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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Christian Romo Complaint Against Kim Salas Deemed Baseless And Unfounded

(Bakersfield) – On Wednesday, October 23, 2024, the Kern County District Attorney’s Office received a complaint from Christian Romo alleging violations of California Government Code Section 8314 against Kim Salas.¹ The complaint alleged that Kimberly Salas was on state government taxpayer time while attending an event. The complaint further alleged that during that event Ms. Salas was engaging in campaign-related communications relating to her candidacy for a position in the Kern County Board of Supervisors. The complaint did not provide any evidence to support the primary assertion that Ms. Salas was on state-compensated time when she attended the event, which occurred on October 22, 2024 from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.

After review of the complaint submitted by Mr. Romo, the Kern County District Attorney’s Office’s Public Integrity Unit sought and received voluntary cooperation from Ms. Salas to determine whether her attendance at the event occurred during time in which she was being paid to perform her duties as a State employee. Ms. Salas provided evidence that she began leave from her state employ from September 16, 2024, with a planned return date of November 15, 2024. During this period, Ms. Salas did not run afoul of engaging in campaign activities using state time, because she was not being paid to conduct State business during her leave. That Ms. Salas had provided notice and effectuated her leave from State employ was verified by the Kern County District Attorney’s Office.

Mr. Romo’s complaint further suggested that, due to the non-profit status of the host of the event, as well as of the involved Church, that it was ‘illegal’ to engage in any campaign-related discourse at the event. This is not consistent with the law. Whether non-profit organizations that are organized and receive tax benefits under various provisions of state or federal law are permitted to maintain that status is an issue that is within the purview of the various tax agencies to review when considering the application of tax-exempt status. The Kern County District Attorney’s Office does not conduct investigations of non-profit organizations or make determinations on their compliance with tax-exemption status or regulations.