

ZONG CHAWS LIS	Hi everybody! This a Hmong talk and you are with me, ZONG CHAWS LIS. Tonight, we have a special guest. That is our Mayor at Elk Grove, California, and he is Mayor STEVE LY. Recently you have been hearing about his personal accusation that you may have known well. Now I invite STEVE LY to talk with me and clarify this issue to all of you. Hello STEVE LY!
STEVE LY	Hi everybody! I am a mayor and thank you for sacrificing your time to listen to me. Thanks to all of our people throughout the north and south, both young and old. I am happy that we have a good opportunity to talk together tonight.
ZONG CHAWS LIS	STEVE, could you tell us a little about what happened in your Elk Grove? Some people who still do not know the root cause of this problem have gathered misinformation. Some people who do not know the truth are spreading ambiguous rumors, thus making us much confused. Could you please tell us yourself?
STEVE LY	Just a moment ago while you are telling the story, I did not know how to begin. There is one important thing in US politics and it is a law. No matter how hard I tell, it would not make any difference. It allows people in general to accuse or exaggerate their stories, and it would not be unlawful. I am not one of the private citizens. As a politician, I am called 'public figure' in English. There are far too many people accusing or defaming me, and I could sue or accuse them in return if I were a private citizen. But I am not; I am a public figure. This is a common rule for people in political arena. It seems like I am a celebrity or public official. As a Hmong that immigrated to the US, I would sincerely say that my passion is politics. Therefore, I am very happy to exchange information on this matter. The original issue has started when many people are talking about me, but I did not have enough time to with them. Especially in this COVID-19 crisis, it resulted in a shortage of our supply and product in the city for the rest of the year. Our children also could not go to school. In fact, I was in the office and I did not have enough time to answer or clarify this accusation, because I was busy. Rumors easily spread throughout the city, but there is not a single truth. I heard our Hmong people sharing this rumor, but nobody knows the original cause of this issue. So I have chosen this time as a good opportunity to inform you or allowed Hmong TV to tell my story from the beginning until now. How did it happen? There is one of my posts in social media concerning one Hmong person in Sacramento. He said that his automobile repair shop was burned down. I felt sorry for him, so I wrote a post in my social media account, "I felt sorry for him. Anybody with a kind heart should help him out, so he could open his shop again in Sacramento Region." Since then, there was a number of people who questioned why I responded in that way as if I was accusing the Black protests. The words that they spread in the rumor are not my words. My intention was to have people helping each other. While people were accusing me, I did not respond anything. But then, there was a Hmong lady who was angry and posted in her social media platform, mentioning that I do not like the Black and I want to oppose their protests. With this post being shared throughout the platform, the most difficult issue was that she did not clearly say all of what I said. I did not say anything about the Black, but she claimed that I am involved in accusing the Black. Instead I requested our people, whether Hmong or Black or White, to contribute and donate fund or labor into fixing the mentioned automobile repair shop. We love him (the owner) and we would support him to open his shop again. That is my first point. My second point is that I did not say anything about the Black; they misunderstood. But I was not upset. I understand that my writing may cause their misunderstanding. I tried to explain to the younger people, but

	<p>they still did not understand. They lied to others in the public. Some Hmong ladies, who did not believe that I am that kind of person, also defended me by saying that this rumor is only a lie. This caused an argument among the ladies. The ladies who did not like me said, “If you are this desperate to save STEVE LY, it might be because you have slept on the same bed with him for sure.” People knew what she meant by saying this, but I cannot sue her. People must understand that even I am accused, it is mandatory that I do not reply back. Then it has become a misinformation and spreading bigger and bigger. This is an original cause of the issue.</p>
ZONG CHAWS LIS	Can you talk a bit about the City Council? What was their decision? Can you tell us?
STEVE LY	<p>Yes! Actually, this may result from my campaigns. As far as I remembered, there are six political campaigns for me in this year. Please note that being a politician, even if you win or lose, comes with haters. This hatred will be kept inside. If you do not submit to them, they will cause you a trouble. In fact, when this Hmong lady accused me of hating the Black, it caused me a trouble. One of our brethren sent her a message to question why she accused me in this manner. She said that there is one individual sending her a secret message, which made her upset about me. That individual claimed that STEVE LY deceived people, STEVE LY forced them not to use their voting rights, STEVE LY made it so that there is no ways for them to complain against me, and STEVE LY is dishonest. Afterward, this Hmong lady called the City Council and made all of these claims. In addition, she claimed that I asked people to harass her. This is a beginning of the story in the City Council. Then there were those people who have lost to me in a mayor election, who came to support that Hmong lady. Those people said to her in an agitating manner, inserting that in the election, I also harassed them as well. This caused a bigger problem in the City Council, so the City Council arranged for a discussion regarding this matter. I was happy and glad that this issue will be solved, because people who heard this rumor have become upset with me, even if it is not the truth. There are also those people who believe that I did not commit such action; they have become my supporters and defended me. Those who hate me claimed that I am manipulating these people to support me. That's not right. You could ask any legislators in the council members. For example, there are some people who love you, who have voluntarily done something that is not right. And yet, should you force someone to be responsible for them and their actions? This is not a US law. Knowing that they could not do me any harms, they began to accuse me of this and that. To solve this matter, I asked for any independent entities to investigate. If I were proved to be on a wrong side, I would be responsible. But I would speak with sincerity that STEVE LY is like before. If my political opponent could not come up with better idea to defeat me, there is no need to use such desperate scheme. The US politics is like this. Even though you are severely accused, you could only let them do it. There may be a lie or truth in politics, and the opponents are using lies to accuse and cause me troubles. About the lady who is having a problem with me right now, she is manipulated by someone who is recently competing with me in an election.</p>
ZONG CHAWS LIS	So could you talk a little bit more about that accusation? I also heard that you are not respecting people, in particularly women. They said that all the 18 Hmong Clans system heard about this and sent messages among themselves. In addition, they (those who oppose him) claimed that you threatened or harassed the women. They are not happy about this, so could you tell us a bit?

