Price

21

Wren Version.doc

this policy could be implemented
IMMEDIATELY

Wren Version.doc

Mimic

*close advisors
to this team*

Part 3

How Wren Makes Policy for Prosecutors

How Wren Makes Policy for Prosecutors

Under Brand's leadership, Wren and its forerunner, The Justice Collaborative, crafted and implemented prosecutorial policies for progressive district attorneys coast to coast. Often working at the behest of shared donors, Wren provided these offices with "off-the-shelf" office policies on everything from bail to police-involved shootings. Wren's work housed in Fair and Just Prosecution's Box.com repository only scratches the surfaces of its policymaking powers in prosecutors' offices.

Boasting about its reach into progressive prosecutors' offices, Wren leveraged its work with one office to make in-roads into others as it was always "looking to expand" its footprint and tie its clients (and shared donors) closer together.

written and could help with policies in the following areas:

1. Bail
2. Diversion/Declination
3. Intake
4. Probation
5. Plea guidelines
6. Fines and Fees
7. Prosecutions related to policing
8. Brady (related to officer misconduct) and "do not call" or exclusion lists
9. Conviction integrity or sentencing review units
10. Juvenile transfer
11. Felony and Misdemeanor case backlog

Wren listed its pre-written "off-the-shelf" prosecutor policies for Portland DA Mike Schmidt including police prosecution, plea guidelines, and bail abolition.

Mike.Schmidt@mcd.us SCHMIDT Michael

To: Caroline.WONG@mcd.us WONG Caroline

Cc: amy.weber@wrencollective.com Amy Weber, jessica.brand@wrencollective.com Jessica Brand

Sunday, February 14, 2021 at 10:32:28 AM Pacific Standard Time

Caroline, I'm connecting you to Jessica and Amy, they are helping me out on a project around looking at our data and taking a crack at policy development. They have data questions - and I want to get them access to what they need to help me craft some policies. Could you please find a time to meet with them so you can let them know what we do and don't have, and then craft the data pull request to Leah so that they can take a look? Thanks! Mike Sent from my iPhone

Portland DA Mike Schmidt tells his staff that Wren needs internal data to "to help me craft some policies."

Wren's Clients and Donors Team Up

In June 2020, Black Lives Matter activist and Real Justice PAC founder Shaun King connected three of the most high-profile (and controversial) progressive prosecutors – Philadelphia's Larry Krasner, Boston's Rachael Rollins, and San Francisco's Chesa Boudin – to coordinate the joint launch of King's brainchild, "Truth, Justice and Reconciliation" commissions in each of the district attorneys' offices. These commissions planned to solicit community complaints of past instances of "police violence" and prosecutorial misconduct to initiate future criminal proceedings.

While publicly the project was a partnership between King's 501(c)(3) nonprofit, the Grassroots Law Project, and the prosecutors' offices, behind the scenes communications reveal the effort was being run by outside political consultants (including The Wren Collective) and coordinated by the same PACs that supported these prosecutors' campaigns.

Included on the email threads was Brandon Evans, who served as Larry Krasner's campaign manager but who was illicitly paid by Real Justice PAC in both Krasner's 2017 and 2021 campaigns according to the Philadelphia Ethics Commission as was Anne Irwin of Smart Justice California, a major donor to Boudin, Contra Costa's Diana Becton, and LA's George Gascon.³⁷ Jessica Brand Listed as the official media contact for the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office, using her Wren Collective email.³⁸ At the time, Wren served as a paid consultant to both Real Justice PAC and Grassroots Law, the official campaign of Larry Krasner, and advisor to the official offices of the Philadelphia and the San Francisco district attorneys.

The commissions were announced on July 1, 2020, then on July 30th, Real Justice PAC made a \$50,000 donation to Krasner's campaign. In the three months from April to August 2020, The Wren Collective earned

Good Morning Everybody,

I want to introduce you to Jennifer Farmer - a seasoned PR vet that I know and trust who has come on board our team to help us launch The Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation Commission.

Jennifer - on here we have:

Larry Krasner - The DA of Philadelphia

Rachael Rollins - The DA of Boston

Chesa Boudin - The DA of San Francisco

We also have Anne Irwin and Jessica Brand - who are subject experts and close advisors to this team and we have Brandon Evans - who is helping to manage the launch of the TJRC.

We also have senior staffers from The Grassroots Law Project, Dan Rowe and Chris Lazare, as well as our

Donor-activist Real Justice PAC's Shaun King coordinated a policy roll-out with Boston's Rachael Rollins, Philadelphia's Larry Krasner, San Francisco's Chesa Boudin, his "close advisors" at Wren, and fellow DA donor Smart Justice (Anne Irwin).

\$30,000 from Real Justice PAC for "strategy consulting."³⁹ When Boudin faced a recall election in 2022, Irwin and Smart Justice and Real Justice PAC spent over \$500,000 with the support of Wren's allies, including the Schustermans (\$50,000), David Menschel (\$6,000) and Anne Irwin personally (\$21,000).⁴⁰

Over the last few years, Wren has helped to organize and led a monthly "progressive policy call" with dozens of 'reform prosecutor' policy advisors including Philadelphia (Krasner), Manhattan (Bragg), Athens, Georgia (Deborah Gonzalez), Baltimore (Marilyn Mosby), New Orleans (Jason Williams), Chicago (Kim Foxx), as well as prosecutors from cities and counties across California, Michigan, Virginia, Massachusetts, Washington, and other jurisdictions.⁴¹ The calls allowed Wren to monitor, coordinate, and influence local prosecutorial policy at scale. Call topics included probation reform, marijuana decriminalization, bail abolition, sentencing reductions, and staffing changes. The only outside group regularly included on the private conference call was Wren's partner Fair and Just Prosecution.

The range of "model" policies and procedures that Wren wrote for its prosecutor clients touch on almost every aspect of the justice system, from how to prosecute offenders (i.e., bail, charging, pleas, and sentencing changes) to their approach to policing (i.e., Brady lists and office-involved shootings). In jurisdiction after jurisdiction and on issue after issue, Wren's policy prescriptions were adopted almost entirely and often verbatim by elected district attorneys. And Wren's help was paid for by the same outside groups that funded and supported the prosecutors' campaigns.



Philadelphia District Attorney's Office

CONTACT:

For District Attorney Krasner:

Jessica Brand, Jessica.Brand@wrencollective.com

For Grassroots Law:

Jennifer R. Farmer, Jenniferr@spotlightpr.org

Philadelphia (July 1, 2020) — Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner on Thursday joined colleagues in Boston and San Francisco to announce the creation of local **Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation commissions** in all three jurisdictions. **Suffolk County District Attorney Rachael Rollins, San Francisco District Attorney Chesa Boudin, and District Attorney Krasner** will lead community-centered, localized efforts to address the harms of unaccountable, unjust, and racist policing and prosecution, with support from the **Grassroots Law Project**, led by activist Shaun King and civil rights lawyer Lee Merritt.

Using her Wren email, Jessica Brand is official press contact for Larry Krasner's office on Krasner donor and Wren employer Real Justice PAC's policy announcement.

Wren's Campaign to Abolish Bail One DA at a Time

The Wren Collective's donors (i.e., Arnold Ventures, Vital Projects Fund, Real Justice) and Jessica Brand herself have been vocal about the need to abolish money bail entirely.⁴² (Arnold Ventures even developed a pretrial risk assessment tool meant to replace bail and limit judicial discretion in bond setting which it then provides to local courts.)⁴³ While that policy is not novel, the strategy of Wren and its predecessor, The Justice Collaborative, is: circumvent the legislative process and have prosecutors unilaterally end money bail and encourage pretrial release by implementing "prosecutor-led" bail reform.

In June 2020, Wren's Amy Weber provided the incoming Portland district attorney with "two model policies (probation and bail) we wrote for the Virginia commonwealth attorneys."⁴⁴ One of those prosecutors, Steve Descano, faced criticism in March 2020 from *The Appeal* magazine (run by Brand's The Justice Collaborative) for not implementing his promised bail reform.⁴⁵ By December, Descano released his new bail policy – abolishing money bail with an accompanying op-ed in *The Washington Post*.⁴⁶ Two neighboring prosecutors, Arlington's Commonwealth Attorney Parisa Dehghani-Tafti and Loudoun County's Buta Biberaj, stopped seeking money bail in late 2020 as well and signed a letter with other Virginia prosecutors urging the state legislature to end the practice entirely. The same progressive prosecutors also attended a TJC retreat prior to being sworn in where the future Wren's senior staff provided "model policies."⁴⁷

Elsewhere, Brand's team drafted policies to end bail that were adopted by her prosecutor clients. In Orlando, Wren emailed State Attorney for the 9th Judicial District Aramis Ayala and her team in May 2020 with attachments titled, "bail policy for Florida," noting "this policy could be implemented IMMEDIATELY" and would reduce the jail population.⁴⁸

 **The Washington Post**

Public Safety

Fairfax County prosecutor formally ends cash bail, joining a growing movement

Fairfax's Steve Descano announced "prosecutor-led" (i.e., unilateral) bail abolition in December 2020. Wren boasted in June that it wrote bail policies for Virginia's prosecutors.

From: [Amy Weber](#)
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2020 11:05 AM
To: Schmidt, Cynthia
Cc: [Jessica Brand](#)
Subject: Re: Working with you on policy
Attachments: [Step 1 bail policy for Florida.docx](#)
[Step 2 bail policy for Florida.docx](#)
[Bail policy overview FL.docx](#)
[Memo on text message reminders.docx](#)

Cynthia--

We are attaching a model bail policy for Florida that your office may want to consider. There are a number of documents here. They are:

1. a bail policy overview: this document provides an introduction to aspects of the bail policy (many of which are repeated within the policy itself) as well as a summary of supporting research
2. Step One Bail policy for misdemeanors and low-level felonies. This policy could be implemented IMMEDIATELY and would likely help you reduce your jail population in light of COVID-19.
3. Step Two Bail policy for other felony offenses. This policy addresses other felonies, not included in Step One, and should also be considered for immediate implementation in light of COVID-19.
4. A memo on text message reminders. I'm not sure if Orange and Osceola county have them, but you may want to look into it in the future if not. Some information on how to do so is in this memo.

Let me know if we can do anything else to help.
 Thanks,
 Amy

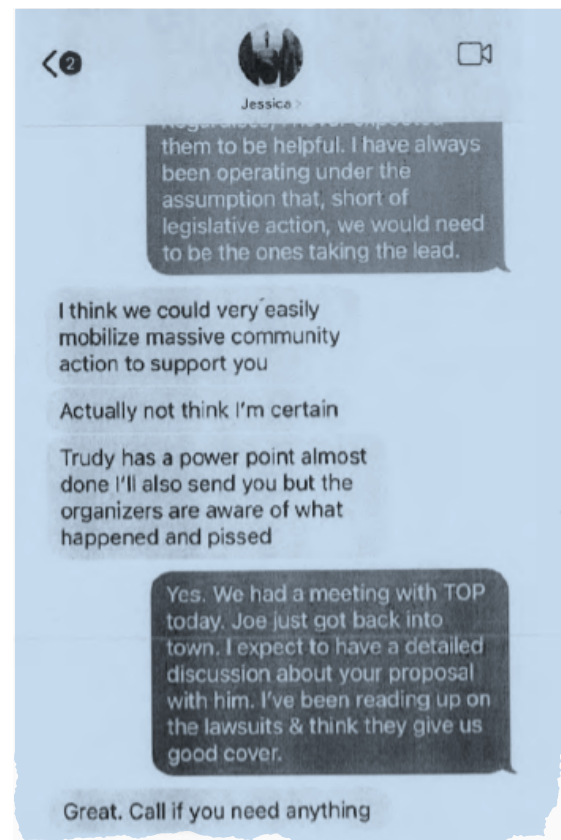
Amy Weber
 The Wren Collective, LLC
wrencollective.com
 (305) 793-7321 (cell)
 (919) 869-7970 (office)

In May 2020, Wren provided Aramis Ayala's Orlando DA office with tailored bail policies, which they later adopted. Ayala's husband is on Wren's board.

In Texas, Wren's influence on unilateral bail changes extended beyond drafting policies and helping to implement them. Brand and prosecutors actively conspired to have their shared political allies pressure judges who were resistant to her plans. In text messages with Bexar County's chief deputy district attorney and Joe Gonzales' campaign treasurer, Christian Hendricksen, Brand promised "I think we could very easily mobilize massive community action to support you. Actually not think I'm certain." Hendricksen replied that his office had met with its campaign donor, the bail reform advocates at Texas Organizing Project (TOP), on the issue. Later Brand checked-in to see if the recalcitrant judges "were any better" and suggested employing Real Justice PAC volunteers to "start calling" to pressure the judges.⁴⁹

Wren Decides Who Gets Charged, Convicted, and Sentenced

And Wren's policies on prosecutorial procedures extended to what charges to pursue (or not), how to plea bargain, and what sentences to seek. Its prescriptions were promulgated and shared between offices, citing the source as added incentive for prosecutors to adopt them. After Travis County District Attorney's Office, under Brand's former colleague Trudy Strassburger, revised its office-wide policies on everything from dismissals and victim contact to sentencing recommendations and media relations, Strassburger sent her Bexar counterpart the document in September 2023, writing, "Jess thought you might want to see our new policy doc...I'm attaching it in word in case there's anything you want to borrow."⁵⁰ Jessica Brand was copied on the exchange. Records show that Wren also authored sentencing guidelines in Orlando and Portland.



