

#1620 Threatening the 2024 Election to Subvert Democracy - Members

JAY TOMLINSON - HOST, BEST OF THE LEFT: [00:00:00] Welcome to this episode of the award-winning *Best of the Left* podcast, in which, as the country gears up for election in November, we look at a variety of ways that the GOP and their election denialist supporters are preparing to subvert the democratic process to get the result they want. Sources today include *The Gaggle: An Arizona politics podcast*, the *PBS NewsHour*, *The Majority Report*, the *Thom Hartmann Program*, *Alex Wagner Tonight*, and *The Rachel Maddow Show*, with additional members-only clips from *The Gaggle* and the *Thom Hartmann Program*.

Election Dissection 'How can the election system be improved' - The Gaggle: An Arizona politics podcast - Air Date 3-27-24

DAVID BECKER: It's interesting because you see a national movement, not just here in Arizona, where people who are disappointed with the outcome of elections, be it 2020 or 2022, are being led to believe a set of lies. It's perfectly understandable to be disappointed about the outcome of elections. There's hardly an American that hasn't experienced disappointment that their candidate lost. And we live in a country that's divided 50/50. [00:01:00] Arizona is a state that's divided 50/50. Maricopa is a county that's divided 50/50. It should not surprise any of us when our candidates lose. And it's understandable that it's disappointing. But that doesn't mean that they didn't lose. And it doesn't mean that we don't know that they lost, that this is a knowable thing, provable, verifiable, thanks to things like paper ballots, and audits, and transparency, and the bipartisanship that encompasses Arizona's and others' elections.

And yet, we see good Americans, in many cases, who are disappointed about the outcome of the election, who have been preyed upon by lies, by, quite frankly, grifters, who have monetized their disappointment, who are raising hundreds of millions if not billions of dollars off their disappointment. They're highly incentivized to keep people who voted for the losing candidate angry and deluded about the loss of those candidates. And this has led to an effort to dismantle election integrity [00:02:00] in the name of "election integrity".

You see things where the people who are getting rich off of the lies are trying to create more chaos post-election, more doubt post-election, more time between the election and when we might know unofficial results because they know they can exploit that time and that chaos to get people angry and raise money.

That's why I think you see efforts to push hand counts, which are not only less accurate and cost a lot more money, but they take a lot more time. And that time can be filled with disinformation, with lies that seek to incite anger and even potentially violence. You see efforts to concentrate all of voting onto a single day, which is about the least secure thing you could do.

Why would you create a single point of failure where 160 million Americans have to do the same thing at the same time, [00:03:00] when instead you could spread voting out over a number of days and over a number of modes, in person and by mail. If you have any problem, if you have a weather event, if you have traffic, if you have a power outage, if you have a technical malfunction of equipment, if you have long lines, even if you had a cyber attack, you can recover from that if you've spread voting out over many, many days.

If you have any of that on a single day, where all voting has to occur in that time, you've created a huge vulnerability that I guarantee you our foreign adversaries will try to take advantage of. You also see it in the efforts to get states to leave the Electronic Registration Information Center or ERIC where states like Arizona along with 23 other states and DC are sharing information on their voter records to identify when someone's moved out of their state or when someone's died, keeping their voter lists more accurate, preventing fraud and creating more perception of security as well at the same time. [00:04:00]

And so, states, when you're trying to create doubt about elections, you want dirtier voter lists. You want states to leave ERIC. You want states to try to hand count ballots. You want states to concentrate all of their voting activity in a single 12 or 14 hour period on a single day. And that's why we see these tactics come up again and again, not just in Arizona, but nationwide.

MARY JO PITZL - HOST, THE GAGGLE: So, your organization, the Center for Election Innovation and Research, recently released a report on the rise of early voting. This method's been around for decades in Arizona, and it's really popular. But as the COVID pandemic took hold during the 2020 election, more people turned to mail-in ballots than ever before. So, what role did COVID play in the future of early voting nationwide, and what are some of the cons to the process? Do those objections have any merit in your eyes?

DAVID BECKER: Well, one of the things we found when we looked at the availability of early voting, be it in person or by mail, in other [00:05:00] words, having options other than voting on a single day on election day, what we found was there is widespread bipartisan consensus. It is not even geographically focused, that states want to offer this option to voters. There are a variety of good reasons for it. [It] creates much more secure elections, because you don't have that single point of failure on a single day. Also, we shouldn't lose track of the fact that it's very popular. Voters like having choices. Voters, like everybody else, are busy. They have families. They have jobs. They have things they want to do. And voting during a single, you know, 14 hour period of time on a Tuesday in November might not be the most convenient thing for them.

And so what we've seen between 2000 and 2024 is that states across the country, states as blue as California, states as red as Florida, and Georgia, and Kansas have moved in a bipartisan way to [00:06:00] offer voters choices, to allow them to decide whether they're going to vote on election day or on a day before, whether they like to fill out their ballot at home and return it, or they'd like to go to a polling place.

In 2000, 60% of all voters in the United States had no choice but to vote on Election Day - 60%. Three out of every five. In 2024, that number is 3% - 3% percent in only 4 states: Alabama, Mississippi, New Hampshire, and Delaware have to vote on Election Day. In every other state, there is some option available. In 36 states, that option is to vote either in person early or by mail, and in another 10 states that option is to vote early in person and you need an excuse to vote by mail, but there's still an option. And that's really remarkable that there has been such a bipartisan consensus around this.

It doesn't really change election outcomes. I don't think it changes turnout just by existing. If [00:07:00] the only thing that affected turnout was how easy it was to vote, then we should have seen the lowest turnout we ever saw in 2020 in the middle of a global pandemic where everyone was getting sick and we had no vaccines. But we saw the highest turnout in American history in 2020 by a large margin, by 20 million more ballots than had ever been cast before in any election. So that's where we are today in 2024 with nearly everybody in all states having some option available to them to vote early in 2020. The options to vote earlier by mail were accelerated due to the pandemic and voters understandably did not want to put their lives at risk, you know, they clearly wanted to vote to cast a ballot.

And so that's where we are today. States across the political spectrum - I cannot stress this enough, this was not just in blue states, this was across the political spectrum - made it easier for people to have a choice about when and how they

voted. States with an excuse requirement for mail voting made COVID a blanket excuse [00:08:00] so that no one had to create a greater excuse than that. There were early voting options at places like sports arenas so people could be more socially distant. That was a wonderful innovation to deal with the crisis. And sure enough, we saw well over 100 million ballots cast in 2020 earlier by mail. The most ever. The largest percentage ever. But what we've seen in subsequent elections is we're starting to settle back down to types of voting we would see before.

