

# At Dem convention, Kamala Harris demands 'opportunity ... open to everyone' — but had special career help from powerful boyfriend

DC [dailycaller.com/2012/09/06/at-dem-convention-kamala-harris-demands-opportunity-open-to-everyone-but-had-special-career-help-from-powerful-boyfriend/](https://www.dailycaller.com/2012/09/06/at-dem-convention-kamala-harris-demands-opportunity-open-to-everyone-but-had-special-career-help-from-powerful-boyfriend/)

Addressing the Democratic National Convention Wednesday night in Charlotte, N.C., California Attorney General Kamala Harris told a crowd of 20,000 that she wants an “America where opportunity is open to everyone ... where everyone plays by the same set of rules.” The first big boost to her career, however, came not because of her legal prowess but because her boyfriend was California Assembly Speaker Willie Brown.

San Francisco Chronicle columnist Herb Caen once called Harris “the Speaker’s new steady.” He went on to become the first black mayor of San Francisco.

As Brown’s time as speaker drew to a close in 1994, he named Harris to the California Medical Assistance Commission, a job that came with a \$72,000 annual salary. Brown had previously appointed her to the state Unemployment Insurance Appeals Board.

She “was described by several people at the Capitol as Brown’s girlfriend,” the Los Angeles Times reported at the time.

Although that job paid nearly \$98,000, Harris’ term was set to expire in five weeks when Brown tapped her for the Medical Assistance Commission slot. That body met only monthly and the \$72,000 position was not consider a full-time job.

Brown named another long-time friend, Phillips S. Ryan to fill the insurance board slot for the remaining five-week period. “Brown and Ryan have been friends and business associates for years,” the Times reported. “Brown was ‘of counsel’ to a Los Angeles law firm in which Ryan was a partner.”

The Brown-Harris affair didn’t last long. She was spotted dating talk show host Montel Williams in 2001, but Brown continued to support her, helping her as mayor to become San Francisco’s first black district attorney over Terence Hallinan, a popular two-term incumbent.

Harris was narrowly elected California’s Attorney General in 2010. The election was widely seen as fraudulent, according to John Fund, co-author of the 2012 book “Who’s Counting?: How Fraudsters and Bureaucrats Put Your Vote at Risk.”

Despite voter registration rolls that showed Democrats outnumbering Republicans statewide by some thirteen percent, Los Angeles District Attorney Steve Cooley led Harris by 34,000 votes after more than 7 million were counted. But after provisional ballots were counted, she was declared the winner by approximately 50,000 votes.

*This article was updated after publication to reflect that the 2010 California attorney general race was decided by counting so-called “provisional” ballots, not by a recount.*

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