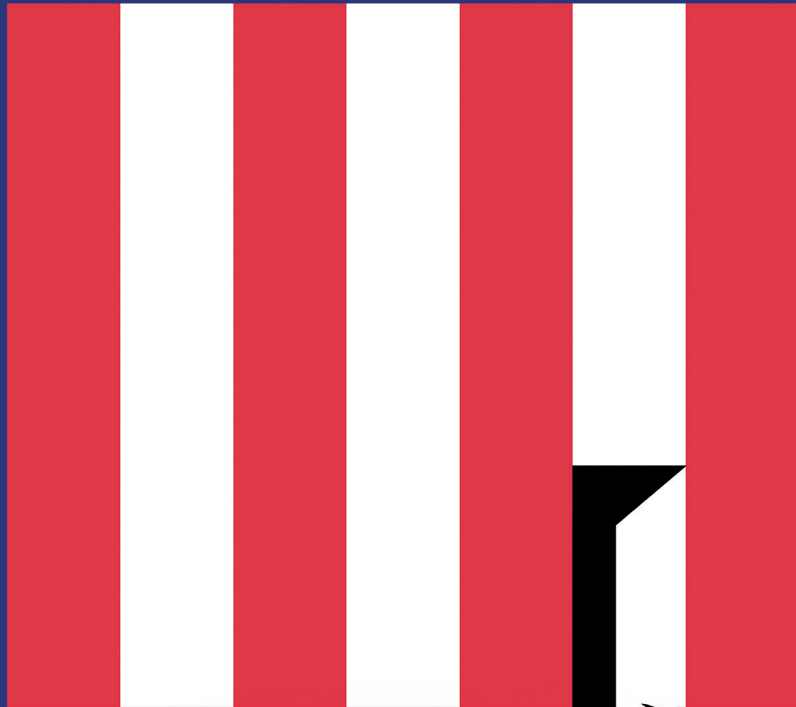


THE EPOCH TIMES SPECIAL REPORT

EPOCH INSIGHT

A hand is shown dropping a white ballot into a white slot. The background is a dark blue field.

**SPECIAL
REPORT**

**ELECTION
INTEGRITY**

WEEK 42, 2022

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a look at where states stand on election integrity