In 2020, for instance, I know in Georgia, which has ample options for early voting and mail voting, about a third of all voters voted by mail, about a third voted early in person and about a third voted on election day. In 2022, the percentage of mail voters fell to below 10%, even though it's very easy and widely available. So, I think we're starting to see a normalization back to a standard here in Arizona, though it's very different. Arizonans are very comfortable and understand mail voting. [00:09:00] It's very common in counties for 85% or so of people to receive mail ballots; they know how to return them, whether it's by mail or returning them to an election office. They know about the options for early voting and election day voting, and yet still most Arizonans, by a large, large margin, choose to return their mail ballot.

Giuliani ordered to pay \$148 million for defamation of election workers - PBS Newshour - Air Date 12-15-23

AMNA NAWAZ - HOST, NEWS HOUR: As we come on the air, a verdict tonight in one of the cases related to the 2020 election.

GEOFF BENNETT - HOST, NEWS HOUR: Earlier this evening, a federal jury in Washington ordered Rudy Giuliani, Donald Trump's former campaign attorney, to pay \$148 million to two former Georgia election workers for distress caused by lies he spread following the 2020 election.

NPR's Miles Park was in the courtroom today and joins us now. So Miles, we should say this was a civil trial, and the jury was asked only to decide the amount of damages. Here's what Rudy Giuliani told reporters on his way out of the courtroom today.

RUDY GIULIANI: Very little I can say right now. I have to analyze this. Obviously, possibly we'll move for a new [00:10:00] trial. Certainly we'll appeal. The absurdity of the number merely underscores the absurdity of the entire proceeding.

GEOFF BENNETT - HOST, NEWS HOUR: So, he's calling that number, the \$148 million, absurd. How did the jury arrive at that number and what message were they trying to send?

MILES PARK: I mean, it is a staggering number, isn't it? I think throughout the entire week, the plaintiff's attorneys were trying to make the case that the jury should send a message—that election lies, especially when the people pushing them are essentially using real people and who are getting caught up as casualties, that this is not acceptable. It made it clear that they wanted the jury to repair the women's reputation, but more than that, they wanted them to send a message that this is not how healthy democracies behave.

GEOFF BENNETT - HOST, NEWS HOUR: We heard from both Shaye Moss and Ruby Freeman, who were subject to Rudy Giuliani's lies about them. Here's what Ms. Freeman told reporters.

RUBY FREEMAN: Money will [00:11:00] never solve all of my problems. I can never move back into the house that I called home. I will always have to be careful about where I go and who I choose to share my name with.

GEOFF BENNETT - HOST, NEWS HOUR: How did their attorneys make the case to the jury that the extreme emotional distress, their damaged reputations, that that was worth X amount?

MILES PARK: Well, it really was kind of a two prong approach, where you had the practical aspect and they made that case. They had an expert witness who was a marketing professor from Northwestern come in and show how these lies reached tens of millions of Americans in the time after voting ended in 2020, and then had her put together a strategic communications plan, essentially. What it would cost to counter those lies and repair the reputation. That estimate was put at roughly \$47 million. And so then on top of that, then they said, And how do you measure essentially the [00:12:00] emotional toll of this? And both women who were affected testified, both women got emotional, cried on the stand, the jurors and the public saw, I mean, more death threats than I could count. We heard racist voicemails that were left for these women that Shaye Moss's son reportedly heard. And so all of that was kind of taken into consideration when the jury was coming up with this \$148 million number.

GEOFF BENNETT - HOST, NEWS HOUR: We heard Rudy Giuliani say an appeal is on the way. What happens next?

MILES PARK: It's a little bit unclear. He says he's going to appeal. I mean, throughout this entire process, one of the strange things about this is that while the attorneys for the plaintiffs say they want to send a message that this is not acceptable, Rudy Giuliani has continued to say these lies that he is being sued for here on Monday, after court ended on the courthouse steps, Rudy Giuliani said, Everything I've said about those women is true, and said, again, that they stole the election. So, what's next? I think [00:13:00] he is clearly indicating that he's going to appeal this decision. I think what's a little more unclear is how this penalty is going to affect whether he, and whether the former president, whether other people who have continued to spread these lies over the last few years, whether this affects whether they continue to do that looking ahead to 2024

Charlie Kirk Lackey Gets Humiliated By Election Official - The Majority Report - Air Date 3-3-24

EMMA VIGELAND - CO-HOST, THE MAJORITY REPORT: Turning Points USA field representative, Aubrey Savala, had this tweet. She is in Arizona, I guess, which is where Turning Points USA is located, and put most of their efforts in, and they funneled money into the Arizona governors and senate race. And they lost both. None of this turning college kids into reactionary right wingers stuff is really working, and it's not, definitely not working in Turning Point USA's backyard in Arizona.

So anyway, they're paid for by big right wing donors, and everyone's cashing in, even if the results are not showing. So Aubrey Savala, who works for Charlie Kirk's Turning Points [00:14:00] USA, tweeted this out about the mail-in ballots that she received in the mail. So trying to make some case that there's a lot of ballots out there and people are ballot harvesting and submitting all these fake votes in order to get Democrats elected. She says, "Maricopa County at its finest, my first time ever voting in the presidential preference election, and I received not one but two mail-in ballots. Thank you, @StephenRicher." And so she tags a Maricopa County recorder in her post, this guy, Stephen Richer, who's responsible for counting ballots, and he responds directly to her: " Hi, Aubrey. Thanks for reaching out. You changed your voter registration on the last day of voter registration, February 20th, from your Chandler address to your new Tempe address. Because early ballots must go out on February 21st, your Chandler ballot was already sent to go out, and so it [00:15:00] did. Then

we sent out a new ballot to your Tempe address when we processed your voter registration modification. That's why you had to redact out different lengths in the address because they were sent to different addresses. You'll also notice that one of the packet codes ends in 01, the one to your old address, and one ends in O2, the one sent to your new address. As soon as the O2 one goes out, the O1 packet is dead, meaning even if you sent it back, it wouldn't be processed to signature verification and would not be opened. That's how we prevent people from voting twice. So just use the one with your new address ending in O2. That's the only one that will work. Hope this helps. Have a great evening. Happy voting."

And you know what I really loved about that response, in addition to her just getting so embarrassed, was the usage of the passive-aggressive "hope this helps," which we've all gotten an [00:16:00] email, or sent an email that includes "hope this helps." But rarely has there been a more satisfying usage of that passive aggression than in this particular instance, where she really thought she got them. She really thought she did something there. And too bad. There of course is a process of the ballots are not counted twice.

Thoughts?

MATT BINDER - GUEST HOST, THE MAJORITY REPORT: It is really funny to see that happen and play out in real time like that. I do wonder if she did that purposefully.