In 2019, Jessica Brand promised to use shared donor-activist groups to pressure resistant judges to support San Antonio's DA Joe Gonzales' unilateral bail changes.

Hi Christian!

Jess thought you might want to see our new policy doc. I'm attaching it in word in case there is anything you want to borrow. We did mandatory trainings for it in August, and made everyone submit a signed receipt of it. It's also going to be part of the onboarding process for every new employee as well.

Please let me know if you have any questions or if you want to talk through any of this.

Hope you are hanging in there- looks like a particularly stressful time in Bexar.

Best,
Trudy

Trudy Strassburger
First Assistant District Attorney
Travis County District Attorney's Office
416 W. 11th Street
Austin, Texas 78701
O: (512)854-9400
C: (512)920-0755

For Scheduling:
Henry.kellison@traviscountytexas.gov

Austin DA Jose Garza's top deputy and former Jessica Brand colleague shares their Wren-drafted prosecutorial policy update with fellow Wren clients in San Antonio.

Prosecutors Want to “Mimic” Wren’s Policy to Decriminalize Prostitution, Protesters

After Wren presented to an FJP prosecutor conference, Chittenden County, Vermont’s Sarah George reached out in May 2023 to ask for a copy of its policy to decriminalize prostitution intending to “mimic” the policy.⁵¹ That next month, Justin Kollar, now director of strategic initiatives for California’s Alameda County District Attorney Pam Price, himself former elected prosecutor in Hawaii and previously chief of staff to Krinsky at Fair and Justice Prosecution, shared the same “really well done” sex work policy with his colleagues recommending their office adopt it.⁵²

Wren authored the Multnomah County prosecutor’s policy to not prosecute anti-police protesters, even those engaged in violence and property destruction. This only came to light after an accused rioter sued for selective prosecution since the district attorney continued to pursue charges in his case which stemmed from an incident prior to the new district attorney taking office and whose politics did not align with the progressive prosecutor.

SA George:

Of course! A Word version of the policy is attached. Please let me know if there’s anything else I can do to help.

Amy

Amy Weber
The Wren Collective
www.wrencollective.org
(305) 793-7321

On Mon, May 22, 2023 at 9:09 AM George, Sarah <Sarah.George@vermont.gov> wrote:

Hello Amy,

I am the SA in Chittenden County Vermont and we are working on a sex work policy. I have your model policy from an FJP convening in NY last year. I am wondering if you have this policy in a word document in order to better mimic the policy and make sure the hyperlinks are accurate.

Thank you SO much!

Sarah F. George

Chittenden County State’s Attorney

32 Cherry Street

Burlington VT’s prosecutor Sarah George requests a word document version of Wren’s prostitution policy that was presented at an FJP conference to “better mimic” it.

From: Amy Weber

Date: July 24, 2020 at 11:20:54 AM PDT

To: Mike Schmidt , Jessica Brand

Subject: Draft of protest policy attached

Hi Mike.

Attached is a draft of a protest policy. If you are planning to release it, you may want to trim some of this research out of here, but I wanted you to have the opportunity to read through it. Happy to talk more about it when you have had a chance to look.

Amy

Amy Weber
The Wren Collective, LLC
wrencollective.com
(305) 793-7321 (cell)
(919) 869-7970 (office)

Wren’s Amy Weber sends Portland DA Mike Schmidt a “protest policy” to not prosecute the city’s left-wing rioters who burned and vandalized the city for months.

Wren Pushes Crackdown on Police in Texas and Florida

The Wren Collective and Jessica Brand's hostility toward police unions and law enforcement in general informed its policy recommendations as well – with significant successes in shaping local progressive prosecutors' policies. As noted, Wren offered its clients various police-related policies. Wren authored the playbook in numerous jurisdictions for how officer-involved-shootings (OIS) would be investigated and charged. It successfully pushed San Antonio district attorney to charge an officer for shooting a man (non-fatally) who struck him with a vehicle but drop charges against his assailant.⁵³

Wren also provided district attorneys with a Brady policy – tailored to their jurisdictions – that expanded officers' eligibility of being effectively barred from testifying in criminal cases by alleging their integrity and truthfulness were compromised. Inclusion on the Brady list is a career-killer for most officers since their alleged prior misconduct can be used to impugn their honesty, making their participation in a criminal investigation a liability.

Wren's prescribed Brady policy empowers the chief of the Conviction Integrity Unit – a function Wren had pushed many offices to create in the first place – to accept outside complaints against police officer's integrity even on an unsubstantiated basis. In the Brady policy provided to Orlando's prosecutor Aramis Ayala, Wren instructed, "If there is incomplete or insufficient information to proceed, but there is a pending administrative review, or the like, the available information must be disclosed."⁵⁴ Additionally, the former public defenders who run Wren insisted, contrary to law, that the prosecution disclose any and all "impeachable" evidence against an officer before a guilty plea – which is not required by law and hands every defendant an advantage in any plea negotiation. Ayala adopted Wren's entire draft document as official policy verbatim.

From: Ayala, Aramis
Sent: Tuesday, July 7, 2020 10:19 PM
To: [Jessica Brand](#)
Cc: [Miriam Krinsky](#); [Gabe Diaz](#); [Meghan Nayak](#); [Ruby Nidiry](#)
Subject: RE: Brady policy

Received and Reviewed. Excellent. Thank you so very much for your review and expedited response. I am grateful. My team and I will work from here. Again, thank you.

Aramis

From: Jessica Brand <jessica.brand@wrencollective.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 7, 2020 9:35 PM
To: Ayala, Aramis <AAyala@sao9.org>
Cc: Miriam Krinsky <krinskym@krinsky.la>; Gabe Diaz <gabe.diaz@wrencollective.com>; Meghan Nayak <mnayak@fairandjustprosecution.org>; Ruby Nidiry <rnidiry@fairandjustprosecution.org>
Subject: Brady policy

State Attorney Ayala-
 Thank you for the opportunity to review your excellent policy. Please see an attached version. Additionally, we had a few questions:

- Last resort: We wanted to flag for you to look closely at the exception for why you might still use someone on the last resort list
- We had a question about the materiality standard, and what that might look like
- We made some suggestions about how someone gets on the do not call list- take a look and maybe we can talk about it
- Scope: The policy doesn't specify how far back you are looking for Brady.

Let us know if you want to hop on the phone,
 Jess

Orlando DA Aramis Ayala accepts and adopts Wren's extreme Brady policy, allowing unsubstantiated accusations of misconduct to exclude police from testifying in court.

Wren Steers a Murder Case in Orlando

Monique Worrell, Ayala's successor as Florida's 9th Circuit State Attorney, who worked closely with Wren on policy and communication issues, brought Wren in to help with the investigation of the murder of 19-year-old Gamaine Brown. Worrell's team apparently gave Wren access to confidential investigative files including witness statements and lab reports to help them draft an internal memo justifying the decision to not charge 17-year-old Jeremiah Cundiff who allegedly shot and killed Brown after a high school football game in Orlando. In March 2023, Weber revised then charging memo and sent the document labeled "Wren Version" back to Worrell's deputy for final approval.⁵⁵

Document edits reveal that Weber's suggestions later became the basis for Worrell's announcement the following week where she chastised the police, "build better cases."⁵⁶ The homicide suspect, Cundiff, was arrested six months later and subsequently sentenced to 18 months in federal prison for possession of a machine gun in an unrelated case.⁵⁷ The episode reveals that Wren likely has broad access to such confidential prosecutorial case files in numerous jurisdictions nationwide in order to "advise" on charging decisions.

From: George, Frank <FGeorge@sao9.org>
Sent: Friday, March 10, 2023 12:56 PM
To: Mulfort, Keisha <KMulfort@sao9.org>
Subject: FW: Jeremiah Cundiff Memo - Wren version

Hi Keisha,
 Amy sent me her edited version, I added something about eh results of the GSR and she said it was good. I didn't case out.

Thanks,
 Frank.

From: George, Frank
Sent: Friday, March 10, 2023 12:49 PM
To: Amy Weber <amy.weber@wrencollective.org>
Subject: Jeremiah Cundiff Memo - Wren version

Two changes, hopefully I saved them correctly.
 One of the shooters was not wearing a mask, but understand why you worded it the way you did.

After accessing confidential witness statements and evidence reports, Wren revised and edited an internal prosecutor memo deciding to decline murder charges in Orlando. The suspect was later convicted of unrelated weapons charges and sent to federal prison.

Wren Trusts but Verifies Its Prescriptions Are Followed

Wren is not satisfied with prosecutors simply adopting but not abiding by their directives. The outside consultants often seek implementation fidelity. In 2022, Loudoun County, Virginia's Buta Biberaj consulted with Wren on drug court and diversion policies (i.e., declining to prosecute narcotics offenses by dropping or diverting cases). To ensure their prescriptions were being implemented to their specifications, Wren's Henna Khan wrote to Biberaj's chief deputy Zaida Thompson that August, "We're currently helping Buta with internal drug court policy, and I wanted to get a better sense of how things are working on the ground."⁵⁸

The Wren Collective (and TJC beforehand) had donor relationships that both facilitated and drove its relationships with district attorneys. In its ongoing policy engagements,

Wren exerted significant influence on the policies of progressive district attorneys. It directly coordinated with the same political donors, foundations, and activist PACs that funded Wren, the prosecutors' election campaigns, and even made grants to district attorneys' offices. The Wren Collective, a single obscure consulting group, could only make policy for dozens of progressive prosecutors' offices and nearly 50 million Americans if those district attorneys understood the group's help was strongly suggested by their shared political donors and allies.

From: Henna Khan <henna.khan@wrencollective.com>
Sent: Monday, August 15, 2022 10:28 AM
To: Thompson, Zaida <Zaida.Thompson@loudoun.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Drug court

Hi Zaida,

My name is Henna Khan and I work at the Wren Collective. We're currently helping Buta with internal drug court policy, and I wanted to get a better sense of how things are working on the ground.

Are you available to chat sometime this week? My schedule is pretty flexible so please let me know what works best for you.

Thanks!

Henna

Wren follows up with the chief deputy of its client (Loudoun County prosecutor Buta Biberaj) to ensure its drug court policies are being fully adhered to.

*use this funding to train and
advise reform-minded prosecutors*

The help comes at no
cost to you or your office

*close advisors
to this team*

Confidentiality and Non-
Disclosure Agreement

All he needs is for us to give
him a final scope of work

Part 4

Who is Paying for Wren's Prosecutor Work?

Who is Paying for Wren's Prosecutor Work?

The Wren Collective LLC derives its revenue from four (4) known sources: political campaigns (i.e., PACs and candidate committees), nonprofit grant projects (wealthy donor support), as a consultant to activist groups (e.g., 501c4s), and only recently, vendor contracts with government agencies (i.e., district attorney's offices).

Because Wren provides many of its services to prosecutors' offices at no cost, it is unclear who is actually paying Wren for its work and who its primary clients are. LELDF's review of over 50,000 pages of private communications (obtained via public records requests), campaign disclosures, and tax filings shows that donors and activists fund both prosecutors' campaigns and The Wren Collective. In turn, Wren develops and implements the funders' agenda in prosecutors' offices. Thus, dozens of elected district attorneys across the United

States are doing the bidding of their political donors and their outside consultant's benefactors.

Over the past decade, donors have sought to influence the administration of justice in these jurisdictions by strategically investing in prosecutors' campaigns. Foremost among them is billionaire George Soros, who has contributed more than \$50 million to prosecutors' campaigns and related expenditures since 2015. However, financial support does not guarantee that elected prosecutors will implement the policies donors favor. Recognizing this gap, Jessica Brand – well connected to activists and criminal justice reform donors – saw an opportunity to create a new organization.

