

Gavin Newsom's past sex deviancy and substance abuse disqualifies him from governorship, rival Renteria says

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California gubernatorial candidate Gavin Newsom's past sexual misconduct disqualifies him from holding higher office, rival Democrat Amanda Renteria said Thursday, and he should resign from his position as lieutenant governor.

"If he was in the Legislature right now, he'd be called out, and like what we've seen, being forced out," Renteria said in an interview with The Sacramento Bee. "We've got to be sending the message that the more power you have, the more responsibility you have to protect others."

As [mayor of San Francisco](#) more than a decade ago, Newsom had an affair with one of his city hall aides, who was also married to his

campaign manager at the time.



"I can't blame anyone for my part in this ugly episode," Rippey Gibney added.

But Renteria told The Bee that "a boss having sex with his employees is an unacceptable situation."

"No one should be beyond that accountability," she said. "The bar needs to be higher. And in fact, the bar is lower here."

She also criticized Newsom, who was then 38, for during the same period dating a 19-year-old model who was [photographed drinking wine](#) at an event where Newsom also made an appearance. Newsom said he never provided her with alcohol.

"This kind of brazen and self-serving political stunt doesn't even deserve a response," Nathan Click, a spokesman for Newsom's campaign, said in a text message.

Asked last month about the affair in the context of the #MeToo movement against sexual harassment, Newsom said, "I acknowledged

it. I apologized for it. I learned an enormous amount from it."

Renteria, a former [Hillary Clinton campaign official](#), shocked political observers last month when she [jumped into the gubernatorial race](#) against four fellow Democratic candidates and more than three years after Newsom launched his campaign. Allies of former Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa charged that she may be trying to draw Latino voters away from him to help Newsom.

Renteria said Thursday that Newsom's continued political ascent sends a dangerous message to sexual harassment victims that they will be one to suffer consequences if they come forward, while their boss gets promoted. She called on Newsom to immediately "step down from the role you shouldn't have to begin with," though she stopped short of asking him to drop out of the governor's race.

"If he doesn't have the public trust to be lieutenant governor, obviously I think he's obviously disqualified to hold the highest position of power in the state of California," she said.

Republicans running for California governor [already slammed](#) Newsom and Villaraigosa, whose 20-year marriage also ended amid revelations of an affair with a TV reporter while he was mayor, for their "serious marital infidelities" at a debate last month. In October, a Los Angeles street artist hung [door signs mocking Newsom's behavior](#) throughout the neighborhood where actress Reese Witherspoon was holding a fundraiser for him.