EMMA VIGELAND - CO-HOST, THE MAJORITY REPORT: I don't think she thought he'd reply.

MATT BINDER - GUEST HOST, THE MAJORITY REPORT: I don't know if she knew what she was doing there or not. Wouldn't put it past her either way, honestly. But that's the thing here. So much of this is either these conservatives purposefully deceiving their audience by creating a scenario purposefully that makes it look like something more is going on there. Or the other option is that they are literally too dumb to know what's going on, which I don't know which one makes them look better or worse, honestly.

And the response to [00:17:00] that was great, 'cause it was a whole bunch of people obviously mocking the Turning Point USA person. But also there was someone --that person who questioned, how do they know? How do you know not to count both of them? Did you show that one? The response?

EMMA VIGELAND - CO-HOST, THE MAJORITY REPORT: No, we didn't show that one.

How do you know not to count both of them?

MATT BINDER - GUEST HOST, THE MAJORITY REPORT: Yeah, some other conservative activist tried to poke holes in the guy's claim in the comment to his response, and he completely owned them.

EMMA VIGELAND - CO-HOST, THE MAJORITY REPORT: Bradley's gonna try to find it. Yeah.

MATT BINDER - GUEST HOST, THE MAJORITY REPORT: They might have deleted it. Who knows? But the basic crux of it was, Okay, so, how does the machine know that, if someone was to send both of them back, not to count one?

And the guy was like, Well, it's easy. Once we print up the 02 one, the number two one, the machine, the system knows to automatically deactivate the paper that has the 01 on it. So if you were to again, ask for another one, we would send you one out that said 03, and that would cancel out the 02 one and the 01 one would have been previously [00:18:00] canceled out when we sent out the 02 one.

And this other person really thought she was onto something too. It was like these people are stupid and they wouldn't know what they're doing.

EMMA VIGELAND - CO-HOST, THE MAJORITY REPORT: In the same way the bank has a system, if you try to electronically deposit a check twice, the same check, you're not going to be able to do it. Because the system then creates some sort of block so that it can't happen, because it's already registered that it's been processed. This is very simple computing.

MATT BINDER - GUEST HOST, THE MAJORITY REPORT: They believe that there is some huge conspiracy out there where all this encrypted data is flying all over the place being sent everywhere to add votes here and votes there. Anything's possible. They could do anything to steal an election. But then they ask How does the machine know the difference between a paper that says number one on it and a paper that says number two on it? Explain that! Gotcha!

EMMA VIGELAND - CO-HOST, THE MAJORITY REPORT: I mean it does very much explain how they're so easily duped by Mike Lindell adjacent [00:19:00] pseudo mathematical speak where there's really just no coherent basis for any of it, but it sounds like it could happen. So this is what Vindor was referring to here @StephenRicher.

One, what happens if someone returns two ballots in the same envelope? Two, is there a way to tell if the first ballot ends up in the second envelope other than the CD mark? Say someone moves in with the CD but to another city legislative district or precinct, and he responds here--Stephen Richer, who knows his crap--"It's a great question! Each ballot has a code that also lines up with the return envelope. We check to make sure the right ballot style comes back in the envelope. Believe it or not, some people will send their primary ballot in their primary ballot for a general election. So, yes, you need to use both the new ballot and the new envelope if you moved, as you should suggest, into a new legislative district on the last day of voter registration, in the instructions. But also, we're able to [00:20:00] help identify which is the correct one on a one-to-one basis by phone or email, if needed."

So, the Goldwater Attorney didn't--

That's not the one you were talking about?

MATT BINDER - GUEST HOST, THE MAJORITY REPORT: That's not the one I was talking about, but it was the same thing, basically. But I didn't know he got multiple, they really tried to poke holes in this, like they were onto something here, like they thought of something that no one ever thought of before.

Far Right Plan Chaos Ahead of 2024 Election - Thom Hartmann Program - Air Date 3-22-24

THOM HARTMANN - THOM HARTMANN PROGRAM: ...lay out this kind of second half of it, which I'm going to tell you about, but what *Rolling Stone* is pointing out is that all across the country or, well, not really all across the country, actually in swing states - I mean, they don't care about Mississippi and they don't care about California because they know Mississippi is going to elect Republicans and California is going to elect Democrats - but in the swing states, in Arizona, in Pennsylvania, in Michigan, in Wisconsin, in Ohio, in Indiana, well, not so much Indiana, but in the swing states, what we're seeing is

what looks like and have been watching now for three years, what looks like dress [00:21:00] rehearsals for this fall, which is where local election officials, who are at the bottom of the chain of command, as it were, for certifying elections, but if a local official refuses to certify a local election, that means those votes just don't get counted. They don't get moved up to the county level, or from the county level up to the state level and it just screws up everything. Right? And it can prevent certification of the entire state, if you do it in a large enough county, you know, like one of the big counties in Georgia, for example.

And this is exactly what's happening. *Rolling Stone* points out a startling number of Republicans have refused to certify election results in recent years despite their legal obligation to do so. In at least 15 instances since November 2020, local Republican officials in eight states have refused to certify election results in Arizona, Colorado, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania. And these are all states that could go, you know, one way [00:22:00] or the other in the presidential election. Republican officials have refused to certify or delayed certification of results for the election of local, state, and national candidates. This is from *Rolling Stone*.

And now, why are they doing this? The why of this, *Rolling Stone* doesn't get into, other than, you know, "create chaos". They mentioned that several times in the article. But, you know, some while back, I wrote an op ed pointing out that I have heard from Republicans who I know, or at least two Republicans who I know, from my days living in Washington, D.C., and, you know, people that I've become acquainted with over the years, and also stuff that I'm reading online, that the plan for this fall is to prevent certification of the election, of the electoral college votes, in enough states that neither [00:23:00] candidate reaches 270 electoral votes.

Now, here's how it works under the 10th Amendment. If no candidate gets, or excuse me, the 12th Amendment, if no candidate gets 270 votes, if no candidate hits that threshold, then the election gets thrown to the House of Representatives. And each state gets one vote. So, there'd be 50 votes for President. There are 26 congressional delegations controlled by Republicans, 23 that are controlled by Democrats, and one Pennsylvania that's split 50/50.

So, if the election gets thrown to the House of Representatives, even if Joe Biden wins by 10 million votes in the popular vote, I mean, he won by 7 million last time around, Hillary Clinton won by 3 million, Al Gore won by a half million. I mean, even if he wins by 10-15 million votes, even if he's, you know, 30, 40, 50 points ahead in the Electoral College, you don't hit that [00:24:00] magic number, then the people's vote doesn't matter at all. The House of Representatives decides the election. This has happened before, by the way.