Known Direct Wren Income

Players Coalition (PC Charitable)	\$536,553.00
Hennepin County Attorney (Mary Moriarty)	\$150,000.00
Los Angeles County District Attorney (George Gascon)	\$180,000.00
Open Philanthropy	\$250,000.00
Real Justice PAC	\$295,000.00
Grassroots Law Project	\$891,000.00
Arnold Foundation (via SEE)	\$519,385.00
Larry Krasner for DA (Philadelphia)	\$122,000.00
PAC for Justice (New Orleans)	\$29,168.00
Charles And Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation (via SEE)	\$125,000.00
Women Donors Network (via SEE)	\$100,000.00
Jane Fonda Climate Change PAC	\$161,347.69
Open Society Foundation (Soros) to Justice Collaborative (2018 & 2020)	\$750,000.00
Total Known Income	\$4,109,453.69

How Soros, Soviet Movies, and Tuna Created The Wren Collective

Launched in 2020, The Wren Collective grew directly out of The Justice Collaborative (TJC) where Brand was legal director. TJC [which still exists] also functioned as both an LLC and fiscally sponsored project under the umbrella of the Tides network– the same parent foundation that “sponsors” the prosecutor group, Fair and Just Prosecution (FJP).⁵⁹

Since both operate as projects instead of independent nonprofits, they avoid filing IRS 990 disclosures, making their funding as opaque as Wren’s. But Tides receives its own funding from a variety of sources including many of the organizations that fund Wren and other progressive prosecutor campaigns and activist groups. George Soros’s personal foundations (under the Open Society umbrella) contributed more than \$75 million to Tides between 2016 and 2023.⁶⁰

While many of Soros’ 151 grants over the period list generic purposes, two Open Society Foundation grants (2018 and 2020) named Jessica Brand’s group The Justice Collaborative as the beneficiary of \$750,000. The 2020 Soros grant earmarked for Wren “to oversee and execute a communications strategy for progressive prosecutors.”⁶¹ So, despite Jessica Brand’s vehement denials that her current group (The Wren Collective) is not funded by Soros, its predecessor TJC was directly subsidized by Soros while Brand was consulting for the same Soros PAC funded prosecutors.⁶² Other Soros grants that named the pass-through beneficiaries went to other allied activist groups, the Prosecutors Alliance and Color of Change for prosecutor work.⁶³

Additional billionaire donors to Tides include Cari Tuna and Priscilla Chan, who in turn bankroll progressive prosecutors’ campaigns directly and through PACs.

But Wren is not a Tides affiliate. Instead, The Wren Collective is a fiscal sponsorship of the Social and Environmental Entrepreneurs (SEE), founded in 1987 under the moniker “American-Soviet Film Initiative” intended to promote cultural exchange between the US and the USSR by screening Soviet films for American audiences.⁶⁴

After the collapse of the Eastern Bloc, SEE’s finances declined, with revenues of only \$3 million in 2008 and net assets under \$1.8 million. Over the following decade, however, SEE’s position rebounded – contributions grew tenfold, and its assets reached \$13.5 million by 2018. What had once been a small, pro-Soviet film charity had suddenly transformed into a nonprofit powerhouse, buoyed by funding from some of the nation’s largest and most prominent left-leaning organizations. By 2023, SEE received over \$85 million in grants and held \$83 million in assets. From 2019 to 2023, SEE took in over \$280 million from outside entities including the Tides network, the Schusterman Foundation, and the Arnold Foundation.⁶⁵ Soros-linked foundations (Open Society, Borealis, Drug Policy Alliance, Neo Philanthropy etc.) gave \$16 million to SEE between 2020 and 2023.⁶⁶ While foundations linked to Priscilla Chan and Cari Tuna gave millions as well.⁶⁷

U.S. and Soviet Film Makers Plan Joint Ventures

By ALJEAN HARMETZ

Special to The New York Times

HOLLYWOOD, Feb. 5 — A delegation from the Hollywood film industry returned from the Soviet Union this week with three signed agreements for joint ventures.

A number of contemporary American films and documentaries are to be screened for the 1,200-member Supreme Soviet, while it is proposed that equivalent Soviet films will be shown to Congress under Library of Congress auspices, according to a document signed by Mark Gerzon, founding president of the American-Soviet Film Initiative, and Elem Klimov, his counterpart in the Soviet Union. The chief objective in making the selections will be to dispel stereotypes.

The other agreements concern a joint cultural exhibition that will travel to 20 cities in the United States and 20 cities in the Soviet Union during 1989, and exchanges among documentary, animation and television

“Russian paratroopers on the land of California.”

The Hollywood paratroopers in Moscow included the actors Keith Carradine and Dennis Weaver, the director Gilbert Cates, the producers David Puttnam and Carolyn Pfeiffer and the television producer Lawrence Schiller. Jeff Berg, an agent, Charles Champlin, a critic, and Bruce Ramer, an entertainment lawyer, were part of the group.

‘E. T.’ Evokes Emotion

They took with them a number of American films, including Ms. Pfeiffer’s “Whales of August” and Mr. Carradine’s “Choose Me.” Mr. Weaver cited the ardent reaction of an audience of young Soviet film makers to a screening of “E. T. the Extra-Terrestrial” as the most emotional moment of the trip. “It showed that people are the same the world over,” he said.

Several members of the Hollywood delegation expressed surprise at the critical tone of a number of Soviet movies and documentaries. “I didn’t expect to see anything that acerbic,” Mr. Carradine said of “The Russian

bled the anti-Vietnam War documentaries that circulated in this country in the early 1970’s. However, when Mr. Klimov described the documentary as “a great film for preparing the Soviet public” for the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan, Mr. Gerzon said he realized that open criticism of previous policies might also serve a propaganda purpose. “I asked Klimov if anyone would make a pro-Afghanistan invasion film today and he said, ‘Hardly likely.’”

Power of the Purse

“What’s wrong is that the film maker is still dependent on the bureaucracy for economic support,” said Mr. Schiller, who is preparing a four-hour mini-series for CBS on the Chernobyl nuclear disaster.

Both Mr. Cates and Mr. Schiller said that once the Soviet authorities approved a script, American film makers had tremendous freedom in shooting. For “Peter the Great,” the 1986 NBC mini-series that Mr. Schiller filmed in the Soviet Union, the bureaucrats had a historical writer review the script. “He said it was to

accept that the picture will have an American point of view.”

Mr. Weaver, a former president of the Screen Actors Guild, said he would try to work out an exchange under which American actors could play Americans in Soviet films and Soviet actors play Russians in American films.

Mr. Cates, a former president of the Directors Guild of America, said the Russians were eager for American dollars. “I tried to encourage them to have Americans dub films there,” he said, since such post-production work costs \$40 an hour in Los Angeles and \$325 a day in Moscow.

The American-Soviet Film Initiative is also sponsoring “The Super Power Mirror,” a documentary about the damaging stereotypes through which the two countries view one another. Michael Levett of Story First Entertainment, the producer of the documentary, said he expected to spend seven months getting clearances from American guilds and studios to use film clips from movies

Social and Environmental Entrepreneurs (SEE), Wren’s “fiscal sponsor,” uses the tax-exempt status granted to a pro-Soviet film charity to obscure donor sources. [Image via *New York Times*, February 7, 1988]

The Donors Wren Doesn't Want You To SEE

SEE's legal structure as a fiscal sponsor means that it does not have to list its subgrants since they are legally deemed internal operations – not external expenditures. Similarly, the grantors do not have to specify (and usually do not) the earmarked purpose and recipient of their pass-through gift. And Wren as an LLC is under no obligation to open its books to the public at all.

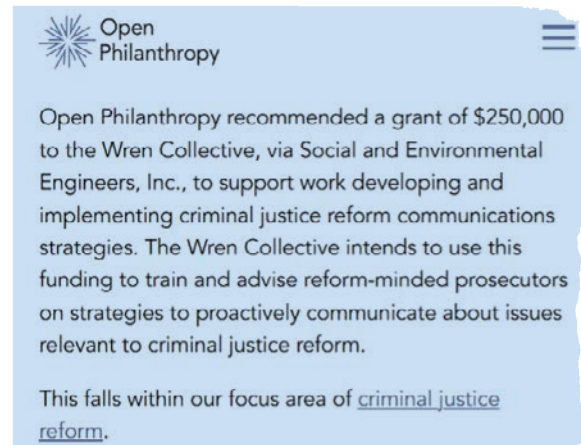
But a closer examination of SEE's donors tax filings reveals that several large grants were earmarked for Wren's work. In 2021, Open Philanthropy donated \$250,000 to SEE so Wren could “use this funding to train and advise reform-minded prosecutors on strategies to proactively communicate about issues relevant to criminal justice reform.”⁶⁸ That comes on the heels of 12 million in Open Philanthropy grants sent via Tides to Wren's forerunner, The Justice Collaborative, between 2017 and 2019. Tuna's group even boasted it “helped to launch an earlier iteration of [TJC] in April 2016.”⁶⁹

In 2022, the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation, run by heiress Stacy Schusterman, sent SEE \$125,000 to “support to The Wren Collective prosecutor communications project.” Then in 2023, the Laura and John Arnold Foundation, which operates the criminal justice reform advocacy group Arnold Ventures, donated \$519,385 to Wren through SEE.⁷⁰

Real Justice PAC Funds Wren's Work for DA Campaigns and Their Offices – At Same Time

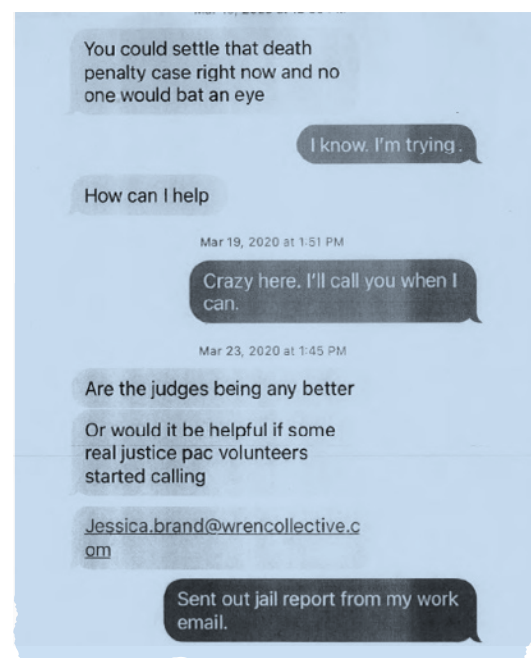
In addition to these grants, Wren has drawn more than a million dollars directly from prosecutors' campaign committees and allied PACs' independent expenditures including nearly \$300,000 from Real Justice PAC from 2020 and 2024 and another \$891,000 from Real Justice's parent organization, the Grassroots Law Project between 2021 and 2023.⁷¹

Meanwhile, Real Justice has spent millions on independent expenditures for progressive district attorneys' election campaigns. In 2020, Real Justice spent \$200,000 as directly attributable as “in-kind” contributions to José Garza's campaign to become Travis County, Texas's district attorney.⁷² Included in those expenditures was \$22,300 in direct payments to Wren for services on behalf of Garza's campaign.⁷³



Cari Tuna-funded Open Philanthropy gave Wren \$250,000 in 2021, before spinning off its criminal justice giving to Soros-linked Chloe Cockburn's opaque Just Impact Fund.

Major donors to progressive prosecutors' campaigns, the Schusterman family's foundation gave Wren Collective \$125,000 via SEE.



Wren's Brand tells San Antonio DA office to drop a death penalty case then offers to have their shared donor Real Justice PAC start harassing judges to support the prosecutor's policies.

The NFL, NDAs, and Hanoi Jane

The same year (2021) that Wren was working inside Garza's DA office and as a consultant to Garza campaign donor Real Justice PAC, Trudy Strassburger landed as board secretary at Real Justice's parent, the Grassroots Law Project in 2021. That same year, Wren landed its first contract with Grassroots Law for \$369,000.⁷⁴ Wren and Garza's office signed a non-disclosure agreement in January 2022 – signed by Strassburger.⁷⁵

Wren also took on work with the professional athlete and justice activist group the Players Coalition (PC Charitable), earning \$536,553 for "strategy" services between 2020 and 2023.⁷⁶ Tuna's Open Philanthropy foundation previously do-

nated \$50,000 to the Players Coalition for its criminal justice reform program including "participating in prosecutor candidate forums."⁷⁷ Wren also took in \$160,000 from the Jane Fonda Climate Change PAC for "communications consulting" in 2022 and 2023.⁷⁸

Meanwhile, Wren has received undisclosed grant amounts from the Just Impact Fund, a spin-off of Open Philanthropy's criminal justice program run by Chloe Cockburn who, with Whitney Tymas, helped launch the Soros-funded progressive prosecutor campaign strategy in 2015.⁷⁹

CONFIDENTIALITY AND NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT

This document is executed between the Wren Collective and the Travis County District Attorney's Office. The Wren Collective, an organization fiscally sponsored by the Social and Environmental Entrepreneurs (SEE), contracts with the Travis County District Attorney's Office to provide policy and communications support for the office for a one year period.

Any information or materials involved in the professional engagement between these parties is confidential, and may not be disclosed by Wren to any third party without the office's permission. Wren agrees to keep all materials provided by the office secure. Wren also acknowledges that, as a consultant of the office, it is governed by the same ethical and professional responsibility rules as is the office.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: I, Jessica Brand, acknowledge and agree to be bound by these principles and prohibitions. I further agree to immediately inform the office about any potential breach of the guidelines listed above, as soon as I become aware of the circumstances.

By: Jessica Brand
ATG31005854453
 Name: Jessica Brand
 Date: 01/10/22

Gertrude Strassburger
 By: Gertrude
 Name: Strassburger
 Date: 1/10/2022

Wren's Jessica Brand, who earned \$22,000 for her work on Austin DA Jose Garza's 2020 campaign, signed an NDA as his official advisor in January 2022. Brand's former colleague and now Garza's chief deputy counter-signed.

