

# Daily Journal

SEPTEMBER 19, 2018

## TOP 100 LAWYERS IN CALIFORNIA 2018

### POLITICAL LAW

### STEPHEN J. KAUFMAN

KAUFMAN LEGAL GROUP APC | LOS ANGELES

SPECIALTY: CAMPAIGN FINANCE, ELECTION & GOVERNMENTAL ETHICS

**K**aufman received a pretty good client endorsement recently.

“They’re a quality shop, very methodical and conscientious”, said California Attorney General Xavier Becerra. “You need folks who have experience and know what they’re doing.”

Becerra said Kaufman is “a consummate professional” who helped him defeat a claim by a Republican opponent that he was ineligible to hold the office of attorney general because he had let his bar license lapse while serving in *Congress. Early v. Becerra*, S250475 (Cal. Sup. Ct., filed Aug. 8, 2018).

The founder of Kaufman Legal Group said the stakes were high -- especially because a loss could jeopardize courtroom victories Becerra’s Department of Justice has won against the Trump administration and other entities.

“We think the language is clear,” Kaufman said, noting that if the Legislature had wanted an inactive attorney in good standing with the State Bar to be ineligible for the job, they could have explicitly said so in statute.

Kaufman added, “Taking their argument to the extreme, if he is ineligible to hold the office of attorney general that goes back to day one.”

From offices in Los Angeles and Sacramento, Kaufman’s firm helps clients follow campaign finance laws and represents them in court in campaign-related cases.

As is typical in political law, the firm specializes in sticking to one side of the political spectrum — in this case Democrats. Other high-profile clients include U.S. Sen. Kamala Harris and several members of Congress.

The firm is also working with a pair of first-time candidates taking on long-entrenched Republicans in Congress: Harley Rouda, who is challenging Rep. Dana Rohrabacher, R-Costa Mesa, and Katie Porter, who is challenging Rep. Mimi Walters, R-Laguna Beach. Both races are polling closer than many expected.

“It’s been quite a year for our firm,” Kaufman said. “The political debate in this country has had a significant effect on our business as more and more people have looked for ways to engage in the political process.”

— Malcolm Maclachlan