This happened in 1876 in the election with Rutherford B. Hayes and, and, uh, who was the guy he was running against? Hayes ended up president. Samuel Tilden was the guy, was the Democrat he was running against. And Tilden actually won the election, he had more Electoral College votes and he had more popular votes. But Hayes ended up president because the thing got thrown to the House of Representatives. And they cut a deal to end Reconstruction. I mean, there's a whole ugly story here, you know, stab Black people in the back and the Republican becomes President. And it also happened with the election of John Adams' son, John Quincy Adams. , I believe that was like, what, 1838 or 1836 or whenever it was, in the 1830s. And he became president, he held the office for one term, and then he went back to the House of Representatives because Congress had passed this law saying that you could not mention [00:25:00] the word slavery on the floor of the House of Representatives. And John Quincy Adams, after he left the White House, went back to Congress, ran for election, won, went back to Congress just so every single day he could stand up and protest slavery in the United States. He did that. I mean, that's a man of integrity. But anyhow, he won the election even though he didn't win the election, as it were. I mean, he was put into office by the House of Representatives. So was Thomas Jefferson in the election of 1800 which, by the way, led to an amendment to the Constitution, I believe the 12th Amendment.

But this is what their plan is. And, again, last night, whoever was interviewing Justin Glawe, you know, the *Rolling Stone* reporter, I believe it was Rachel, did not get to that question of why? How do they intend to game this out? Well, I'm telling you. This is what they're gonna try and do. And by the way, it would be perfectly legal. If they can get a handful of states, arguably even [00:26:00] red states, although, you know, we're talking about having to get Biden votes, right?, so they're trying to knock off the swing states, the one's that could vote for Biden. If they can get a handful of states to be unable to certify their election results because local, Republican election officials... I mean, in Georgia, even Democratic areas are controlled by Republican election officials. This was, you know, that law that the Georgia legislature passed three years ago. If local election officials refuse to certify the local elections, it echoes all the way up to the state being unable to submit a slate of electors. And what do you get? You get Donald Trump as president.

'The real voter fraud' Supreme Court stalling leaves illegal gerrymandered map in place for 2024 - Alex Wagner Tonight - Air Date 3-30-24

ALEX WAGNER - HOST, ALEX WAGNER TONIGHT: Imagine you find out that your state's congressional map was gerrymandered to illegally dilute your votes. Even a panel of judges ruled the map unconstitutional. You'd probably expect that by the next election cycle that unconstitutional map would be thrown out. That is not the case in South Carolina.

The state will [00:27:00] continue to use an unconstitutional congressional map for the foreseeable future, even though a panel of judges concluded that the state's conservative legislature exiled 30,000 Black voters from the state's first congressional district to make it safer for White, Republican incumbent Nancy Mace.

South Carolina appealed the judge's decision, sending the gerrymandered map to the Supreme Court for an expedited decision. And now almost six months after hearing the case, the Supreme Court has yet to rule on whether or not the map needs to be redrawn, allowing South Carolina to use the old, unconstitutional map, the one that exiles 30,000 Black voters this election cycle.

Back with me is Maya Wiley, President and CEO of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights. Maya, thank you for sticking around to be incensed with me here.

MAYA WILEY: Thank you for allowing me to be incensed with you.

ALEX WAGNER - HOST, ALEX WAGNER TONIGHT: I mean, this is the real election fraud. Here it is, right? That's it. You can't get an election back, Maya. How is this happening? [00:28:00]

MAYA WILEY: It starts with the fact that the Supreme Court said, we're going to create "get an election free" cards. Because it started saying things like, Oh, you know, we're going to decide a year takes too long to organize a new election, new maps. That's before this case, but this is what's happening with the lawyers in this case who have been trying to vindicate the rights of Black people in South Carolina, people who the district court said had been bleached. The district they were removed from had been bleached. That's a quote, okay? That is what's happening here because if you can take Black people and dilute their vote, you can essentially muffle our votes, our voices, our ability to say who leads.

But this is something that we've seen, frankly, in far too many legislatures, but unless the Supreme Court is willing to do what the Constitution demands, which is to say, No, you don't get to steal elections. It's actually fundamentally

[00:29:00] not what we allow, particularly when you're doing it to take elections away from people who are Black. That's not what our Civil War amendments were written to allow. That is not what we will now. And this is why we need to fight for voting rights legislation because otherwise we keep having our election stolen from our democratic process, from our people.

ALEX WAGNER - HOST, ALEX WAGNER TONIGHT: Why the slowdown at the Supreme Court? I mean, they were asked to expedite this. They know presumably full well that this is happening. And yet no ruling.

MAYA WILEY: Not only do they know full well, they're the very ones who started to say, Okay, we'll let that gerrymandered district move forward, even though a district court said it was discriminatory. We'll let that work, because we didn't have enough time. This case was January 23. This they've had time to decide this. And frankly, I can't say what's going on, but I will say this: what's going on ain't right.

ALEX WAGNER - HOST, ALEX WAGNER TONIGHT: Yeah. I mean, there is a pattern here. Louisiana, Alabama, you know, states of the Confederate South, South Carolina, they are the [00:30:00] ones that keep having these problems. And we live in a world where the justices on that same Supreme Court, the conservatives, would like to say, we're in a post racial America where racism is no longer a problem. The shadow of the Confederacy still looms large even today in this kind of voting rights legislation.

MAYA WILEY: Being race blind in this country today means being blind to injustice and refusing to address it. That is not good for democracy and that's why we're not going to stop fighting for voting rights.

ALEX WAGNER - HOST, ALEX WAGNER TONIGHT: Maya Wiley, I'm going to, like, say that we're ending on an up note because the fight goes on, the warriors in the fight continue on this Friday night.

MAYA WILEY: And it's a big coalition and we are a majority of this country and we are not letting it go.

Maddow joins colleagues in objecting to McDaniel for legitimizing Trump, attacking democracy Part 1 - The Rachel Maddow Show - Air Date 3-26-24

RACHEL MADDOW - HOST, THE RACHEL MADDOW SHOW: So it's February 28th. The County Board of Supervisors was holding one of its regular meetings. This was in Arizona, Maricopa County, Arizona, and there were discussions about proposed zoning changes and a new irrigation district and bringing certain roads into the county highway system. There was even a pet showcase for adoptable dogs. Oh, hello. [00:31:00]

Maricopa County is home to the city of Phoenix, it's home to over 60 percent of the population of the State of Arizona. There's a lot of local governance to cover at these Board of Supervisors meetings. But as this meeting approached the two hour mark, something changed in the room that was definitely a vibe shift. You could see the supervisors looking around, starting to whisper to each other, they seemed to sense something was about to happen. And then the chair abruptly adjourned the meeting, at which point some version of pandemonium broke out.

