

The Oakland Police Commission (Measure LL) was created by a vote of 83% of the city's residents in 2016 as a way of taking oversight of the Oakland Police Department from a federal district court judge sitting in San Francisco and giving it to the people of our city. But the strong independent Police Commission that Measure LL created hasn't been quite strong enough to overcome all the obstacles the City Administration and the City Attorney threw in its way.

 So the Coalition for Police Accountability started working in the spring of 2019 on fixes to Measure LL that would clean up the glitches and omissions in the original Charter amendment. The Commission needed its own lawyers and staff, it needed an Inspector General, and it needed access to OPD records. City Council members started working with CPA on draft language for the Charter changes. It began as a technical fix, a good government effort.

 But on May 5, the day before the City Council was about to consider a draft measure, Mayor Schaaf sent out an "Action Alert" warning citizens of the *dangerous* proposal brought forward by council members Kaplan and Kalb. If they got their way, the Police Commission would be able to "override any police operational decision, divert public safety resources, and prevent rapid response to public safety emergencies."

 The statement quoted is a lie. Any additional Commission powers proposed would be hedged in with qualifications and subject to City Council approval. Nothing in any of the proposals could be construed by any fair- minded person as compromising public safety in any way.

 Oakland's mayor has, sadly, assimilated the spirit of Donald Trump-- willing to use the Big Lie to get a political advantage.

 But then Libby Schaaf is the two- faced person who while she was publicly firing former Police Chief Anne Kirkpatrick said ***both*** that she did it because the Police Commission, which she said she respected, wanted her to ***and*** that Kirkpatrick was an outstanding and admirable chief. Public confusion about the firing was not surprising.

 Schaaf had no legal obligation to fire the former chief and if she thought she was so great why didn't she stand by her? Or if she thought the Commission had good reasons to fire the Chief (Kirkpatrick's allowing OPD to slide backward in its compliance with the court orders) why didn't she stand up for that?

 No doubt she wanted to keep the support of *both* the people who stood behind the Commission as well as the people who liked the chief. So whose side is Libby Schaaf actually on? That's pretty obvious--Libby Schaaf's side.

 Seventeen years (!!) of federal supervision of Oakland's police force will end only when Oakland wakes up to the need for effective local oversight. Schaaf won't do it. She'll be out of here in two years and like every mayor since 2003, she's just kicking the can down the road. But she doesn't want anyone else to do it either. It might make her look bad to potential supporters on the right in her bid for her next gig.