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# Attorney General: State's top law enforcement officer

PROGRESSIVE VIEWS

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For my next column to describe the important statewide races on the Nov. 3 ballot and the Democratic vision for that office, I'll review the Office of the Attorney General (OAG).

The OAG serves as the state's top law enforcement officer. The OAG's responsibilities include defending the state of Texas and its laws by providing legal representation to the state, its officials, and agencies; serving the children of Texas through the enforcement of the state's child support laws and the collection of child support; securing justice for Texans by investigating and prosecuting criminal activities; and more

The OAG has the power to hold politicians accountable for any wrongdoings and can promote justice and equality by advocating for policies that benefit Texas communities.

A Democrat in this office will champion voting protections, accessible health care and more.

Democrats want to restore the OAG to its true purpose. Current AG Ken Paxton has turned the OAG into a right-wing headline machine, trampling individual rights and freedoms in order to promote the radical MAGA agenda.

Democrats will use the power of the office to defend — and where possible restore — individual rights and freedoms, and to uphold the rule of law and honor the Constitution.

Under a Democrat, the OAG will join other Democratic attorneys general to take the President to court to block the MAGA machine's illegal actions that harm the economy, tear apart communities and erode the foundations of democracy.

Democrats are committed to "doing the basics" of the office and doing them well. This includes collecting child support, issuing legal opinions that clarify the law and help government run efficiently, working with city and county governments to finance infrastructure, and ensuring government transparency.

Democrats will restore the integrity of the office so OAG employees will care about the people they serve and will feel good about the service they provide. Democrats will also act to ensure that corporations feel the consequences of taking advantage of Texans.

Democrats will root out political corruption and investigate and prosecute officials — regardless of political party — not for revenge or persecution, but to preserve the integrity of public service.

Fighting crime and promoting public safety are other strong Democratic priorities. In Texas, the attorney general can directly prosecute cases of identity theft, cybercrime, Medicaid fraud and, in some instances, human trafficking.

But in Texas, primary prosecutorial authority in criminal matters lies with local district attorneys, with the attorney general's cooperative support. Paxton's antagonistic approach to district attorneys diverts resources away from prosecuting criminals, directing those resources instead to dealing with red tape.

Democrats will bring the powers of the office to bear on public safety by working with local district attorneys to keep Texans and their property safe.

Democrats will fight to maintain a secure border, ensuring it's safe from drug smuggling, human trafficking and all forms of cross-border criminal enterprise.

Though immigration enforcement falls under federal jurisdiction, under the direction of the governor and Paxton, Texas is engaged in unconstitutional, wasteful border enforcement efforts.

Democrats will reject "shock and awe" border policy and tactics that violate the Constitution. Democrats will also refuse to surrender state sovereignty to the federal government.

The attorney general should assist with federal enforcement as appropriate, and block federal actions when they go too far.

Monday is the last day to register to vote in the November election. Visit www.votetexas.gov to check your registration or to register to vote. Note: Texas doesn't have online voter registration; you must fill out a form and mail it to the Kendall County Elections Office.

Early voting starts Oct. 19 at the Kendall County Courthouse Annex, 221 Fawn Valley Drive in Boerne. For more on statewide offices or to register to vote, call our office at 830-331-1243 or visit www.kcdems.us.

*Laura Bray is former Chair of the Kendall County Democratic Party. Nathan Johnson and the OGA contributed to this article.*