



Above: Micah Castillo, 10, holds up a sign while his father, David Castillo, speaks at the podium during a rally to reopen Oakland public schools on Feb. 28, 2021.

PHOTO BY ANNE WERNIKOFF, CALMATTERS

Left: Gov. Gavin Newsom announces a new requirement for all school teachers and employees to show proof of vaccination or to undergo weekly COVID-19 testing at a press conference Aug. 11, 2021.

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2018, Newsom not only said he wanted to end capital punishment in California, he said he wanted the voters to do it. In 2016, voters rejected a ballot measure that would have done that by a 6-percentage-point margin. Newsom hasn't yet given them another chance—or backed an effort to put it back on the ballot.

- Support a new gun tax: In 2021, Newsom's tough-on-guns rhetoric collided with his commitment not to raise taxes during a budget boom. An excise tax on guns, gun parts and ammo to fund violence intervention programs passed the Assembly by a thread and is pending before the Senate. Newsom has been mum.

- Replace cops with mental health professionals: Newsom last year vetoed a bill that would have let some cities send clinicians or social workers to respond to certain mental health-related 911 calls rather than armed police. He praised the bill's "underlying goal" but argued that it put responsibility for the new project with the wrong state agency. Another version is before the Legislature this year, while some cities have acted on their own.

Economy/poverty

What he's done:

- Push the largest economic stimulus ever: Buoyed by higher than expected tax revenue and an avalanche of federal money, Newsom proposed the largest budget in this state's—or any state's—history this year. It included \$100 billion in headline-grabbing, poverty-targeting initiatives including direct payments to millions of Californians and billions more for housing, debt relief, pre-K education and broadband.

- Expand signature anti-poverty program: At Newsom's urging, the 2019 state budget doubled the size of California's Earned Income Tax Credit, which sends cash to low-wage workers. That expansion, which also included a supplemental boost for taxpayers with young children, was, according to one enthusiastic commentator, Newsom's "biggest accomplishment" to date. Last year, he signed a bill extending the payments to undocumented immigrants.

- Support controversial gig worker law: In 2019, Newsom signed a bill that rewrote California labor law and sent shudders through the political system. It codified a state Supreme Court ruling to make it much harder for companies to classify their workers as "independent contractors." For freelancing Californians, this meant the prospect of less flexibility, or less work in general, but also a minimum wage, worker compensation protection and other benefits of formal employment. Corporate titans of the gig

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