

Waves of anti-Tesla and Elon Musk protests ripple throughout Bay Area

From Berkeley to San Jose, hundreds of protesters mobilized outside Tesla showrooms to denounce Musk and call for a boycott



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Waves of protesters parked themselves outside dozens of Tesla stores in the Bay Area on Saturday in protest against Elon Musk's recent actions on Capitol Hill that include spearheading an agency that supports cuts to diversity funding and potentially allowing access to private taxpayer data.

Musk was recently appointed as a "special government employee" by President Trump, and tasked with leading the White House's Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) to help reduce federal spending.

Some DOGE supporters see its efforts as a way to monitor spending at a time when the nation's federal debt is at an all-time high. However, the task force's efforts have also raised alarms from lawmakers after its employees gained access to the Treasury Department's payment system, which stores personal data for many Americans. Musk's popularity with the Bay Area's deep blue residents has soured as a result. From Berkeley to San Jose, hundreds of protesters mobilized outside Tesla showrooms to denounce Musk and call for a boycott of Tesla's products.

In Santana Row in San Jose, a dozen protesters congregated at the Tesla store waving homemade signs mocking Musk and his involvement with the government.

As two security guards stood by the store entrance, Los Gatos resident Debbie Lowe planted herself next to them, bearing a sign that read "Don the Con and F-Elony Musk" with a caricature of Musk and Trump.

“Never in a million years did I think our country would go down this way,” she said. Alongside her, fellow Los Gatos resident Karla Albright carried a poster with the text, “Down with DOGE” and “Dump Tesla.” Albright said she used to be a supporter of Tesla and loved the concept of electric vehicles. She stopped supporting Musk when it became clear the tycoon “was getting too wealthy, and becoming corrupted,” she said. “When a single human being has more money than a government, there is something grossly wrong,” she said. Albright helps lead the Los Gatos chapter of Together We Will and Indivisible, two national political action and civic engagement organizations with local representatives. Both movements helped organize similar protest against Tesla nationwide. Later Saturday, in Sunnyvale, more than 80 people lined up outside the Tesla store on El Camino Real. They stood on the sidewalks and lawns, waving posters, beating drums and cheering on cars that honked in support.

Those who chose to drive onto Tesla’s parking lot were met with jeers. “You can do better,” one protester yelled, while another added, “There are other choices.” Sunnyvale resident Bruce Hahne, one of the organizers for the protest, said Musk is not an elected official, and has no business having so much power in the government. “It’s an administrative coup. We can’t allow that,” he said. “Buying a Tesla is supporting Musk’s corporation, and supporting the coup.” As Hahne handed out fliers criticizing Tesla and watched the sidewalk flood with like-minded protesters, he waved his “Stop Elon Coup” poster toward them. “Elon Musk does not run the government,” he said, “We the people run it.”