JACK SELLERS, CHAIR OF MARICOPA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS: This meeting is now adjourned.

PROTESTORS CHANTING: Sellers, runnin' for the hills.

We the people will have answers.

You are being served. You are being served. You are being served. You are being served. You are being served.

You will go to the other side of this board.

You are being served.

[00:32:00] We will vote in new officials.

It shouldn't be like this. It shouldn't be hostile like this. It's only like this...

You are treasonous. You are treasonous.

It's only like this because of you guys, because you're corrupt. It shouldn't be like this.

William. William.

Do your job.

You are being served.

RACHEL MADDOW - HOST, THE RACHEL MADDOW SHOW: This is where election denialism hits the road. This is what it looks like in real life. You can see in the video how the Maricopa supervisors, they hustle out pretty quickly, law enforcement blocks these people who are yelling at them and jostling, jostling them. And if you're wondering what all the yelling is about, all the shouting about "treasonous" and "you are being served", after the supervisors left, one person in the crowd laid it all out.

PROTESTOR: Twelve signatures, which means each individual person is personally liable for over 21 million dollars, just from this paperwork. If they don't resign within three days, they will be personally served with a writ of quo warranto and an opportunity, again, [00:33:00] to rebut any one of our claims, which I'm making right now. None of them have signed a oath of office. None of them are bonded to we the people. All of them are foreign invaders acting as government. They are not our government. Therefore, we will be serving them a writ of quo warranto with a waiver of tort. And, if they still do not rebut, we'll be notifying the military, and they can be held off, hauled off, I'm sorry, to a military tribunal, and I think we all know the penalty for treason. Thank you.

RACHEL MADDOW - HOST, THE RACHEL MADDOW SHOW: Thank, thank you. Thank you. We'll be serving them with a writ of quo warranto with a waiver of tort, if they do not rebut, we'll be notifying the military, and they can be hauled off to a military tribunal, we all know the penalty for treason, thank you very much.

Maricopa County Board of Supervisors, for what it's worth, almost all of them are Republicans, they're all foreign invaders who are now liable for millions of dollars because somebody yelled, "you're being served". If they don't resign in minutes, the military will come and execute them. And however this might look to us watching it on video, for the Maricopa [00:34:00] Board of Supervisors, having a bunch of people rush the dais where they're sitting, yelling that they're traitors and they should all be killed, is scary. Here's how the *Washington Post* reported it. "The scene at the February 28th meeting terrified many county employees and others who were reminded of what happened after Joe Biden won the county, and with it Arizona, in the 2020 presidential race. Back then, Trump supporters used baseless claims of fraud to try to pressure or scare elected leaders into changing the county's election results".

After the 2020 election, you might remember this was the scene for days on end outside that county elections department when the votes were being tabulated. There were mobs of often armed Trump supporters gathering outside the

building, yelling at the election workers inside. At one point, they surrounded one elections worker outside the building. The person had to be pulled out of the angry crowd by a sheriff's deputy.

Arizona has been a hotbed of election denialism ever since, as epitomized by the [00:35:00] circus of that bizarre arena audit of the 2020 election. The state's attorney general is closing in on a decision now whether to criminally charge the fake electors from Arizona who signed forged documents after the 2020 election, claiming that Trump had won the state, rather than Biden.

Just today, a man was sentenced to two and a half years in federal prison for making repeated death threats in 2022 against Katie Hobbs, who was then Arizona's top elections official and is now governor. The head of the U. S. Justice Department's Elections Threat Task Force had a press conference in Phoenix today after that sentencing to drive home the message that threats against election officials will not be tolerated, they will be prosecuted, and you will go to prison.

Election Dissection 'How can the election system be improved' Part 2 - The Gaggle: An Arizona politics podcast - Air Date 3-27-24

SASHA HUPKA - CO-HOST, THE GAGGLE: Moving away from early voting for a moment, I want to chat with you a little bit about the Election Official Legal Defense Network, which is something that you helped launch in 2021. It's an effort to connect election officials with free legal advice and free communications advice. [00:36:00] How is that working so far?

DAVID BECKER: We launched the Election Official Legal Defense Network in September of 2021 with co-chairs Bob Bauer, former Obama White House counsel, and Ben Ginsberg, former campaign counsel to Republicans, including President George W. Bush and presidential candidate Mitt Romney, in an effort to assist election officials with something we are becoming increasingly concerned about. They were experiencing challenges they had never experienced before I get asked a lot, Is this the worst we've ever seen it with regard to election officials being threatened or abused? And my answer is, We've never seen this before. Before 2020 election officials were doing a vital function in our democracy. They give us all our voice. But they're largely anonymous. You'd never see an election official look for praise. There's never a

headline on the Wednesday after an election that everything went great. You just forget about them. And that's the best case scenario for election officials: anonymity. Unfortunately, since 2020, [00:37:00] the worst case scenario has not been a mistake. It has been mental and physical abuse, threats, harassment, sometimes even coming from government entities that are supposed to be there to support your work. And we've seen that here in Arizona in places like, for instance, Cochise County.

So, what we started in 2021 was we recruited an ever growing network of attorneys who were willing to be matched with an election official and serve pro bono to advise them with whatever might be coming up. It could be about abuse and harassment. It could be something imminent, like a sheriff is banging on their door saying they're going to seize the voting machines. That has happened. It could be that they're worried about their personal safety, or the safety of their families, or the safety of their staff, or their facilities. And that lawyer will work for them, for free, even if their own lawyers at the county level are actually some [00:38:00] of the people engaging in the harassment. We have paired lawyers with election officials here in Arizona, and I can tell you right now we're seeing as many requests for assistance in the last few months as we did in the first few months.

SASHA HUPKA - CO-HOST, THE GAGGLE: For a lot of these election officials, these are threats of violence, and there are some that are leaving office because of that or choosing not to run again. And I've done some reporting around the fact that this is also trickling down into poll workers, the front line people who greet you when you come into the voting center, who are usually paid around minimum wage. And those positions are increasingly becoming harder to fill. Is there anything that local or federal election officials, or maybe even law enforcement, can do to address this problem? Is there a way to ensure physical safety at the polls?

DAVID BECKER: Yeah, I think there's several things that need to be done. And I actually want to call out Maricopa for, I think, having a successful model for that. One of the things that Maricopa does exceptionally well is the partnership between the Board of Supervisors, the [00:39:00] Recorder's Office, and the Sheriff's Office, [which] is absolutely crucial. And that partnership - there's constant communication going on between those entities. They are ensuring that facilities and staff are protected. I have talked to multiple election officials in Maricopa about this, as well as representatives of the Sheriff's Office, and it's very clear the Sheriff's Office is incredibly responsive when there's even a hint of a problem in some way. The facilities are very secure, even when they are very clearly being targeted with bullying and threatening

activity, if not actual violence. I think Maricopa is a model for the nation in that regard.