The Billionaires Quietly Financing Wren’s Prosecutor Projects

Notable and known shared donors who funded Wren’s progressive prosecutor “clients” and The Wren Collective itself include oil fortune heiress Stacy Schusterman (chair of the Schusterman Family Foundation, now Philanthropies), David Menschel (Vital Projects Fund), John and Laura Arnold (for-profit Arnold Ventures and nonprofit Arnold Foundation), George Soros (Open Society Foundation, Justice & Public Safety PAC, Democracy PAC I & II etc.), and Anne Irwin (JK Irwin Foundation, Smart Justice California).

These individual and foundational donors then used their relationships with their grantees (i.e., progressive prosecutor organizations FJP and Wren) to access the prosecutors’ offices and then influence the decisions of their political beneficiaries.

The Schusterman Family Foundation, led by energy heiress Stacy Schusterman who donated substantial sums to numerous progressive prosecutor campaigns directly and to the PACs backing them, simultaneously sent tens of millions to Tides and SEE including a \$2.75 million in grants earmarked for FJP for “general operating support” for 2019-2022 and another \$125,000 to SEE designated as “general support for Wren Collective” in 2022.⁸⁰

While Stacy Schustermans donated \$1.8M to PACs backing Garza’s campaign (i.e., Equity Action, Justice and Public Safety)⁸¹ and his campaign directly, Jessica Brand introduced her former Wren colleague in Garza’s office to the staff (Whitney Williams) at the Schusterman Foundation, their shared benefactor, to discuss “our prosecutor comms project.”⁸²



**OPEN SOCIETY
FOUNDATIONS**



Vera INSTITUTE
OF JUSTICE



**real
justice**

Whitney-

Please meet Trudy Strassburger, who is the incredible first assistant in Jose Garza's office in Travis County. She's also quite familiar with many of the offices across the country. Like you, she spent time in the trenches in New York's public defender system (but at the Bronx). Before that she was in Philly.

Trudy, Whitney is a program officer at Schusterman, and before that, was at NDS. As I mentioned, we've been discussing our prosecutor comms project.

Happy holidays, everyone,
Jess

Wren connected its donors (Schusterman Foundation) to their client and former colleague, Trudy Strassburger, now in the Austin DAs office, mentioning their “prosecutor comms project.”

Shared Donors Connect Wren to Prosecutors, Expect Proof of Work

Schusterman, who had also given substantially to PACs and groups (e.g., Drug Policy Alliance) funding Portland DA Mike Schmidt, also struck up a working relationship with the Oregon prosecutor, offering to connect him to “Krasner’s policy folks” – who, we now know, included The Wren Collective.⁸³

But Wren was already in close touch with Schmidt’s office and him personally, courtesy of another shared donor, David Menschel.

Menschel, the president of the Vital Projects Fund, is a Portland-based activist lawyer and major donor who has given thousands directly to Wren-linked prosecutors across the country. Menschel donated \$26,200 to Philadelphia’s Larry Krasner and made large contributions to others including Steve Descano, Parisa Dehghani-Tafti, and Stephanie Morales in Virginia, Steve Mulroy in Memphis, and José Garza in Austin.⁸⁴

Menschel, a top individual donor to Multnomah County District Attorney Mike Schmidt in both 2020 and 2024, reached out to the DA-elect on June 11, 2020, writing to Schmidt⁸⁵

“I want to introduce you to Amy and Jess who run The Wren Collective. As I mentioned, they have worked with DAs around the country to design and implement a variety of policy reforms. Amy and Jess, this is Mike. He recently won the race for Multnomah County District Attorney. I’ll leave the rest to you guys to follow up to set up a call.

Stay safe, David”⁸⁶

Schmidt’s introduction to Amy Weber and Jessica Brand led to Wren serving as transition team advisor, writing and implementing policies including its controversial decisions to not prosecute rioters and drug offenders, end cash bail, overturn convictions of the “wrongfully” accused, increase prosecutions of police officers and give greater leniency to young adult offenders (18-25) as well assistance in hiring and communications with the media and public.

In a follow-up, Weber assured Schmidt that “we do this work without any billing or publicity. These policies will be yours, not ours. We are just here to help you figure out how to implement meaningful changes to the criminal justice system in Portland.”

After detailing Wren’s services, Weber told Schmidt that before Wren could start its “free” work for the new district attorney, “I imagine that Dave [Menschel] will need some information about the scope of our involvement, so lets us know what areas you’d like our help with, even potentially.” Two days later, Weber pressed Schmidt on Wren’s need to provide their wealthy donor shared benefactor with proof of their agreement, writing:

“I spoke to Dave, and all he needs is for us to give him a final scope of work. It doesn’t have to be written in stone if you could let us know what areas you are interested in policy-wise, that would be helpful. Once this is in the works, we can get started!”⁸⁷



The “Prosecutor Transparency Project” is the first partnership of its kind in the State of Michigan. It is geared towards taking an unflinching look at potential racial inequities in the Prosecutor’s Office-and taking action to eliminate inequitable treatment.

Thanks to generous grants from the University of Michigan, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Michigan, and the Vital Projects Fund, no taxpayer funds will be expended on the Project. Work on the Prosecutor Transparency Project commenced in January, 2021.



This study, supported by the Vital Projects Fund, is the first to focus on such a large concentration of released individuals sentenced to life for homicide, providing a unique opportunity to examine their reentry experiences and update and inform evidence-based policies on how to best prepare for, and support, returning citizens who have served long sentences. The report is

The Vital Projects Fund led by progressive DA campaign donor David Menschel frequently underwrites prosecutors’ office policy programs to study and “reform” the criminal justice system.

Same Donors' Money and Staff Flow to Wren and Prosecutors

Before Rebecca “Becky” Silber became the Chief Operating Officer at The Wren Collective, she was the director of criminal justice policy at Arnold Ventures (AV), the philanthropic vehicle of billionaire and former Enron executive John Arnold and his wife Laura’s foundation.⁸⁸ There, Silber focused on “pretrial justice, bail reform, public defense, and prosecution.”⁸⁹ Despite publicly billing itself as a “philanthropy,” Arnold Ventures is, in fact, an LLC, designed to avoid full public disclosure of its activities.⁹⁰ Since AV manages the Arnold Foundation’s criminal justice grants, Silber approved grants worth tens of millions of dollars for the progressive prosecutor project and allied groups over the last five years.⁹¹ In 2023, the Arnold Foundation’s criminal justice initiative led by Silber earmarked a nearly \$520,000 payment to The Wren Collective, before she joined the group as COO.⁹²

It is no surprise that Silber helped to steer grants directly to Wren’s client prosecutors’ offices and their outside partner groups to advance its agenda. In 2021 alone, the Arnolds gave DA Larry Krasner’s office a \$359,395 grant to “assess recent reforms and new initiatives in prosecutorial decision making in Philadelphia communities,” and earmarked \$150,000 for the “Prosecutors Alliance of California project” (headed by future Gascon chief of staff and close Wren ally Cristine Soto-DeBerry) via Tides.⁹³ Arnold Ventures was frequently included in email chains coordinating policy and

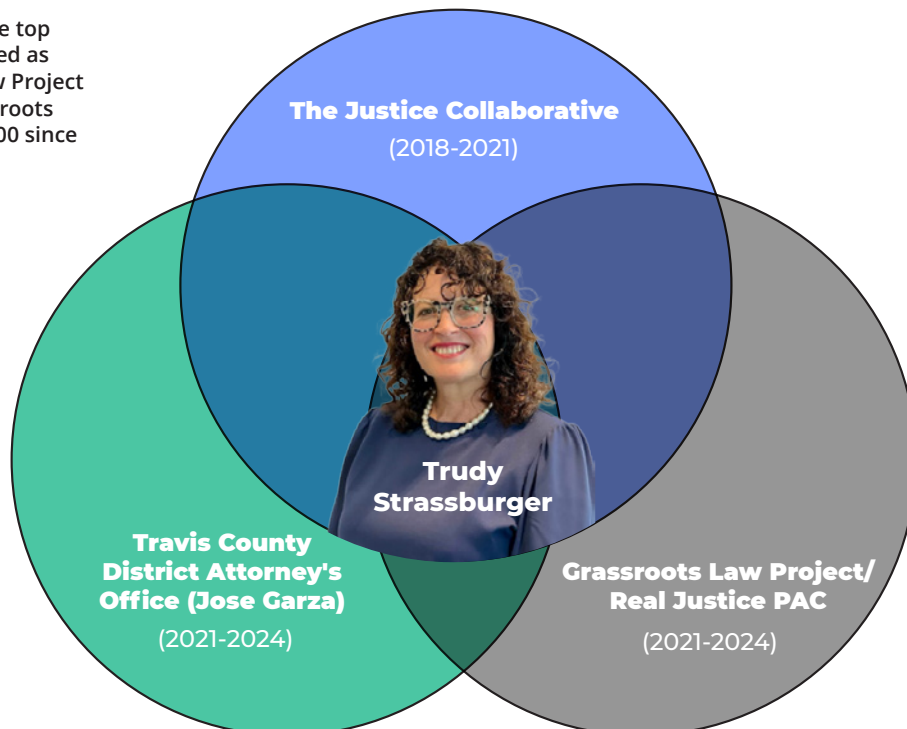
communications strategy with Wren and FJP, who both pushed prosecutor officers to apply for AV grants.⁹⁴

Between 2020 and 2023, the Arnolds generously donated \$11.4 million to the largely taxpayer-funded Vera Institute, Silber’s prior employer.⁹⁵ Vera’s nonprofit arm both receives and distributes taxpayer money for “technical assistance” grants to help implement progressive prosecutors’ agendas locally. Vera’s dark-money arm (Vera Action), in turn, funds progressive prosecutors’ campaigns.



Former colleagues at Soros-funded Justice Collaborative, Trudy Strassburger (now a top deputy to Austin DA Jose Garza) joined Wren’s Jessica Brand on “progressive prosecution” panel in 2022 four months after signing an NDA for Wren’s work with Garza.

In 2021, Strassburger both became top deputy for the Austin DA and joined as board secretary of Grassroots Law Project (Parent of Real Justice PAC). Grassroots Law has paid Wren almost \$900,000 since Strassburger joined the board.



Taxpayer-Funded Nonprofit Does Political Work With Wren and Soros

Despite being a nonprofit (501(c)(3)) ostensibly barred from political activity the Vera Institute actively provides political and legal cover when its partner district attorneys come under scrutiny. Brand's groups [TJC and Wren] also coordinated with Vera on joint responses to criticisms of their shared progressive prosecutor allies and clients. Vera helped St. Louis City Circuit Attorney Kim Gardner (whose campaign was a Jessica Brand client) secure funding for a legal team to fight an ongoing investigation into Gardner's malicious and abusive prosecution of a political adversary.⁹⁶ That funding, Vera's director of its federally-funded "Reshaping Prosecution" initiative, Jamila Hodge, told a group of its client-prosecutors came from Soros' Justice and Public Safety PAC's Whitney Tymas, who Hodge noted "many of you know."⁹⁷

Conscious that Vera's activities skirted the line between legal and illegal political coordination, In September 2019, Vera invited prosecutor partners and their allies to join them for a "strategy meeting," hosted at the offices of highly political law firm Perkins Coie, intended "to begin a coordinated strategy to support the important reform efforts of prosecutors" but counseled that referencing "upcoming elections or political strategy pertaining to ourselves or any elected official" risks the participating 501(c)(3) groups' tax-exempt status. Vera's self-awareness and caution was limited since copied on the email was the prosecutor prosecutors' largest campaign PAC donor (Soros' Whitney Tymas).

Although Vera operates a 501c4 (Vera Action) that provides political support to progressive DAs, with the generous support of Tuna, Priscilla Chan, and Soros's foundations,⁹⁸ the correspondence, was sent from the email account of Vera's taxpayer-funded and tax-exempt entity, acknowledged it had a political strategy for the upcoming election – activity prohibited by law.⁹⁹

And Brand herself recognized her own apparent conflicts of interest working on both sides of the political-official divide. In her private text exchanges with San Antonio's Joe Gonzales, Brand wrote that they had to split her campaign activities from her "official" (though unpaid, undocumented, and undisclosed) functions.¹⁰⁰

Hi Everyone,

I am writing with an important update about the efforts to fight back against the attacks in St. Louis. Thanks to the amazing efforts of Whitney Tymas, there is now funding for the RICO action. Roy and the other lawyers are on working on some pre-filing requirements, but shooting to file the action on Monday, January 13th. This is important timing because, as I previously shared, Kim is now going to be deposed in the Tisaby investigation on January 15th. This is the moment to come to St. Louis to support Kim. We are shooting to hold a panel and press conference on January 14th the day before the deposition. The panel will be to highlight the policy and practice change that is happening across the nation led by so many in this group, and that the enemies of progress are fighting specifically against the black women who are leading this effort. I know that this is a busy group, but this is the best opportunity to do what we discussed back in August and show up for Kim in a real and concrete way. I don't expect that we can get all of you, but we definitely need a good number to attend.

