

Former Supervisor Ginny Simms statement to the Napa County Board of Supervisors on July 11, 2018 regarding the dissolution of the collaboration between the Napa Valley Vintners and the authors of Measure C, the Watershed Protection Initiative, prior to its placement on the June 2018 ballot:

I didn't think that I was going to be first [to speak] and I hope to hell I'm not last since I'm going to be talking about things that are so disturbing to me that once in a while I really lose my cool. First I want to say that Minh Tran has been very generous with his time to those of us he called in to talk about his suggestions. We did not get around to saying yes or no to his suggestions. But he let us let him know how the people who'd worked hard for Measure C felt; about how this county is in grave danger of becoming an arm of big wine.

Here's what I want to tell you. It's a story I don't like but I'm going to tell it anyway because I think its time for us all to hear the same story. Please feel free to verify it on your own.

What happened: A group of the Napa Vintner board OK'd a negotiating process with the members of Measure C. That board and its representatives met with the Measure C people for about 6 or 7 months. Each time they would report back to the Vintner board and the Vintner board would OK that they could go ahead. That happened 4 times in that 6 months. There were times when they would go back to the Vintner board report what they were working on, there were changes made at the request of both sides but there were also alterations that the Measure C people came to regret because they were done at the request of the Vintners and they had no time to change them after the Vintners backed out.

After that 4 times, a group of people came into the meeting of board of the Vintners, and this group included Gallo Wine from Modesto, Treasury Wine from Melbourne Australia, Hall Wines from Napa and some individuals whom I would rather not name at this time but you will find them out if you check the story. This particular group walked into the Vintners board meeting and told the board that if they did not stop working with this group and if they did not come out against Measure C and did to give Measure C opponents \$200,000, they were personally and professionally going to leave the Vintners and pull all their wine from any further wine auctions. Faced with the particular ultimatum, a bullying effort that really struck me as beyond the pale, the board changed its mind and that afternoon along about 3:30 the board of the Vintners did a complete switch, decided to oppose Measure C, decided to put money in against Measure C and the game was over at that moment. Now that's it. You check it. As far as I'm concerned you know now who you're up against. And don't think it was us, because it was the whole county,