But I think more has to be done beyond that. I think everyone should try to build that cooperation between law enforcement and elections, so that law enforcement understands what elections do, so that to the degree they might be consuming lies about the election, that they can understand how transparent and protected the process is.

But I think another very crucial aspect of [00:40:00] providing a safe environment for election officials and voters is the deterrence that comes from accountability. We need to hold those who have broken the law, who have created an environment of fear and potentially violence, accountable under the law. That's why the January 6th prosecutions are so important. That's why, where there's evidence, prosecutions against those who might have been at the top of this pyramid, at the top of the scheme, the investigations of fake electors, for instance, those things are absolutely crucial. People need to be - where they've committed a crime, where there's probable cause to charge them - they need to be brought to court. They need to be forced to show evidence to prove their innocence if they have it. And if they are found guilty beyond a reasonable doubt, they have to be punished under the law. I think we are in the early stages of that process. There's still a lot of work to be done, but it's absolutely crucial that it continue.

That's why I think the investigations of fake electors, not just in Arizona, but [00:41:00] in other places like Michigan and Wisconsin and elsewhere, are really important. And one of the questions I often get is, Does this become partisan in some way? And the answer I always have, and I know this is true to the core of my belief, is I ask people to ask themselves what would you say if the party identification on everybody that was being charged was different? If the result of the election had been different, would you want the other party to be investigated and prosecuted that way? I know the answer. The answer is yes for me. And in fact, in the book that I wrote with Major Garrett, *The Big Truth*, we discuss a hypothetical in the post-2016 environment, where what if Secretary Clinton had engaged in efforts to overturn the will of the people in an election that she lost? She won the popular vote, but she lost under the rules that we had. And I said it at the time, but what if she had started to do even a fraction of the things that we saw the losing candidate in 2020 do? What if she had tried to weaponize the federal government under the [00:42:00] Obama administration to do the same thing? What if she had organized a rally and incited anger and urged those people to march violently to the Capitol to stop a crucial constitutional task? We, of course, would expect some of the same people claiming that the January 6th defendants are hostages to be saying lock

her up. And that's where we cannot clearly identify that it's not those of us who are demanding accountability that are being partisan. It's actually those that have spread some of the lies and rumors who seek absolution for their acts in delegitimizing democracy.

Maddow joins colleagues in objecting to McDaniel for legitimizing Trump, attacking democracy Part 2 - The Rachel Maddow Show - Air Date 3-26-24

RACHEL MADDOW - HOST, THE RACHEL MADDOW SHOW: Quote: "In training poll workers for this year's presidential election, the office of Arizona secretary of state Adrian Fontes is preparing them for a series of worst-case scenarios, including combat, coordinating active shooter drills for election workers, sending kits to county election offices that include tourniquets to stem bleeding, devices to barricade doors, hammers to break glass windows."

[00:43:00] Arizona has been ground zero for election denial and threats and intimidation of election workers ever since the 2020 election. Things do not seem to be getting better ahead of this next election, but this time at least state officials do know a lot more about what they're up against.

Joining us now is Arizona Secretary of State Adrian Fontes. Mr. Secretary, thank you so much for being with us. I appreciate your time.

ADRIAN FONTES, ARIZONA SECRETARY OF STATE: Thank you so much, Rachel, for having me.

RACHEL MADDOW - HOST, THE RACHEL MADDOW SHOW: Is it fair to say that things aren't better since 2020 in Arizona, and that as we head toward this next election, you're expecting to see a continuation or maybe even a worsening of some of the sorts of threats, and sort of craziness that we saw in Arizona a few years ago?

ADRIAN FONTES, ARIZONA SECRETARY OF STATE: Well, I think in balance, things are actually better, with our elections officials are much [better] trained. They're more prepared. We know what to expect for the most part. There are some new emerging wrinkles. But we've been here. We've seen that. And those pictures you showed of those armed crowds outside of the warehouse, that was my warehouse. That was my election in Maricopa County

in 2020. [00:44:00] We got through that. We got through 2022. We will get past 2024 and we will protect democracy.

RACHEL MADDOW - HOST, THE RACHEL MADDOW SHOW: Tell me some of the specifics of your planning. This is obviously a threatening environment, not just in terms of physical safety for you and your staff, but in terms of making sure the election can be carried out without being hindered by external forces.

ADRIAN FONTES, ARIZONA SECRETARY OF STATE: Yeah, well, first the background. We've lost senior election officials in 12 out of our 15 counties here in Arizona. But to shore up the load, we're making sure that everybody who is coming in--most of whom really were already in elections, at the the next level down positions--that they're prepared. And we're focusing on the fundamentals, but we're also adding in some augmented training, including some AI training like we had at a recent tabletop exercise. That's a training that law enforcement and the military used to role play, throw scenarios out there. We've also got some Tiger teams from our office that are going out to make sure that our IT security systems are locked down, that [00:45:00] folks are well trained, and we have worked directly with the Department of Homeland Security, both at the state and federal level, and CISA to shore up all of our physical and cyber security needs.

But at the end of the day, it is fundamentals, fundamentals, fundamentals, and the folks who are running elections in Arizona are ready.

RACHEL MADDOW - HOST, THE RACHEL MADDOW SHOW: I know that the Justice Department had a press conference today in Arizona and Phoenix after the sentencing of a man sentenced to more than two years in federal prison after threatening your predecessor, who's now the governor of the state. Do you feel like the criminal law part of this, obviously threats and intimidation, are always illegal, let alone violence itself. Do you feel like, on the criminal law side of this, that Arizona is doing a good job at prosecuting the stuff and that you have the support that you need from the Federal Justice Department to do what needs to be done?

ADRIAN FONTES, ARIZONA SECRETARY OF STATE: Well, I've been openly critical of the Department of Justice and the FBI for not celebrating their wins in the courtroom enough, to act as a deterrent against this sort of thing. And it looks like they're coming [00:46:00] around a little bit. The press conference today really does show that accountability matters. And it's important that we let folks know that threats or violence against elections officials--look, at the end of the day, that's domestic terrorism; threats or

violence for a political outcome is terrorism. And that's just what's happening in America today. It's inexcusable. And law enforcement at the federal and state level needs to step up not just the investigations, but promoting the convictions that have been had, so that folks understand clearly: threatening election workers is not an American thing. It is criminal. Acts of violence against election workers, election officials is also criminal. And we cannot have this kind of activity and maintain the civil society that we purport to love.