I will be fully transparent that the lawsuit is not a done deal. The investigation happening now will confirm whether it can survive a motion to dismiss before filing. We are believing that it will, but we will need to have a show of support on the 14th regardless given the deposition on the 15th. Please continue to Kim in your prayers and send good thoughts her way!

Shiqueen and I will take the lead to work with Kim's team to plan the event on the 14th. Please feel free to reach out if you have suggestions, ideas or questions.

Finally, please do not share about the pending RICO action until it is filed. Please let me know as soon as you can whether you can attend the panel and press conference on January 14th. This will help with planning. We will circle back with more details as the plans come together.

I hope you all have a wonderful and restful Christmas and Holiday season!

Best,
Jami

Jamila Hodge
Director
Reshaping Prosecution

Vera Institute of Justice
1111 14th Street NW, Suite 920
Washington, DC 20005

The taxpayer-funded Vera Institute collaborated closely with both Wren and Soros-backed prosecutor PACs (led by Whitney Tymas) to support and defend progressive DAs.

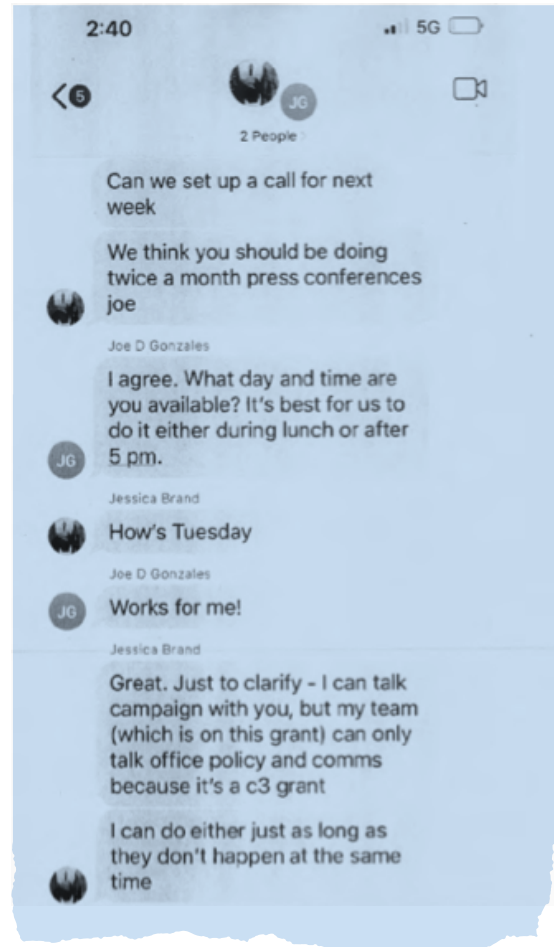
Wren Does Campaign Work Despite Conflicts of Interest

Wren does not rely only on funding from third parties like foundations and PACs, it has extended its operations directly into campaigns themselves. In Philadelphia, The Wren Collective was paid \$122,000 directly by incumbent Larry Krasner's 2021 re-election campaign for campaign consulting¹⁰¹ – while also employed by Real Justice PAC, one of Krasner's largest in-kind contributors.¹⁰²

Yet, Real Justice's "independent expenditures" on behalf of the Krasner campaign were not actually independent at all, The Philadelphia Board of Ethics determined the cozy relationship amounted to illegal coordination between Wren's two employers.¹⁰³ Real Justice was effectively Krasner's campaign – managing volunteers and grassroots organizing, making media buys, and even paying Krasner's campaign manager all while they shared office space – in a building personally owned by Larry Krasner.¹⁰⁴ The ethics board fined Krasner for the 2017 violations, then Krasner and Real Justice did it all over again in 2021 – and were hit with another fine for their campaign violations.

While Wren was on Real Justice and Krasner's campaign payrolls, Wren was working for Krasner's official office too, advising Philadelphia's District Attorney's Office on communications and policy.¹⁰⁵

The Wren Collective, The Justice Collaborative, or Jessica Brand herself have done campaign work for other progressive prosecutors or their supportive PACs including Kim Gardner in St. Louis and Kim Foxx in Chicago (making \$65,000 in-kind donation via the Soros-backed PAC "Vote Liberation").¹⁰⁶



Wren's Jessica Brand consulted San Antonio DA Joe Gonzales on both campaign and official matters at the same time but cautioned to not imperil their grant funding by including her Wren colleagues in political conversations.

The Philadelphia Inquirer **DA Larry Krasner's campaign and Real Justice PAC have admitted to breaking Philly's campaign finance law, again**

Krasner's campaign maintained a complicated relationship with the Real Justice PAC that has ended up getting both groups in trouble with the Board of Ethics for the second time.

Philadelphia DA Larry Krasner's campaign (Wren's employer) illegally coordinated with Real Justice PAC (also Wren's employer) in both 2017 and 2021, sharing staff and resources. Wren was also working for Krasner's DA office.

Los Angeles County (California)

On November 17, 2021, *The New York Times Magazine* published a 7500-word feature on George Gascon, titled “He’s Remaking Criminal Justice in L.A. But How Far Is Too Far?”.¹⁰⁷ The piece portrayed the new Los Angeles County district attorney as a righteous justice warrior and quoted Wren’s Jessica Brand. Brand told the reporters, Emily Bazelon and Jennifer Medina, that progressive DAs had to recognize the gap between “what it takes to fix the whole prison system and what the public is ready for.” The journalists described Wren as “a group of former public defenders who provide policy and research support to reform-minded prosecutors.”

But Bazelon and Medina failed to disclose that Brand and Wren were currently working on behalf of Gascon, including drafting amicus curiae briefs for Fair and Just Prosecution, defending Gascon’s “prosecutorial discretion” (i.e., the unilateral right to not prosecute crimes). A Wren-authored appeal brief in the case (*ADDA v. Gascon*) was being circulated for progressive DAs to sign on as parties, just as Brand spoke to the Times. When the brief was released weeks later, FJP’s president Miriam Krinsky copied Jessica Brand and Amy Weber on the email to the signatories and expressly thanked “our wonderful partners at The Wren Collective” before she even thanked the law professors who supposedly authored the amicus.¹⁰⁸

But neither did Bazelon acknowledge her own cozy relationship with Brand and Wren. The reporter, writing for one of the most storied outlets, joined as board member and advisor to the Law & Justice Journalism Project (LLJP), another fiscally sponsored project of Social and Environmental Entrepreneurs (SEE), and founded and chaired by Wren’s Jessica Brand.¹⁰⁹ Formally launched in August 2022, LLJP offers fellowships and training to journalists to “improve coverage” of criminal justice that “has contributed to mass incarceration” and “how racism permeates every aspect of the legal system.”

Such lack of transparency and conflicts of interest appear to be The Wren Collective’s *modus operandi* but increasingly those oversights come at taxpayers’ expense. Looking for a new revenue stream in late 2022, Wren sought out a consulting contract with Gascon’s county office after having already provided district attorney George Gascon, with “research and communications support” from January to May 2022, valued at \$5,000 per month as “donated services.”¹¹⁰ Even Gascon’s chief of staff appeared confused why The Wren Collective was involved in office policies and strategies, writing to an administrative staffer on February 24, 2022, “Do we have a grant with Jessica Brand Wren Collective? If so, what is the nature of the grant?” The staffer replied: “I don’t believe we have a ‘grant’, but I believe she [may]

On Fri, Mar 10, 2023 at 4:16 PM Amy Weber <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Hi Diana!

I am actually just trying to estimate GG’s impact on incarceration and I want to make sure to include the resentencings. What I would really like is a list of the cases, the old sentence and the new sentence. I am not going to release this info to anyone — our organization works closely with the office and we need to show why that’s important to our funders. Do you have that information?

Thanks!!

Amy

On Fri, Mar 10, 2023 at 4:11 PM Tiffany Blacknell <TBlacknell@da.lacounty.gov> wrote:

Hi Diana!

I’m connecting you here to Amy Weber. Amy is a friend who is doing some work around resentencing. She was wondering if you had a list of the people that we have resentenced. I’ll leave it to you to discuss. Thanks!

TTB

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

--

Amy Weber
The Wren Collective
www.wrencollective.org

Wren’s Amy Weber sought confidential data to show why their close work with Gascon’s office “was important to our funders” but she promised she would not share it.

be donating services for communications projects with our office.”¹¹¹

In February 2023, Gascon’s senior advisor Tiffany Blacknell pushed county procurement staff to approve the non-competitive vendor agreement with Wren for three times (\$15,000) the monthly cost of Wren’s previously donated services. In March, after Blacknell secured Wren’s contract, she connected Brand’s deputy at Wren, Amy Weber, to her Gascon colleague, Diana Teran, with a data request. Wren wanted to “estimate [George Gascon’s] impact on incarceration,” promising that she would not “release this info to anyone – our organization works closely with the office and we need to show why that’s important to our funders.”¹¹²

It is unclear why Wren needed the sensitive data to “show” their work’s importance if they wouldn’t share it with third parties. And the exchange raises questions as to who exactly Wren’s unnamed “funders” were that needed proof of Wren’s value since Wren was now also being funded by taxpayers.

One of those Wren funders is Real Justice PAC, whose largest benefactor (Cari Tuna) also directly gave

at least \$225,000 to PACs backing Gascon’s 2020 election.¹¹³ And that excludes what Real Justice PAC transferred to other Gascon groups (i.e., Smart Justice California of the Tides network). And Brand’s links to Smart Justice, which transferred millions to the Gascon independent expenditure committee (Run, George, Run), included a weekly communications call with Chesa Boudin in San Francisco.

Smart Justice made its way into the Los Angeles District Attorney’s office as well, alongside Brand. In December 2022, Blacknell and Wren reached out to Smart Justice’s program director, Irene Hsu, on a yet-to-be announced Gascon immigration policy and asked for Hsu’s help sharing it on social media. Months after Wren was on a contract with the county, Hsu reached out to Brand and Blacknell again, this time she shared a background memo and factsheet on retail theft legislation to serve as Gascon talking points and then suggested Smart Justice pen an op-ed supporting Gascon’s policies.¹¹⁴ Ever obtuse, Gascon’s chief of staff asked his staffer Anna Kozma, “Is there an ask for the Department from Smart Justice?” The rest of his reply is redacted.¹¹⁵

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Irene Hsu <[REDACTED]>
 Date: Mon, Aug 21, 2023, 3:39 PM
 Subject: Fwd: SB 301 implementation - retail theft
 To: Tiffany Blacknell <tblacknell@da.lacounty.gov>
 Cc: Daisy Vieyra <[REDACTED]>, Jessica Brand <[REDACTED]>, Cristine DeBerry <[REDACTED]>

Hi Tiffany!

With so much media attention on recent shoplifting, lies about Prop 47, and smash and grabs, we wanted to make sure that SB 301 is on your team’s radar as something the DA can refer to re: what’s proactively being done. Similar to what the DA did with the cell phone kill switch when he was still in SF, this new bill that went into effect a few months ago and that he supported through the Prosecutors Alliance, makes it harder for folks to resell stolen goods. Fact sheet and additional background attached in case you think it makes sense to try incorporating this into Gascon’s remarks and/or when asked about this topic.

Daisy is pitching Robert Greene about the need for more solutions like this. :)

Do you think we should also consider an op-ed by Gascon about what the office is doing to shut down organized theft? Anne mentioned Gascon has done a lot of work to streamline the work around this issue.

Smart Justice’s Irene Hsu emailed now-paid Gascon advisor Jessica Brand at Wren and senior Gascon staff, offering research and suggesting an op-ed for Gascon.

On Second Thought, Wren Will Accept Taxpayer Subsidies After All

“[W]e do this work without any billing or publicity.”

– Wren Collective to Multnomah County DA-elect Mike Schmidt (June 16, 2020)

“The help comes at no cost to you or your office.”