STEVE LY	<p>Ok! This is a truth. My opponent may not be happy if I tell you about this. She claimed that I was upset when she was appointed into a school board. I was upset so that I asked some Hmong people to compete with him, which is not the truth. While he was in office, no Hmong competed with him. He further mentioned that I was calling a school board to complain against his colleagues. If that was true, what I am here talking to audience now will create him a problem. But that is not the truth. I say all of this to let you understand. I am most upset and unhappy with them accusing Hmong men as bad people. Another accusation was on the 18 Hmong Clans system. They said that the system is trampling and stepping on women so that those women do not earn any reputation and prosperity in this country. My answer to them was I want my people to support one another like before and they should stop this accusation on the 18 Hmong Clans. They have insulted our traditions; and I responded, "If you insult Hmong, you are insulting me, insulting my father, my mother, and all of our ancestors. We have this system for almost five thousand years. You, the American people, have just built up this country. What rights do you have in forcing us, Hmong people, to compare to you?" I insulted those Americans by saying, "Whenever you paid for the women, you also paid for the men. They are all working. Or do you want me to insult Hmong people? I cannot actually do it." This is me fighting with them. I cannot do they may want me to do. Because Hmong people have invested in me, now I am having this job. So now, I am working putting most effort into this job to repay the 18 Hmong Clans. If they insulted us, Hmong people, this is not right. I cannot do that and I am not pleased with this. This is me fighting with them. Besides, those foreign women, who were upset with me insulting them, claimed that I forcibly sent this Hmong lady to insult the 18 Hmong Clans. There is no a single truth in this. I did not know what to do about this, so I decided to report to the police in Elk Grove to investigate the wrongdoer. After the policemen investigated, it is found that there is no evidence in their saying. But they still claimed that Hmong people do not know what is good and Hmong men are not good people; moreover, we stepped on women. I would like to reply by asking them, "In the US, we, whether men or women, have first invested for our reputation. You, the American people, did not invest in us. Why do you force us to be like you? Do you think that by doing this, you will be better than us? When you do this, I do not think that it is right. You should come and look at our Hmong culture which is more than five thousand years old. The US was just built for only two thousand years. What rights do you have in forcing us?" This is my sincere truth that I would like to share with the chiefs, companies, and all Hmong people. My political opponents did not respect us, the Hmong people. The office term is not more important than our people, so at that moment, I had an argument with them. This escalated the problem. But most importantly, I believe that Hmong people must preserve our dignity. This is the most important thing.</p>
ZONG CHAWS LIS	<p>Mayor, what do our Hmong people or the 18 Hmong Clans in Sacramento think about this matter? And why did they send a message to that lady, which she thought that it was threatening or harassing her. Moreover, what do the 18 Hmong Clans in California or Sacramento think about this as well?</p>
STEVE LY	<p>The 18 Hmong Clans and Hmong citizens are not happy about this. Right now, they are upset. But every time they fought back, that lady would assume that I, as a mayor who cares for them, is the one who orders and forces them to do. So this caused this problem. But I would say with my utmost sincerity that there are also some smart Hmong people. Besides there are a few group of people in the 18</p>