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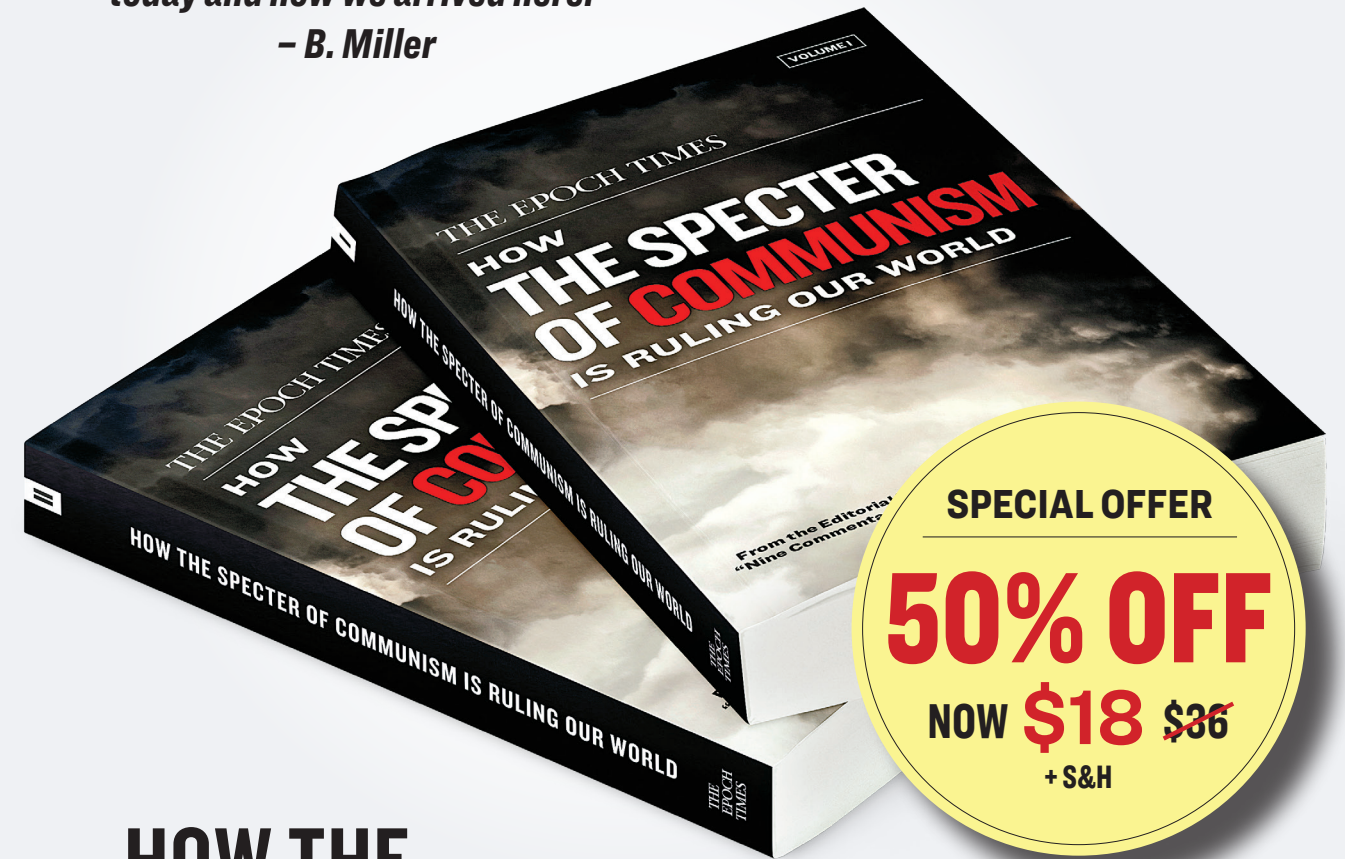
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How Secure Are Our Elections?

IN THE AFTERMATH OF 2020, concerns mounted over the integrity of elections in the United States.

Two years later, have our elections become more, or less, secure? We explore this question in this special report.

Epoch Insight provides an in-depth look at changes in state laws around mail-in ballots—a form of voting that is most susceptible to fraud.

One of the more controversial practices is ballot harvesting, which involves a person collecting and submitting ballots for other voters. Read in this special report how, last month, a Texas man was captured on police bodycam footage saying he was paid \$200 for every absentee ballot he delivered during the 2016 election.

We also met with people who have become part of a new wave of volunteer poll watchers around the nation.

“I’m retired now—and I thought it was time to roll up my sleeves and to go out and to help out,” says Warren Jenkins, a volunteer in Virginia.

Lynn Taylor, who leads a state-level coalition focused on election integrity, says, “I’ve been doing this for 26 years, and I’ve never seen people come together where they all left their logos at the door.”

A key question is whether enough voter fraud occurs to swing elections. Find the answer in this special edition.

JASPER FAKKERT
Editor-in-chief




ON THE COVER

Changes in laws and a new election integrity movement have been spurred by questions over the 2020 election.

GETTY IMAGES/ILLUSTRATION BY THE EPOCH TIMES

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An election integrity movement is sweeping battleground states.



A voter exits a voting booth in Concord, N.H., on Feb. 11, 2020. | Scott Eisen/Getty Images

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Voters cast their ballots at The Orpheum Theater in Madison, Wis., on Nov. 3, 2020.

PHOTO BY ANDY MANIS/GETTY IMAGES



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GRASSROOTS

ELECTION INTEGRITY MOVEMENT SWEEPS BATTLEGROUND STATES

CONCERNS THAT THE 2020
ELECTION WAS NOT CONDUCTED
WELL DRIVE LOCAL ACTIVISM

BY GARY BAI ↔



A man drops off a vote-by-mail ballot at a drop box in Chicago on Oct. 2, 2020.