BONUS Election Dissection 'How can the election system be improved' Part 3 - The Gaggle: An Arizona politics podcast - Air Date 3-27-24

MARY JO PITZL - HOST, THE GAGGLE: When the Supreme Court recently ruled that Trump can remain on the ballot in Colorado, you noted that the court didn't address the question of, you know, could Trump have been ineligible because of inciting an insurrection? But you said that argument might still come up maybe when the Congress meets as the [00:47:00] electoral college. What do you foresee coming when you made that comment?

DAVID BECKER: Well, it's not that I foresee it. It's a possibility. I try to stay away from predictions as much as possible. But, should Donald Trump win the election, should the results be certified in such a way, and should he have 207 or more electoral votes after the electors meet on December 17th, there is a significant possibility, maybe even probability, that members of Congress who oppose Donald Trump will raise his ineligibility under the 14th Amendment as he engaged in insurrection. And one thing left open by the Colorado case is that it appears that all of the justices believe that Congress does have the power to create a framework whereby someone could be held ineligible under the 14th Amendment. And certainly, the January 6th joint session of Congress is a potential opportunity for them to exercise that power.

So, I think that I would expect that if Donald Trump wins, that there will be some [00:48:00] members of Congress who will raise that as an objection. I should note also, there has been some strengthening of the Electoral Count Act. The Electoral Count Reform Act was passed in 2022 during the lame duck session. And it requires greater thresholds to bring an objection, 20 percent of each house in order for it to be debated in those houses. So, whether it will meet that threshold or not, I think it's highly possible that it will be raised. And so there were many, and I consider myself among them, who were hoping that the

Supreme Court might find a way to get at the core factual and legal issues about whether or not Donald Trump engaged in insurrection and was an officer who had sworn an oath to the Constitution sufficient to be disqualified from office. But they didn't go there. I can understand why they didn't go there. The decision to overrule the case was 9-0. There were vastly different grounds there. And some concern from at least three justices, and possibly four, that [00:49:00] the majority had gone too far in kind of restricting Congress's power. But all that said, if Congress seeks to act in that way, if Donald Trump wins, we could find ourselves in somewhat of a constitutional crisis again.

SASHA HUPKA - CO-HOST, THE GAGGLE: You recently said on social media that you're very confident that the 2024 election will be safe and secure. What is your basis for that comment? If I'm a voter, what kinds of things should I be looking for to evaluate whether an election is well run or not?

DAVID BECKER: I'm so glad you asked me that question. Our elections today are the most secure, transparent, and verified elections we've ever held in American history. And that's not just the opinion of Trump's own DHS. It's not just the opinion of conservative legal scholars who wrote a report called LostNotStolen.org about the 2020 election. It's not just the opinion of 60+ courts. It's just objective fact when you look at what we have in our elections right now. Ninety-five percent of all Americans vote on verifiable, auditable paper, like [00:50:00] Arizonans have for decades. That percentage was only about 75-80% in 2016. Between 2016 and 2020, the entire states of Pennsylvania, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia moved to paper. All paper. All recountable. Georgia's presidential ballots, on paper, were all recounted three times, three different ways, once entirely by hand. That's incredible. The only states that still have some number of non-paper ballots are not swing states, states like Mississippi and Louisiana and Tennessee. Every swing state, every battleground state has paper, and we have more audits than ever before. All of those states that have paper, audit those ballots. That means they take a sampling of those ballots, they count them by hand, and they confirm those counts against the machine totals to make sure the machines work right. If there's a problem, they count more ballots to see if they can identify what the problem is. And if there's ever litigation, the losing candidate could always go back to those paper ballots and have a judge review them and confirm what happened.

We've had some very close elections in American history, not just Florida in 2000, but for instance the Minnesota Senate race in [00:51:00] 2008, which was decided by a couple hundred, all paper ballots in that race. That was finally decided by a court in the summer of 2009 and Al Franken was seated, having been declared the winner over Norm Coleman. That's why we should feel

secure. Our voter lists are more accurate than ever before. More states are keeping their voter lists more accurate because they're sharing data between states. They're sharing data within their state with Motor Vehicles, where people go when they have a move, for instance. So those voter lists are much more accurate.

We have better tools to prevent fraud than ever before. We have more pre-election litigation than ever before, for good or bad. That means we're clarifying the rules. And we apparently are going to have more post-election litigation than ever before for the foreseeable future, perhaps mostly in Arizona. For those law students in Arizona right now, it's a bull market for you to join the election law field if you want to. So, we should be absolutely confident that our elections are secure, that we can document, show our work, to confirm, even in a case like the [00:52:00] state AG's race in 2022, where the margin was very narrow, we know who won. It was really close, but we know there was a winner and by how much. But ultimately no matter what happens, and even perhaps no matter what the margin is, there are going to be losing candidates and their supporters who are highly incentivized to spread lies and incite anger and violence, and importantly, to raise money.

So, the election officials in Arizona, nationwide, can do the best possible job. I have every confidence they will, even with all the stress they've suffered since 2020. Think about the 2022 election and how well it went. There was a problem here in Maricopa, but ultimately that was handleable and that was... nationwide though, hardly any problems. 2021 and 2023, where there were off-year elections, went very, very well. The primaries are going very, very well nationwide. They are doing their jobs, even with the stress and the abuse and the turnover. And the question is, will it matter if the [00:53:00] losing candidate won't accept a loss, no matter what the margin is?

BONUS Exposing Secret Fascist Plan To 'Win' 2024 Election - Thom Hartmann Program - Air Date 2-26-24

THOM HARTMANN - THOM HARTMANN PROGRAM: About four years ago, actually four years ago, two weeks from now, March 13th, 2020, I published a piece over on Alternet laying out how Republicans were then, 10 months before January 6th, planning on stealing the election for Donald Trump with fake electors and with Mike Pence not certifying all of the votes.

When I published that article 10 months before January 6th, People were saying, Eh, number one, don't give them any ideas, --you don't have to worry about that, they already were thinking about it. And number two, Eh, Trump would never do that, that's too audacious. He's not gonna do that, and if he did, he wouldn't get away with it.

But I was right. And that's exactly what Trump did. And now I'm hearing a new story--and by the way, this isn't just unique to me, Joy Reid talked about this on Friday of last week, the editor-at-large of Newsweek has written about it, and other places--that the Republicans have a [00:54:00] new scheme.

First, they need to maintain control of the House of Representatives. The House is sworn in on January 3rd. The President is certified on January 6th. So, on January 3rd, the Republicans need to maintain control of the House, even if Democrats win a majority of the House seats. Now, how do they do that? The same way that, that right now, we see that Tom Suozzi, the guy who won the race in New York's 3rd district, I believe it's the 3rd, has not been sworn in yet. Eric Swalwell is talking about this. He says, Eric Swalwell just announced on MSNBC that Republicans are refusing to seat Suozzi because their majority in the House is so small. This is pretty straightforward stuff.