	Hmong Clans who are fighting against the elected school board. Because they see that it is inappropriate, they have stood up to protect the Hmong dignity.
ZONG CHAWS LIS	So, for Hmong people in Sacramento, what do they want? What do they want from this lady?
STEVE LY	There is not only that Hmong lady, but also foreigners, Hispanic, White, and one Indian lady. So that Hmong lady is not alone. I have received one message that accused me of forcing the people to be against them. Before they are going to make claims by referring to the federal laws, state laws, and policy laws, they should check out the truth. You should see which race is giving me a trouble. I would not say that. But they said everything and said it very wrong. Our Hmong community gave them some time to resolve this problem; it is not forcing them to. I will tell you the truth. There are three men who run for the school board. The first man is ALIMUA, the second one KEOXONG, and the third one YANGLAN. They all run for school board. In politics when I said “shooting one bullet and killing three birds”, I am telling this to the Hmong people so that they will understand well about politics. All three men said something which make people misbelieve that Hmong men are bad people and they intimidate Hmong women. Do you think that the first highly elected mayor will commit such action? They said that Hmong people supported one another to say something bad against them. I want to question, “Why do you say like this?” But as a matter of fact, they are claiming us forcing and doing something bad with the Hmong lady. This escalated our problem.
ZONG CHAWS LIS	Another thing will be talking about your personal attack. Another thing will be on the personality of our Hmong people. Everybody is not happy with such issue. If Hmong people in Sacramento and California throughout fifty cities heard about this, they would be upset as well. What do they want from Hmong people in Sacramento? And for Hmong people there, do they want the accusing people to apologize or what? What do our brethren want?
STEVE LY	There are a few problems and many groups of people demand with different ideas. If you want to know this, we need to arrange an interview with them, so that we would know what their demand is. But the most important thing is that I want to come out and tell the truth so that our brethren will understand those lies. I am still working and I am like before. This is politics. I am telling you all of the truth.
ZONG CHAWS LIS	Does this problem affect your leadership in Elk Grove?
STEVE LY	Yeah! It has made me astonished and unhappy with the problem. If this continues, I may not be able to help the 18 Hmong Clans in competing for the position. My opponents have created problems to defame me. This is astonishing and grief-stricken..
ZONG CHAWS LIS	So in this coming November, are you expecting any debates with your opponent?
STEVE LY	Yeah! Talking about debate, I have prepared my outlines. Right now, I am helping friends in the city to prepare for businesses. The second concern is that I am finding a way for our children to return to school. The third one is about how we need to reserve our finances to get ready for economic crisis. These concerns are the most important, and it makes my accusations less important, not worthy to mention. But any way, as many people are still misunderstanding, I take this as a good opportunity to let the truth be known to all of you.

ZONG CHAWS LIS	Yes! That's why we invited you. And Mayor, I know that this is a petty matter in politics. Whoever listens to this will also feel indignant. I know that you are doing a big job to control the people and improve the living of our brethren to become prospered. Do you have anything else to say to our brethren who are watching this TV?
STEVE LY	The most important thing is what I said to all of you. These days, there are many types of politicians in the US. There may be many more bad people in where you are living. You must always remember that you should not believe what you heard from that person. I speak with sincerity that I did not order the 18 Hmong Clans to come out and speak against that lady. I did not force anybody, whether she/he is a Hmong or not, to become my supporter and speak bad things to those American and Indian ladies. They are accusing me because they are not smart enough. They can do whatever they want, but they will never win. It is all political. And I know that in November, people will see that for what it is.
ZONG CHAWS LIS	And Mayor, you have spoken the truth to all of our brethren and its root causes. But before you go, you are using the mainstream media. Is that your plan?
STEVE LY	Yeah! That's my plan. My goal is to have the people understand first and you will understand about politics. You are the first people to support me. Without your support, I would not be in this position. So before discussing with the Americans or outsiders, I must discuss with you and tell you that those are baseless accusations. This is politics, and I am still working like before.
ZONG CHAWS LIS	Thank you Mayor STEVE LY very much for joining us tonight and for sacrificing your time.
STEVE LY	Ok! Thank you everybody!
ZONG CHAWS LIS	My beloved brethren! The man who has just spoken is our Mayor STEVE LY of Elk Grove, California. You may have realized what is happening right now from himself. He said that this is a political game. Even they accused him, he has not yet harass and threaten those who are upset with him. Moreover, they spoke against Hmong people. This is unacceptable, especially to STEVE LY. However STEVE LY will solve this issue will be followed up by us. When talking about it, it is indignant. Our Hmong people are not like that. This is what we heard from STEVE LY. If you have any concerns on this issue, you can either contact us or STEVE LY. STEVE LY will be in reelection in this coming November. And you know that his opponents will compete against him in this coming November and these are those who accused him. We all believe that it is about politics, and we will not hate anybody. Therefore, I want our brethren to join our talk at Hmong TV Conversation. We still have many people to interview on politics and living for our Hmong people throughout fifty cities. I am glad that you joined me in listening to Mayor STEVE LY of Elk Grove, California. I am ZONG CHAWS LIS. See you again!