PHOTO BY SCOTT OLSON/GETTY IMAGES

AT 10 PAST 5 IN THE MORNING on Election Day in 2021, retired construction company owner Warren Jenkins pulled on his business-casual attire in a panic, knowing he had to get to the polling station in 20 minutes. He was the only Republican poll watcher in an important precinct.

Jenkins's wife, in a prescient move, had pre-made lunch for her husband, who managed to arrive at the polls to begin his 15-hour shift—from 5:30 a.m. to about 9 p.m.—just in time.

As a volunteer poll watcher in Virginia, Jenkins would run back and forth between the outdoor ballot box and the indoor voting site, observing the conduct of those at the site and reporting irregularities and violations of the state election code, if any, to election officials.

Throughout his life, Jenkins had been somewhat of a model American: He served in the Army, built houses, and loved spending his weekends at church and with family and friends. He wasn't into politics, at all.

But as the battleground blaze died down at the conclusion of the 2020 election lawsuits, Jenkins still had in his mind the lingering silhouette of Zuckerbucks, whispers of faulty mail-in ballots, and alleged—later court-confirmed—flouting of election laws. As a proud American, he thought he could do more for his country.

"With the Trump-Biden election, there was so much press on the dishonesty in the election. I thought I would see for myself," Jenkins told *The Epoch Times*. "I'm retired now—and I thought it was time to roll up my sleeves and to go out and to help out.

"I felt like being a poll watcher—even though we didn't get paid—was an important role. I didn't really care about the money."

Jenkins is one of many who were moved to help defend the integrity of America's elections, following concerns that the 2020 election was not conducted well.

Some offered explanations for what went wrong in 2020—and some had substantial proof—but none seemed to be able to convince the courts to rule in favor of what they were proposing, which often consisted of flipping the election results for a district, or the Biden presidency altogether.

Many realized this, so they pivoted forward.



They formed a movement, driven by the belief that citizens should participate in the election process, to help give rise to transparency, and that accompanying the right to vote is the right to have every legal vote counted—and every faulty vote trashed.

From the Ground Up

Jenkins's resolve to act proved fortuitous; just as people like him across the country decided to become more involved in elections, roads were being built to help them do exactly that.

Cleta Mitchell, who fought alongside former President Donald Trump in one of the lawsuits disputing the 2020 election results in Georgia,

The first 2020 presidential debate plays on a screen at Walters Sports Bar in Washington on Sept. 29, 2020.

FROM TOP: SARAH SILBERG/GETTY IMAGES, JESSICA MCGOWAN/GETTY IMAGES

was getting a lot of calls—and a lot of ideas—following the election.

"What happened in 2020 was that many people across the country realized that things were not right, and that the election was not conducted according to the law in many cases," Mitchell told *The Epoch Times*. "And so a lot of people have said, 'What can I do to help? What can we do to make sure this doesn't ever happen again?'"

"As somebody who spent a lot of time on a lot of different aspects of the election, I've tried to say, 'Here are things you can do: You can go to rallies and have somebody get yelled at. Or, we can train you. We can tell you what you need to do to make sure it never happens again.' And

"With the Trump-Biden election, there was so much press on the dishonesty in the election. I thought I would see for myself."

Warren Jenkins, poll watcher

there's plenty to do."

Mitchell, a seasoned lawyer (and a Democrat-turned-Republican) with experience across all corners of election issues, leads the Election Integrity Network, a project of the Conservative Partnership Institute, a Washington-based nonprofit.

Since its launch, the network has developed into a nationwide mobilization base and knowledge-sharing platform that works at the national, state, and local levels on election integrity initiatives. These include pushing for legislation on voting security, hiring more poll watchers and election officials, and examining potential loopholes in election administration processes.

Through training and discussion "summits," the network has kicked off state-level "coalitions" across the country, and these state coalitions have become the headquarters for mobilizing precinct-level task forces working on election integrity projects in those states.

