GOVERNOR BROWN’S RECENT PARDONS CLASH WITH PRESIDENT TRUMP’S ACTIONS ON IMMIGRATION

Submitted by Bethany Klein on Wed, 12/27/2017 - 05:10

California Governor Jerry Brown isn’t backing down from the state’s feud with President Trump regarding illegal immigration. Brown issued pardons on Saturday to two men who were on the verge of being deported from the country for committing crimes. Brown used the state’s approach to federal immigration authorities in combination with faith in the ability of these men to redeem themselves as validation for why he chose to grant these acts of mercy to the two individuals. A **pardon** can only be issued if the person has been crime free for ten years, finished their sentence, and receive a certificate of rehabilitation from a court.

Federal officials have recently increased the number of immigrants deported for felony convictions that resulted in them losing their status of being in the United States legally. Many of the offenders have incidents that were nonviolent and occurred many years ago. Attorney Kevin Lo from the Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Asian Law Caucus represented a few of the men in a recently filed class-action lawsuit and said that the pardon allows the reason for the deportation to be eliminated. The individual still needs to ask the immigration courts to reopen their case.

Deportation has been narrowed down to specific ethnic groups, particularly the Vietnamese and Cambodians according to lawyers familiar with the field and those who are currently handling cases. Two of Governor Brown’s pardons were given to Monty Neth from Modesto and Rottanak Kong of Davis, who are Northern California Cambodia men swept up during a recent immigration sweep in October.

Kong’s felony occurred in 2003 when he was 25 and was for joyriding. He received a punishment of a year in jail. Neth received a felony weapon charge conviction with gang enhancement along with the misdemeanor of receiving stolen property in 1995.

Since being back in office in 2011, Brown has granted 1,050 pardons and 37 commutations. He also pardoned Kimberly Joyce Carter, who was in and out of prison due to a life of prostitution and homelessness who has since founded a nonprofit agency. Time for Change Foundation to combat women homelessness. Inmates have the opportunity to request a modification or elimination of their sentence, which is dependent upon their behavior while incarcerated along with other factors. Brown recently signed Senate Bill 54 which will go into effect on the first of January and allows state authorities to refuse to cooperate with federal immigration laws.