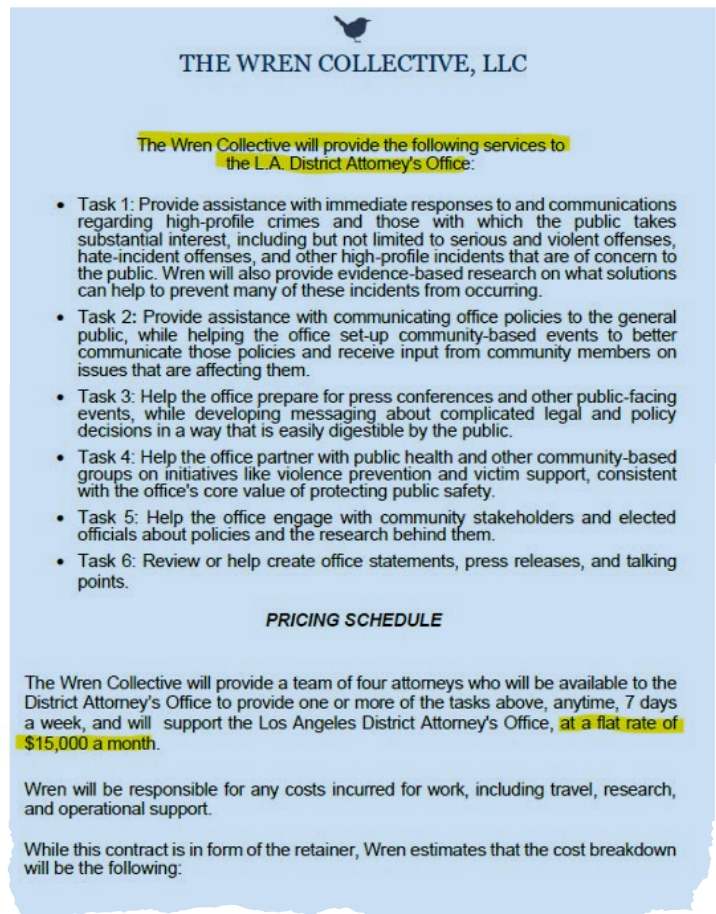
– Wren Collective to Loudoun County Commonwealth's Attorney Buta Biberaj (June 13, 2022)

Even after repeated assurances to prospective prosecutor-clients their services were completely cost-free to taxpayers, The Wren Collective eventually sought out and obtained government contracts.

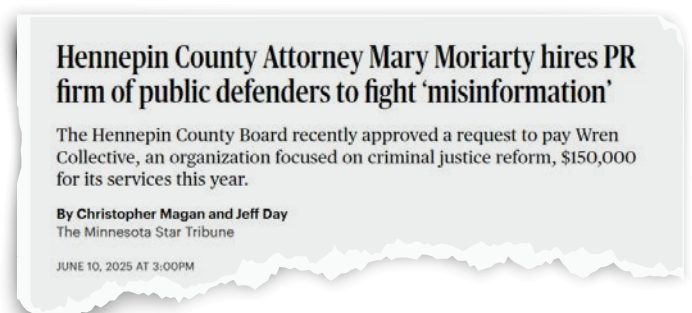
In June 2025, the Hennepin County, Minnesota Board of Supervisors approved a contract extension for The Wren Collective to continue its work for Minneapolis prosecutor, County Attorney Mary Moriarty. The new contract terms pay Wren \$150,000 for the year for its communications services. But the prosecutor had already hired and paid Wren \$75,000 for its previous six months of work – a fact that had not been disclosed until Moriarty needed more to cover Wren's fees.¹¹⁶

Moriarty's office said the contract was necessary to fight “misinformation” and that Wren already gave the taxpayers a 50% discount from its normal fee. And the Minneapolis prosecutor, beset by ongoing outside investigations and scandals, needs all the PR help she can get. In May 2025, the US Justice Department launched a civil rights probe into Moriarty's office after she announced that charging decisions would be, at least partly, based on the accused's race.¹¹⁷ Meanwhile, high-profile Democratic party officials (and progressive stalwarts) including Governor Tim Walz and state attorney general Keith Ellison have admonished her publicly for public safety and prosecutorial failures.¹¹⁸

While Wren's work with Hennepin's prosecutor is not its first taxpayer-paid contract, it is the first one to be publicly disclosed – until this report. In 2023, Los Angeles County District Attorney George Gascon also contracted with The Wren Collective, also for a supposedly reduced rate, billing county taxpayers \$180,000 a year for policy and communications work.¹¹⁹ The paid contract came a year after Wren had already been “donating” its services to the district attorney's office



Wren wrote a proposal to become a paid advisor to the LA DA's office for \$180,000/year. Gascon's communications director copied and pasted Wren's proposal text as an RFP for the county's procurement office. Wren received the contract in Spring 2023.



Minneapolis prosecutor Mary Moriarty hired Wren as a PR firm in late 2024 but could not pay their \$150,000 fee and had to ask the county board for more.

Wren Works With Prosecutors But For Their Shared Donors

Although Wren's structure obscures the true source of its revenue, the donors to its fiscal sponsor SEE reveal deep ties to Wren's project and blur the bright line between the political and official. Billionaire-led foundations funneled tens of millions of dollars to the "progressive prosecutor project" via Tides (TJC and FJP sponsor) and SEE (Wren sponsor) in recent years, occasionally earmarking the grant for the express purpose of the progressive prosecutor work of The Wren Collective or Fair and Just Prosecution.

Meanwhile, Wren's nonprofit benefactors funded these same prosecutors' election campaigns (both directly and via PACs and activist groups). Those political organizations and candidate committees often hired Wren for political work on behalf of the same DA candidates.

In Memphis, Shelby County District Attorney Steve Mulroy was propelled into office in 2022 with over \$900,000 from PACs funded by Pricilla Chan (wife of Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg), Cari Tuna, and George Soros. Soros personally gave \$280,000 to the pro-Mulroy PAC People for Fairness and Justice (PFJ) while Tuna-backed Accountable Justice Action Fund and Chan financed Stand For Children PAC contributed over \$500,000 combined to Mulroy's campaign.¹²⁰ PFJ's campaign spokesman Cardell Orrin continued to correspond with Mulroy while in office as executive director of Stand For Children.¹²¹ Meanwhile, Mulroy lists The Wren Collective – alongside Fair and Just Prosecution and Vera Institute – as one of four "partnerships and collaborations" in his 2022-2023 annual report.¹²²

Many Wren client DAs stay in touch with their donors. Austin's José Garza, who received at least \$527,000 in Soros

campaign help in 2020, spoke directly with Soros PAC treasurer Whitney Tymas, seeking funding for a legal fight in January 2023.¹²³ Garza also texted with Open Society chief of staff Elizabeth Guernsey, meeting personally with the group at least five times in 2022 and 2023.¹²⁴ Soros subsequently spent another \$400,000 on Garza's 2024 re-election.¹²⁵

Once in office, these donor-activist groups leverage their political relationships with prosecutors to embed The Wren Collective in their offices as the DAs' lead policy and communications advisors, while closely monitoring and directly coordinating with both their grantee-vendor Wren and their political beneficiaries, the progressive prosecutors.

And the donors and activists funding the prosecutors' campaigns and The Wren Collective went further – pushing Wren's "fee-free" services on the same district attorneys' offices whose campaigns they funded (and Wren worked on). Since most of The Wren Collective's official work (at least initially) was not taxpayer-funded, Wren's fiduciary duty and client loyalty remained with their political and nonprofit donors – the same donors who got them "hired" as unpaid policy and communications consultants to the elected prosecutors.

These previously undisclosed files reveal that The Wren Collective worked *with* prosecutors but worked *for* their shared donors' political interests. In addition to Cari Tuna's funding of Real Justice-Grassroots Law, other wealthy political donors and their affiliates who funded both Wren and prosecutors' campaigns helped arrange, manage, and fund Wren's work with progressive district attorneys' offices.



Steve Mulroy, the district attorney for Shelby County (Memphis, TN) – elected with the backing of Soros, Cari Tuna, and Priscilla Chan – boasted about his relationship with WREN Collective, Fair and Just Prosecution, and Vera Institute.

*information sought is excepted pursuant
to the attorney-client privilege*

REDACTED

to comply with your request as written,
we estimate that it will cost \$14,478



Part 5

Prosecutors Hide Wren Ties, Block Public Disclosure

Prosecutors Hide Wren Ties, Block Public Disclosure

KSAT-TV's revelations about Wren's involvement in the Bexar County District Attorney's Office begged questions about the scale, scope, and nature of The Wren Collective and other outside groups' influence and control over progressive prosecutors' offices.

The Law Enforcement Legal Defense Fund sought to answer those questions – issuing public records requests to 65 district attorney's offices in more than 30 states. Most offices engaged in bureaucratic obstruction – violating the spirit, if not the letter, of sunshine laws. Some offices denied disclosure outright or sought blanket exemptions, others provided excessively redacted records, many demanded exorbitant fees for production, while still others engaged in obstruction by delay – requesting repeated extensions or revisions to avoid releasing the files. [LELDF plans litigation in numerous jurisdictions to compel that the files be released.]

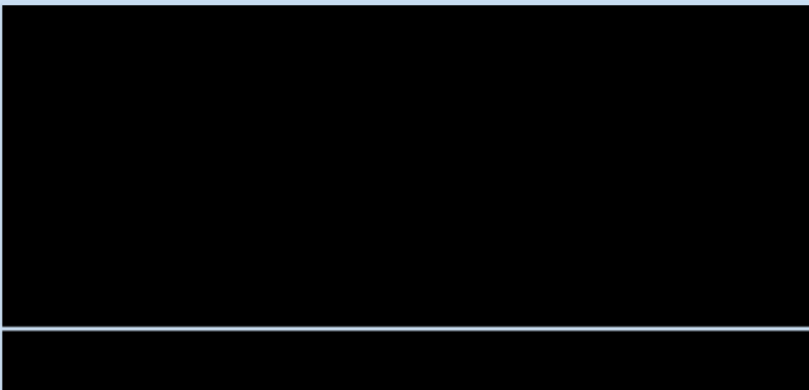
Over four months, LELDF received 23 public records disclosures with, at least partially, responsive records – totaling more than 50,000 pages of emails and text messages. Aside from official records that were directly withheld, this cache of documents likely represents a fraction of the communications between Wren (and its allies) and these district attorneys since the available records show most of the prosecutors actively using personal email accounts and devices to communicate with Wren and others about official business, thus avoiding potential public scrutiny.

On Mon, Sep 16, 2019 at 6:39 AM Jessica Brand <jessica.brand@thejusticecollaborative.com> wrote:

Hi, D.A. Becton-
I hope you are well. Just wanted to follow up on this and see if you had folks you might put us in touch with so we can get moving for you.
Best,
Jess

On Fri, Sep 6, 2019 at 2:38 PM Gabe Diaz <gabe.diaz@thejusticecollaborative.com> wrote:

Hi DA Becton,



Look forward to getting started! Take care.

--Gabe

Prosecutors' office like Contra Costa County used redactions to obscure the contents of communications, rendering them useless. Communications with third parties are not privileged information under open records laws.

Use of Personal Email, Devices, and Encrypted Messaging Services

This report identified at least 20 progressive prosecutors and their staff who communicate with outside groups regarding official business matters using their personal email accounts including Gmail, Yahoo, personal law firm, and campaign accounts. Frequently, these communications were uncovered inadvertently with one prosecutor using their official account to correspond with a different district attorney's personal account and third-party activists on a matter of official business.

In some jurisdictions, this is a violation of state open records laws (which are rarely enforced or have minimal penalties).¹²⁶ Where using personal accounts and devices is legal to do so for official business, such communications are deemed public records and subject to open records review.¹²⁷ But the use of these personal accounts, devices, or in some cases encrypted messaging services (e.g., Signal) allow public officials to destroy records before they can be obtained.¹²⁸

An official record-keeper, often a directly reporting to the elected prosecutor who is the subject of the records request, can plead ignorance that such communications exist or simply notify the official who can then destroy the records being sought.

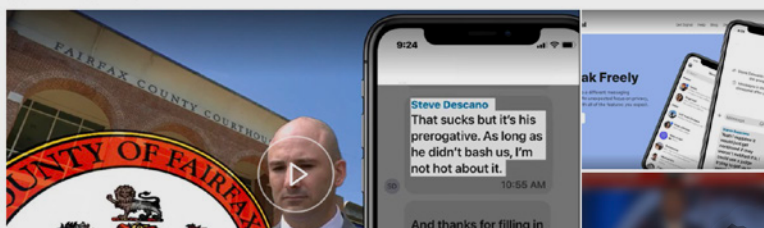
Diana Becton
Chesa Boudin
Aisha Braveboy
John Cruzot
Steve Descano
Michael Dougherty
Jose Garza
George Gascon
Joe Gonzales
Eric Gonzalez
Mark Gonzalez
Jim Hingeley
Brian Middleton
Stephanie Morales
Mary Moriarty
Harold Pryor
Eli Savit
Mike Schmidt
Carol Siemon
Monique Worrell



LELDF's discovered more than 20 prosecutors using personal email accounts to correspond with third parties (i.e., Wren Collective) on official matters, even sharing confidential and non-public information.

Fairfax CA Steve Descano uses an app that deletes messages. Is he breaking the law?

by Nick Minock | Tue, January 17th 2023 at 5:29 PM
Updated Wed, January 18th 2023 at 4:25 AM



Fairfax prosecutor Steve Descano was found to be using the disappearing messaging app Signal to communicate with his staff in 2023, discussing specific criminal cases and destroying public records – he faced no consequences.