"Ultimately, all elections take place at the local level," Mitchell said. "We are asking people to become involved in apparatus at their local level, because that's where the elections take

Ballots sit in stacked boxes as Fulton County workers count absentee ballots at State Farm Arena in Atlanta on Nov. 6, 2020.





place. That's where many of the problems occur."

Getting to Work

The Election Integrity Network started humbly with weekly telephone calls on which coalition leaders in battleground states would bounce ideas.

But things quickly picked up speed when Lynn Taylor, a regular on these calls who leads Virginia Fair Elections, saw that time was running short for her state.

"Virginia is one of two states that have statewide elections every year," with the other being

A poll watcher monitors the counting of ballots at the Allegheny County elections warehouse in Pittsburgh on Nov. 6, 2020.

The RNC was legally barred from organizing and sponsoring ballot security operations like poll watching from 1982 to 2018, due to a 1982 consent decree. For nearly 40 years, the DNC had a structural advantage over the RNC.

New Jersey, Taylor told The Epoch Times. After seeing what happened in 2020, she wanted to help improve the security of the 2021 election. The question was how.

"The idea came from Cleta when she and I were on the phone together, and she said, 'You really need a summit,'" Taylor said, recounting her conversation with Mitchell. "I said, 'I don't have the budget for that,' and she said, 'I do.' Two and a half weeks later, we had a summit.

"This was very different from the way that things had been done. You know, people have been having summits for ages, but this is the first one [I've seen that was actually used] for training purposes."

With Mitchell's help, Taylor organized the network's first Election Integrity Summit in August 2021 in Virginia. The two-day event featured training and information for people at the grassroots level, on topics including poll observer recruitment, scheduling, training, and administration; how to document potential illegal voter registrations; and the alleged influence

of private funding in the 2020 election.

During the summit, people who had already been working on related initiatives—improving security around the ballot box, analyzing election data for potential anomalies, or pushing for election integrity legislation, for example—found others scattered across Virginia who were working on similar things and quickly joined together in local work groups, called election integrity task forces. These task forces began collaborating on projects at the county level.

At the time of the summit, there were a little more than a dozen task forces in the state; in only a few months, that number had quadrupled to more than 50.

"I've been doing this for 26 years, and I've never seen people come together where they all left their logos at the door," Taylor said. "They are more interested in the election integrity issue—and making sure that there are free and fair elections—than they are in promoting their own agenda. It is the first time I have ever seen this, in the 26 years that I've been working in the nonprofit arena."

Shelley Oberlander, a Republican precinct captain for 10 years, was leading a local election integrity task force in the Virginia coalition. After learning from the summit about the kinds of projects that she could start in her own county, Oberlander started to expand her team.

She connected with other county-level task forces, holding weekly conference calls to share their experiences. Within a year, Oberlander's team grew from a few members to six work groups, each specializing in areas of election integrity including legislation, education, data analysis, election technology, and voter administration.

"We brought it home, we put it into practice, and we got it going," Oberlander told The Epoch Times.

National Effort

Another driving force behind the movement is none other than the Republican National Committee (RNC).

Emma Vaughn, an RNC spokesperson, told The Epoch Times in a statement that "the RNC and Virginia GOP are encouraging unit chairs to hone in on local election integrity efforts."

In other words, Oberlander, as a part of the Republican Party, was able to utilize resources within the GOP establishment, as well as the Election Integrity Network, to expand her task force and knowledge base.



Cleta Mitchell speaks at the Election Integrity Summit in Harrisburg, Pa., on Aug. 20, 2021.

But the RNC wasn't always able to do this, as its hands were only recently untied.

The RNC was legally barred from organizing and sponsoring ballot security operations like poll watching from 1982 to 2018, due to a 1982 consent decree issued by Dickinson R. Debevoise, a judge appointed by President Jimmy Carter.

The consent decree meant that for nearly 40 years, the Democratic National Committee (DNC) had a structural advantage over the RNC in strategizing and developing election administration infrastructure in accordance with its vision of how voting should be done.

"Because of the DNC v. RNC Consent Decree, the RNC had been shut out of most election integrity efforts for nearly four decades, which led to a lack of institutional knowledge to conduct election integrity operations," the RNC's 2021 election integrity report reads.

