



Charges Aborted

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Can people now report on controversial subjects without being targeted by California officials?

At least for the next four years?

David Daleiden has [announced on X](#) that the charges against him and Sandra Merritt for reporting on Planned Parenthood's alleged sale of the body parts of aborted fetuses have now been dropped. Daleiden's no-contest plea, "which cannot be used adversely" against him, will be "entered into judgement as a misdemeanor ... then converted into a 'not guilty' plea and dismissed."

Why all the rigmarole instead of dismissing the charges fully and immediately?

Blame the sulking psyches of California poohbahs and jacks-in-office, who may have felt pressured to unload the

case because of the regime change in Washington. It seems that President Trump [nominated](#) Harmeet Dhillon, who has represented Daleiden and Merritt, to help lead the Civil Rights Division of DOJ.

Charges of filming people without permission—in the kind of sting operation that still happens quite often without anybody getting arrested for it—had been brought against Daleiden and Merritt in 2017 by California's attorney general at the time, Xavier Becerra. This prosecution was based on an investigation launched by one Kamala Harris.

The supposed crime was the recording, [in 2015](#), of interviews with Planned Parenthood personnel by members of the anti-abortion group Center for Medical Progress. Daleiden is CMP's founder.

Now, with the charges gone, Daleiden and CMP can focus on their work, which he describes as reporting on "the injustices of taxpayer-funded experiments on aborted babies."

A work that their prosecutors obviously wished to forestall.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.