Obstruction by Delay, Denial, and Redaction

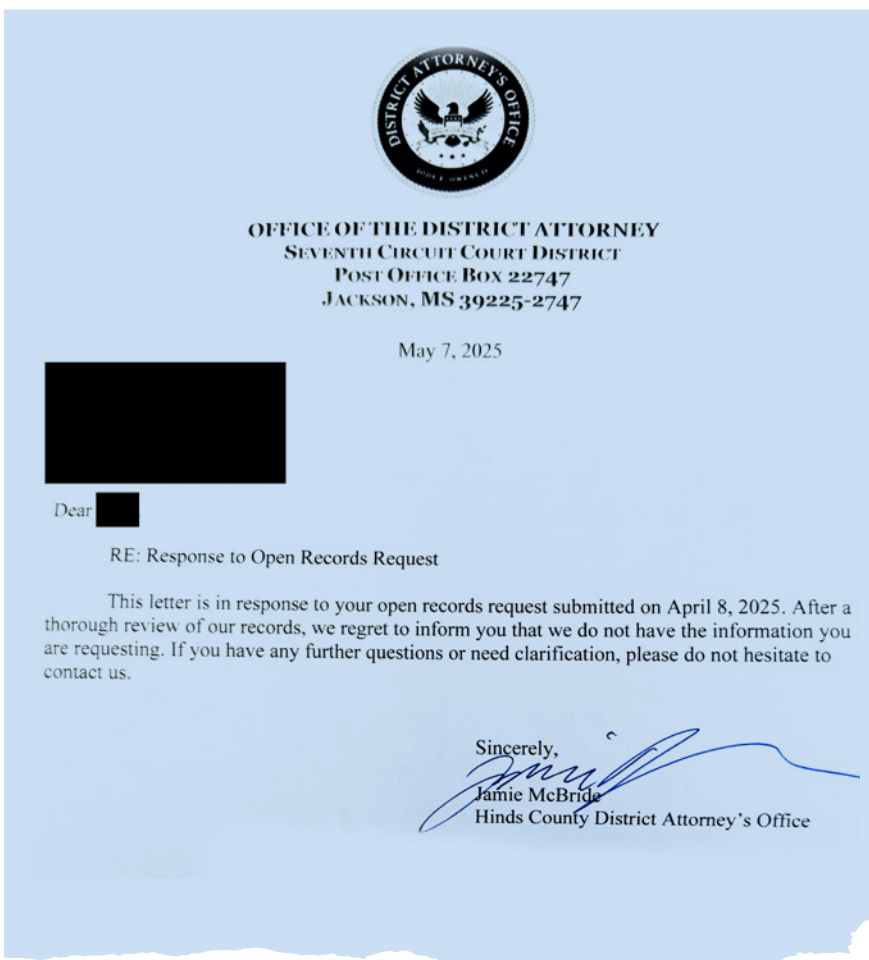
Additionally, the true scope and contents of responsive records in the possession of the prosecutors' offices are largely unknowable since the open records system relies on radical transparency and a good faith (and competent) effort to fulfill the request and comply with both the spirit and the letter of the sunshine laws.

Due to the lack of viable remedies for the media let alone members of the public, bad actors can thwart the system through various methods – knowing that the requester is unlikely to be able to prove the existence of a record they are seeking – if they did not already possess it. Taking advantage of that quandary, numerous records offices attempted to exploit our perceived ignorance of the records' existence or contents to obstruct our investigation.

First, some offices issued outright denials citing their own expansive interpretation of open records law exemptions

related to law enforcement investigations, prosecutorial decision-making, and attorney-client privilege.¹²⁹ The first two are curious since the requests were specific to Wren and other outside groups' communications with the elected prosecutor's official offices. The inference is that Wren and others who are not public employees have access to non-public records, yet the public cannot view Wren's communications about supposedly confidential documents. Similarly, claims of attorney-client privilege beg questions about Wren's role in those offices, suggesting a for-profit, yet "free" consultant to the prosecutor is their legal representative.

Second, other offices engaged in delay tactics to obstruct the timely release of records. In Minneapolis's Hennepin County Attorney's Office, where it was later disclosed that Wren had a taxpayer-funded contract with the prosecutor Mary Moriarty, the request has been in progress for four months



Despite LELDF possessing proof that Hinds County Mississippi District Attorney Jody Owens directly corresponded with the Wren Collective, Owens' office denied that responsive records existed.

and the assistant district attorney assigned to the case is non-responsive to follow-ups. To date, no records have been provided.¹³⁰

The assigned records attorney for Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg's office noticed repeated extension "requests" and then missed their own self-imposed deadline for fulfillment and only requested a further extension when LELDF followed up, after a statutory deadline passed. To date, no records have been produced.¹³¹

The Contra Costa County District Attorney's office (Diana Becton) noticed a three-month extension before it provided partial records, dating prior to Wren's formation. In ongoing correspondence, the deputy district attorney wrote "I highly

doubt I will find a responsive document—there was very minimal contact between my office and The Wren Collective." When asked to clarify and confirm that claim since LELDF possessed direct communications between Wren and Becton on her personal email, her deputy replied that their claim "was based on the relatively small number of communications with Wren that I saw in the emails as a whole...I will refrain from commenting and simply conduct the requested review."¹³²

Third, some offices, like Becton's, provided partial records that were not responsive or simply redacted large portions of email communications and documents, citing exemptions despite the correspondence being between official staff and third parties thus not allowable exemptions.

Fourth, the District Attorney's Office asserts that the information sought is excepted from public disclosure pursuant to the attorney-client privilege. Section 552.107 of the Government Code states that information is excepted from the requirements of section 552.021 if it is information that the attorney general or an attorney of a political subdivision is prohibited from disclosing because of a duty to the client under the Texas Rules of Evidence or the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct. Tex. Gov't Code Ann. § 552.107(1). Additionally, Texas Rule of Evidence 503 enacts the attorney-client privilege. The elements of the privilege under rule 503 of the Texas Rules of Evidence are the same as section 552.107(1) of the Government Code. For information to fall under the attorney-client privilege the government agency must first demonstrate the information constitutes or documents a communication. *See* ORD 676 at 7. Second, the communication must have been made "to facilitate the rendition of professional legal services" to the client governmental body. Tex. R. Evid. 503(b)(1). Third, the privilege applies only to communications between or among clients, client representatives, lawyers, and lawyer representatives. *Id.* Lastly, the attorney-client privilege applies only to a confidential communication, meaning it was "not intended to be disclosed to third persons other than those: (A) to whom disclosure is made to further the rendition of professional legal services to the client; or (B) reasonably necessary to transmit the communication." *Id.* 503(a)(5). As stated above, The enclosed email communications concern criminal policy and legislative decisions among elected prosecutors. These communications were intended to be, and have remained, confidential communications between the elected prosecutors. Therefore, the withheld communications should be excepted from required disclosure as attorney-client communications under Texas Rule of Evidence 503 and section 552.107 of the Texas Government Code.

Records Building 500 Elm Street Suite 6300 Dallas, Texas 75202 214/653-7358 Fax 214/653-6134

The office of Dallas County DA John Cruzot denied LELDF's requests request citing "attorney-client" privilege and policy discussions between elected officials, suggesting Wren had an official role to allow an exemption – or it is pure obstruction.

Excessive Costs and Burdensomeness Claims

Based on new information uncovered in the files, LELDF issued a follow-up records request in Bexar County and were told that the fee for fulfillment would be \$228 – which was paid. A week later, the district attorney's office followed up and informed us the revised fee was \$14,478.¹³³

Others quoted us similarly excessive fees where in other jurisdictions in the same state (governed by the same open records law) the fee was minimally or waived entirely. In New Orleans, the district attorney's office sets its own fee schedule to require \$20 per "query term" (there were approximately 50 terms) plus \$1 per page of records.¹³⁴ Since some of these files can entail hundreds of pages, often padded with duplicate documents or email chains, the district attorney's office can "price out" any requester with superfluous material.

The Milwaukee District Attorney's office (via the prosecutor's personal assistant) sent a reply three months after LELDF's request, enclosing a denial letter dated two months earlier. The stated reason for the denial was searching for 27 specific terms and emails (i.e., "Wren Collective" and Jessica Brand etc.) was "burdensome."¹³⁵ Similarly, the records officer for Cook County's State Attorney (now run by her successor) repeatedly deemed request after narrowed request as burdensome, justifying denials even after LELDF spoke with the general counsel who assured us that our latest requests would be fulfilled. They were not.

In Philadelphia, where DA Larry Krasner had Jessica Brand on both the official, campaign and PAC payrolls simultaneously, the records attorneys repeatedly assured LELDF that after just one more revision the records requested would be released. Our request was transferred four times to a new records officer since three of those attorneys resigned abruptly over a two-month period.

Eventually, the head of the civil division issued a terse, full denial.¹³⁶ The stated rationale was, in addition to a litany of questionable exemptions, the request lacked "specificity" despite the request including specific terms, emails addresses, and time period to search.

Fortunately, due to the web of ties between these various prosecutors' offices, shared communications between district attorneys and Wren (or other third-parties) proved the existence of records withheld by agencies. Still, the obstruction suggests there is more to be uncovered regarding these prosecutors' relationships with Wren, political activists, and donors. These disclosures, though limited, warrant further investigation by the media as well as local, state, and federal authorities to determine if such interactions and coordination constitute any legal violations. The obstruction and potential destruction of records suggests there is something to hide, or they would not go to such great lengths to obstruct public disclosure.

We have determined that complying with your request will result in the imposition of a charge that exceeds \$40. Therefore, we are providing you with this cost estimate as required by Texas Government Code § 552.2615. In order to comply with your request as written, we estimate that it will cost **\$14,478.00**.

Because the estimated charges exceed \$100.00, Section 552.263(a) allows Bexar County to require a full deposit before starting work on any portion of your request. After the deposit is paid and the work is completed, an updated statement will be prepared showing actual final costs to satisfy your request. If the actual costs are more than \$10 higher than your deposit, then you will be required to pay the full balance of costs owed before you receive the copies. If the actual costs are less than your deposit, then the unused amount will be refunded to you.

There is a less expensive way for you to obtain this information. You may narrow the scope of your request such as a narrowed date range, narrowed topics/specific search terms.

You may also view the information in person at our offices. If you choose to view the information in person, please provide me with three dates and times when it will be convenient for you to come. Please respond in writing using one of the following methods so that there is a record of your response:

1. by responding to this email; or
2. via the Bexar County [Open Records Request Portal](#).

Your request will be considered automatically withdrawn if you do not notify us in writing within ten business days from the date of this letter that you:

- (a) accept the charges;
- (b) wish to modify or narrow your request as previously discussed your request; OR
- (c) have sent to the Open Records Division of the Office of the Attorney General a complaint alleging that you are being overcharged for the information you have requested.

Thank you for your patience in awaiting this information.

Sincerely,

Bexar County

Bexar County's quote of \$14,478 to produce responsive records is a common obstruction tactic to prevent requesters from accessing files by making it too expensive.

Bexar County (Texas)

In September 2023, The Wren Collective's founder Jessica Brand furiously texted the elected district attorney for Bexar County, Texas – San Antonio's prosecutor Joe Gonzales – begging him to reply to her email.¹³⁷

Brand has secured DC law firm Arnold & Porter to defend Gonzales against a potential removal petition. She told Gonzales she “went out on a limb to get these guys and you are basically getting the smartest guys in dc.” Gonzales, who had been working closely with Brand since taking office in 2019, texted back:

“I just sent out an email and the problem is that this was sent to my work email and I do not always check my work emails as often as I do my personal. Can you please see that any future communications with this group or sent to REDACTED EMAIL please? I

would also suggested [sic] any communications coming from you, Jess, go to that email because my secretarial staff can see my emails and I would prefer this to go to [Gonzales' chief deputy district attorney and campaign treasurer Christian Hendricksen] And I only.” [typos in original]

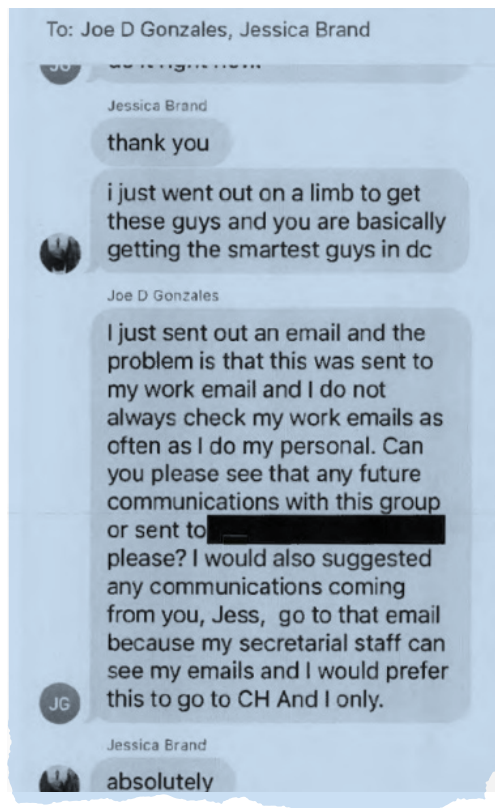
Based on other public records requests, Gonzales used at least four different personal email addresses to communicate on official matters including a campaign email [joegonzales.com], a law firm email [gonzaleslaw.com], and two free email clients [rocketmail.com and gmail.com]. While those records are supposedly subject to disclosure, Bexar County's lawyers have sought to exempt them from release.