And, I don't know how long this is going to hang on here, how long they're going to be able to get away with this stuff. But, they're saying that they're going to swear in Suozzi on Thursday of this week.

But the fact of the matter is, they could have sworn him in [00:55:00] before they adjourned, and they didn't.

So how do the fascists win? Well, number one, you do that. You hold on to the House of Representatives. So, Johnson continues to be Speaker of the House, even though the Democrats got more votes for the House of Representatives. He would just say, oh, well, we've got these seven Democrats--who just happen to make the majority--who we think there are problems with the elections in their home districts. And so we're going to hold off on seating them for a couple of weeks while we examine the irregularities in this election.

So he gets to stay speaker. And then as speaker, he gets to lead the effort on January 6th to say, no, we're not going to accept the electoral college certificates of election from a couple of states where we think something skeezy went on. And as a result, there are not 270 electoral college votes for Trump [00:56:00] or Biden. Neither one. So what happens then? Then the election gets thrown into the House of Representatives. And in the House of Representatives, each

state has one vote. Now, there are 26 states that are controlled by Republicans, 23 states that are controlled by Democrats, one that's 50/50, Pennsylvania, in terms of their congressional delegation. So you would have a 26 to 23 vote in the House of Representatives for Donald Trump. And he would become president.

And Republicans are betting that, just like when Hillary Clinton won by three million votes and Trump became president anyway, just like when Al Gore won by a half million votes and Trump became president anyway, there was no large, wide scale outrage. People didn't show up on the streets. And so the Republicans are guessing that this time there won't be either. That it'll be, oh yeah, everything's good. Trump is president again for four more. Yeah, there'll be some protests. But then President Trump comes in and he starts putting [00:57:00] down the protests. This is Project 2025, right? Impose fascism on the United States. Or at least that's how some would characterize it.

So I think that this is actually a possibly really big deal. And then, of course, once they have done this, once they have put Trump back in the White House and they're maintaining a Republican control over the House of Representatives, then the Republicans pursue their actual agenda, which is to end gay marriage and criminalize being trans, outlaw abortion and most forms of birth control, end the teaching of black history, outlaw DEI and affirmative action of any sort, shut down most functions of the EPA so the fossil fuel and chemical industries can do whatever they want to our air and water, end enforcement of our anti-monopoly laws, fire thousands of IRS investigators to make America safe for the morbidly rich tax cheats, shut down all the green initiatives and instead [00:58:00] "drill baby drill," sell off public lands and parks to the highest bidders, privatize Social Security and end traditional Medicare, end federal funding for public schools and colleges and outlaw unions.

They're not hiding any of these things. These are the things that are at the top of their agenda.

Final comments on the backfire effect of lies about mail-in voting

JAY TOMLINSON - HOST, BEST OF THE LEFT: We've just heard clips today, starting with The Gaggle: An Arizona Politics Podcast discussing the impact of election denialism in the state. The PBS News Hour reported on Rudy Giuliani's defamation case brought by election workers in Georgia. The Majority Report discussed the feeble arguments against mail-in voting

conservative conspiracy theorists come up with. Thom Hartmann discussed the impact of Republican county officials who refuse to certify election results. Alex Wagner Tonight looked at the case of South Carolina's unconstitutional congressional map.

The Rachel Maddow Show showed the threats to the Maricopa County board of supervisors. The Gaggle discussed the necessity of the Election Official Legal Defense [00:59:00] Network. And The Rachel Maddow Show looked at some of the measures being put in place to defend the election system.

That's what everybody heard, but members also heard bonus clips from The Gaggle, which discussed the question of whether Congress could object to a Trump win based on the 14th amendment. And Thom Hartmann described another potential maneuver the GOP may pursue to elect Trump against the will of the people. To hear that, and have all of our bonus content delivered seamlessly to the new members-only podcast feed that you'll receive, sign up to support the show at BestOfTheLeft.com/support or shoot me an email requesting a financial hardship membership—because we don't let a lack of funds stand in the way of hearing more information.

Now, to wrap up, acknowledging that this is a pretty dark topic—because it's always difficult to be up against a group of people who are willing to cheat and lie to get their way—I have just one positive element of the election to end on, which also happens to be a little funny. [01:00:00] Early voting and voting by mail continue to be two of the best tools for increasing voter turnout, and smart Republicans working to drive Trump voters to the polls know this, but there continues to be a hangover from Trump's associating mail-in voting with fraud. This is from an NBC News article :

" When Donald Trump held a rally last year in Erie County, an important area in the battleground state of Pennsylvania, the top Republican official there went one by one to the 11,000 people waiting in line to ask one question: would you like to vote by mail?

It didn't go well.

'I tried to give them a mail-in ballot application, and could only get out about 300,' Tom Eddy, head of the county's Republican Party, said. Every one of them said either, "No, that's not the right way to vote," or "Trump does not agree with it.'""

The article goes on to explain that Republicans across the [01:01:00] country are trying to change the perspective on early and mail-in voting because they understand that giving up on those tools will hurt them politically. By the way, you may recall from election coverage in 2020 that Republicans used to be big supporters of mail-in voting. Continuing from the article:

" It starts at the top. As the leader of the Republican party, Trump has used his position to blast, without evidence, mail-in voting as a Trojan horse for widespread voter fraud. In the process, the former president has eroded trust in a method that was once widely embraced by many people in his party, putting Republicans at a disadvantage against Democrats."

And, you know, with all the instances that we can think of where the liar's dividend does, in fact, give an advantage, it's good to hear of cases like this—where attempts to subvert democracy through lies and casting unfounded doubt looks set to backfire for a [01:02:00] second presidential election in a row. Now, it's not like that's enough to get Republican states to certify their election results or anything, but I'll take my good news where I can get it.

That is going to be it for today. As always, keep the comments coming in. I would love to hear your thoughts or questions about this or anything else. You can leave a voicemail or send us a text at (202) 999-3991 or simply email me to jay@bestoftheleft.com. Thanks to everyone for listening. Thanks to Deon Clark and Aaron Clayton for their research work for the show and participation in our bonus episodes.

Thanks to our transcriptionist quartet, Ken, Brian, Ben, and Andrew, for their volunteer work helping put our transcripts together. Thanks to Amanda Hoffman for all of her work on our social media outlets, activism, segments, graphic designing web mastering, and bonus show co-hosting.

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So, coming to you from far outside the conventional wisdom of Washington DC, my name is Jay and this has been the Best of the Left Podcast coming to you twice weekly thanks entirely to the members and donors to the show from BestOfTheLeft.com.