And in the fall of 2023 Gonzales had cause for concern that his relationship with Brand and Wren would be discovered. Investigative reporters for a local San Antonio television station (KSAT) received a tip about Wren's role in Bexar County justice and filed open records requests. The revelations erupted into a scandal in January 2024.

Donor Web Ties Wren to Prosecutor

The communications showed Gonzales and his deputy, Hendricksen, openly coordinating with Wren's Jessica Brand in 2020 to pressure judges to adopt new Gonzales' Wren-authored bail policies through “mass community action” from two activist groups. The two groups, Texas Organizing Project (TOP) and Real Justice PAC, were the largest donors to Gonzales' election, behind only George Soros' Texas Justice and Public Safety PAC.¹³⁸

Soros' Open Society Foundations (OSF) has given \$3.9 million to the Texas Organizing Project, with millions more coming from other Soros-linked groups.¹³⁹ Open Philanthropy donated \$7.6 million to TOP while Cari Tuna personally gave \$1.2 million to Real Justice months before the 2018 election.¹⁴⁰ Shortly after receiving Tuna's donation, Real Justice sent Gonzales a check for \$55,000 and another \$280,000 to TOP.



San Antonio's DA Joe Gonzales appeared concerned that his communications with Wren and other third-parties could be leaked, so he asked that Wren's Brand use his personal email [he had at least four LELDF discovered].

Texas Justice and Public Safety PAC (whose sole donor is George Soros) spent over \$2.1 million electing and re-electing Joe Gonzales.¹⁴¹ It also donated \$100,000 to TOP and polling to Real Justice during Gonzales' first campaign run. TOP and Real Justice, in turn, spent hundreds of thousands to back Gonzales' campaigns.

And it was TOP who Brand, in coordination with Gonzales, turned to when they needed someone to put their name on Brand's op-ed defending Gonzales' policies as violence soared in San Antonio. And Gonzales again turned to TOP's director, Laquita Garcia, when they needed to push back on the Texas governor's support for reigning in progressive prosecutors.¹⁴²

Soros Pays for DA Campaigns and Their Lawyers

In text exchanges with four of fellow progressive Texas prosecutors (Travis' José Garza, Nueces' Mark Gonzalez, Fort Bend's Brian Middleton, and Dallas' John Creuzot), Middleton advised the group to contact Soros' prosecutor PAC director Whitney Tymas as "they have a legal team ready" to resist removal petitions lodged against the prosecutors.¹⁴³ Gonzales replied, "I'll call Jess Brand tomorrow."

Brand also kept Gonzales' team abreast of her other Texas prosecutor clients' opinions in Dallas, Austin, and Ft. Bend, telling Hendricksen "I'm sure Jose [Garza] will be on board [with a Creuzot effort]. So I'll call Brian [Middleton] and then we can get together."¹⁴⁴

Wren Ties Help to Sink DA

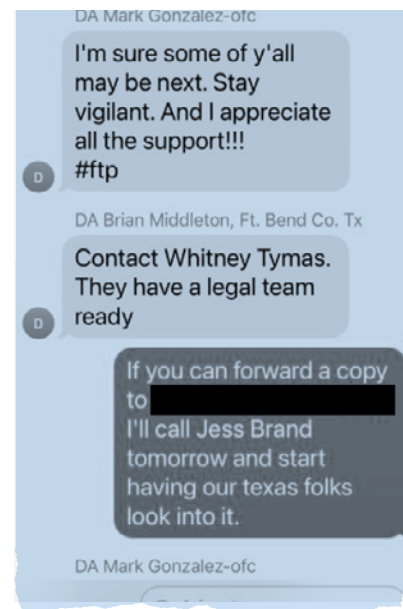
In 2022, after a rookie cop shot a driver who hit him with a car, Brand and Hendricksen worked together to get the assault charges against the driver dropped and the officer criminally indicted for the shooting. Gonzales' deputy Hendricksen texted Brand his appreciation, writing, "We got an indictment on the officer from the Erik Cantu case. Thanks for the help from you & your team." Then he told Brand that at the press conference, the district attorney, "Joe [Gonzales] pretty much stuck to the talking points." An elated Brand responded, "Hooray."¹⁴⁵

After the exchanges came to light in 2024, a judge ordered the district attorney to turn over all communications regarding the officer-involved shooting to the accused officer's lawyers.¹⁴⁶ Then, Gonzales

called an all-staff meeting to explain his relationship with Brand's Wren Collective. He reportedly told his line prosecutors and support staff that Wren did not influence any prosecutorial decisions but provided media help and talking points. Tellingly, Gonzales' chief deputy said that Brand's role was to provide insight into how other prosecutors are implementing criminal justice reform.

But after the local news stories about Wren's role in Gonzales' office broke, Gonzales' erstwhile ally and county sheriff Javier Salazar felt compelled to write a letter to Gonzales and Hendricksen admonishing them for invoking his name in their dealings with Brand, asking him to respect "attorney-client privilege."¹⁴⁷

Then Hendricksen left suddenly – to Austin. Now a senior prosecutor for Travis County's district attorney, Hendricksen reports to Jessica Brand's old colleague at The Justice Collaborative – Trudy Strassburger, who in addition to being José Garza's chief aide, is board secretary for Real Justice's Grassroots Law Project.¹⁴⁸ In June 2025, Gonzales announced he would not seek re-election.¹⁴⁹



The five progressive DAs in Texas (Creuzot, Middleton, Garza, Gonzales, and Gonzalez) had a five-way text group to coordinate political and policy issues. Here they suggest reaching out to Soros PAC's Whitney Tymas and Wren's Jessica Brand for help.



Part 6

Conclusion

Wren's Reach: The Implications and Consequences of the Progressive Prosecutor Project

That donors and activists can effectively buy access and influence over a prosecutors' policies undermines the integrity of the criminal justice system and our democratic institutions. Ostensibly, elected prosecutors are public servants who garnered the support of voters and owe allegiance to upholding justice and enacting the will of their constituents. But the flow of outside money into these races has reshaped the criminal justice system, especially in America's largest and least safe jurisdictions. Often, the spending appears farcically lopsided. (Loudoun County's Buta Biberaj spent more than \$1.3 million on her 2023 re-election campaign compared to the \$95,000 spent by her opponent – who shockingly prevailed by a few hundred votes.)¹⁵⁰

Such levels of spending on prosecutor races are unprecedented and overwhelming, often propelling unknown and underqualified candidates into office. Those neophytes – who have never been prosecutors or run an organization before winning their races – turn to outside groups for guidance including many of the same groups that funded their campaigns. But that guidance is more than suggestive – it is provided both directly and through expert intermediaries that the donors selected and funded for the express purpose of influencing the same district attorneys they helped to elect. The node of this donor-backed prosecutor influence operation is The Wren Collective LLC, whose influence

stretches from Boston to Los Angeles and from Orlando to Portland. Wren's policies and strategies have held sway over the criminal justice policies in most major cities and counties in the US, covering approximately 50 million Americans.

And the substance of those policies – abolishing bail and releasing dangerous offenders, declining to prosecute narcotics, shoplifting, prostitution, and rioting while increasing prosecutions of law enforcement officers – have had serious consequences for public safety. In most of those jurisdictions, crime – especially violent crime – rose dramatically and much faster than other similar jurisdictions. Meanwhile, victims, police, judges, and other justice system stakeholders have been met with outright hostility. The justice system as a whole has suffered from these prosecutors' misguided policies, promoted by The Wren Collective and their shared donors and allies.

Worse, the basic tenets of the justice system are eroded by this type of influence-peddling operation since it demonstrates that these elected prosecutors' actions are shaped not by their own ideas or by those of voters and local stakeholders but are pursued at the behest of a few ultra-wealthy donors and well-connected activists. Campaign donations and political support bought these donors access to district attorneys' offices and the prosecutors duly took orders from the donors' messengers – The Wren Collective.

NATIONAL REVIEW

NEWS LAW & THE COURTS

Man Exonerated by Philadelphia's Progressive DA Arrested on New Murder Charges

Gascon gave teen killer second chance — now she's charged again

Travis County prosecutors have 90 days to indict or release. They missed that deadline 263 times in 2024.

By [Tony Plohetski](#), *Austin American-Statesman*
Updated May 31, 2025 3:27 p.m.

LOCAL NEWS

Over 16,700 felony cases await indictment in Bexar County; commissioner calls for urgent solutions

Bexar County Pct. 3 Commissioner Grant Moody asking for DA to update commissioner's court on backlog

Appendix

Confirmed Wren Collective-Linked Prosecutors (40)

Name	Jurisdiction	State	City
Aramis Ayala	9th Judicial Circuit	Florida	Orlando
Diana Becton	Contra Costa County	California	Martinez
Buta Biberaj	Loudoun County	Virginia	Leesburg
Sherry Boston	DeKalb County	Georgia	Atlanta
Chesa Boudin	San Francisco County	California	San Francisco
Alvin Bragg	New York County	New York	Manhattan
Aisha Braveboy	Prince George's County	Maryland	Hyattsville
Shalena Cook-Jones	Chatham County	Georgia	Savannah
John Creuzot	Dallas County	Texas	Dallas
Satana Deberry	Durham County	North Carolina	Durham
Parisa Dehghani-Tafti	Arlington County and the City of Falls Church	Virginia	Arlington
Steve Descano	Fairfax County	Virginia	Fairfax
Michael Dougherty	Boulder County	Colorado	Boulder
Kimberly Foss	Cook County	Illinois	Chicago
Kim Gardner	City of St. Louis	Missouri	St. Louis
José Garza	Travis County	Texas	Austin
George Gascón	Los Angeles County	California	Los Angeles
Sarah George	Chittenden County	Vermont	Burlington
Joe Gonzales	Bexar County	Texas	San Antonio
Deborah Gonzalez	Clarke & Oconee	Georgia	Athens
Eric Gonzalez	Kings County	New York	Brooklyn
Mark Gonzalez	Nueces County	Texas	Corpus Christi
Andrea Harrington	Berkshire County	Massachusetts	Pittsfield
Lawrence Krasner	Philadelphia	Pennsylvania	Philadelphia
Beth McCann	Denver County	Colorado	Denver
Brian Middleton	Fort Bend County	Texas	Sugarland
Stephanie Morales	Portsmouth	Virginia	Portsmouth
Mary Moriarty	Hennepin County	Minnesota	Minneapolis
Marilyn Mosby	Baltimore City	Maryland	Baltimore
Steve Mulroy	Shelby County	Tennessee	Memphis
Jody Owens	Hinds County	Mississippi	Jackson
Pamela Price	Alameda County	California	Oakland
Rachael Rollins	Suffolk County	Massachusetts	Boston
Dan Satterberg	King County	Washington	Seattle
Eli Savit	Washtenaw County	Michigan	Ann Arbor
Mike Schmidt	Multnomah County	Oregon	Portland
Tori Verber-Salazar	San Joaquin County	California	Stockton
Lynnece Washington	Jefferson County (Bessemer District)	Alabama	Birmingham
Jason Williams	Orleans Parish	Louisiana	New Orleans
Monique Worrell	9th Judicial Circuit	Florida	Orlando

Methodology

This study is drawn from files disclosed via open records requests across the country, tax filings, campaign finance documents, media reports, and, in one instance, litigation filed in federal court.

Based on LELDF's prior research identifying progressive and Soros-backed prosecutors, this study selected 65 jurisdictions where the prosecutors were in office sometime between 2020 and 2024 – from the Wren Collective's creation to the end of last year. LELDF filed public records requests, commonly called Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, specifying the terms and names sought related to any email communications and calendars that referenced Wren, its staff, or other related keywords. Some requests were narrowed as the project progressed to include communications between known email addresses used by Wren and its allies, based on previously received records in other jurisdictions.

Over four months (from April to July 2025), LELDF received 23 open records requests of our 65 requests with the remainder being either ignored, denied, or repeatedly extended and remain pending. But the cache of documents, combined with other parties' FOIA requests and publicly available documents, allowed LELDF to cross-reference names and communications to build out a list of 40 progressive prosecutors who themselves or their staff communicated regularly, and substantively directly with The Wren Collective or Jessica Brand on policy, communications, and legal strategy. Regularly being defined as three or more discreet instances on different matters, directly - defined as a participant in the communication (not merely copied on a mass email), and substantively – defined as engaging on official or political matters with specificity and depth.

Primary Source Documents

Fulfilled Open Records Requests:

Contra Costa County	California	Bexar County*	Texas
Alameda County	California	Travis County*	Texas
Los Angeles County	California	Chittenden County	Vermont
San Francisco County	California	Albemarle County	Virginia
San Joaquin County	California	City of Charlottesville	Virginia
9th Judicial Circuit^	Florida	City of Norfolk	Virginia
Cook County	Illinois	Fairfax County	Virginia
Cumberland County	Maine	Loudoun County	Virginia
Berkshire County	Massachusetts	Portsmouth	Virginia
Multnomah County	Oregon	Arlington County and the City of Falls Church	Virginia
Davidson County	Tennessee		
Fort Bend County	Texas		

*Prior records request or may include records received from third-party.

^This request is counted twice since it covers two Wren-linked prosecutors over the period.

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