After the decree expired in 2018, the RNC began building infrastructure around election integrity projects. This included spending more than \$30 million on election protection efforts in battleground states across the country during the 2021 cycle, and continued efforts in 2022, Vaughn told The Epoch Times.

"The RNC has made a multimillion-dollar investment for the 2022 cycle, including 17 state election integrity directors, 35 in-state election integrity counsels, and in recruiting over 43,000 poll workers and poll watchers in battleground states across the country," she said.

"The RNC works with other groups who

\$30 MILLION

The RNC spent more than \$30 million on election protection efforts in battleground states across the country during the 2021 cycle.

\$447 MILLION

of "dark money"—political donations with undisclosed sources—went to supporting liberal groups at the federal level during the 2020 election cycle, while only \$190 million went to conservative groups, according to a report.

FROM L. JEFF SWENSEN/GETTY IMAGES; COURTESY OF CLETA MITCHELL

have an interest in promoting election integrity, but the party's efforts are independent from any outside organization."

The Movement Ripples

The Election Integrity Network's success in Virginia, which Mitchell calls the "Virginia model," was promptly replicated in other states. By mid-2022, the network had held summits in eight battleground states—Virginia, Georgia, Arizona, Florida, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin, and North Carolina—and mobilized thousands to start election integrity projects at the local level, she said.

"What we are focused on is building out the infrastructure—creating state coalitions and local election integrity task forces," Mitchell said. "We really are measuring our success by the number of states that are up and running with statewide election integrity coalitions.

"We measure that by helping them bring together the various groups to have weekly calls, then getting their local task forces going and then getting a framework for recruiting and training poll workers, election officials and starting the working groups within each state."

According to Marshall Yates, executive director of the network, the state-level conference calls in North Carolina, Michigan, and Georgia had about 75 task force leaders in attendance, and Arizona and Pennsylvania had about 40 in attendance.

Rep. Claudia Tenney (R-N.Y.), who heads the Election Integrity Caucus with more than 70 Republican members, participates in the Election Integrity Network's conference calls when she can and has passed some of the network's materials around Congress.

"We go through with a very methodical legal analysis, and that's what she does, which I really appreciate," Tenney said. "We're trying to set the record straight, and come up with solutions. We just want to make sure that people feel confident and trust their vote."

Uneven Playing Field

An important pretext for the project, according to Mitchell, is that the left has been building infrastructure around election administration and attempting to influence election outcomes with more effort and conviction than those on the right.

"We need conservatives to become involved and engage in the process—because the left has been systematically building their own infra-



structure," Mitchell told The Epoch Times.

Underlying this infrastructure-building Mitchell was referring to are two competing ideologies, one held by the right and another by the left, on how voting rights should be protected in a democratic society.

Improving access to voting and improving ballot security often come into conflict. The left leans toward the access approach, and the right leans toward the security approach.

"The voting system, by necessity, requires a balancing of these somewhat countervailing interests," the authors of a 2009 paper published in the Yale Law & Policy Review wrote.

As evidence that the scales are tipped disproportionately toward the left's agenda, Mitchell

pointed to reports by the Capital Research Center (CRC), which alleges there is a "coordinated effort" by the left to influence elections via private donations and dark money networks, such as the Arabella Advisors, the Rockefeller Foundation, and Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg's left-leaning nonprofit, the Center for Tech and Civic Life (CTCL).

Arabella Advisors, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the CTCL didn't respond to requests for comment.

Notably, Zuckerberg and his wife, Priscilla Chan, funneled \$400 million via the CTCL to a network of nonprofits that sent advisers to local election offices across the country to become directly involved in election administration in 2020—hence the term Zuckerbucks.

Voters cast their ballots at the Old Stone School, used as a polling station, on Election Day in Hillsboro, Va., on Nov. 3, 2020.

Mark Zuckerberg (R) and his wife, Priscilla Chan, attend an event in Mountain View, Calif., on Nov. 3, 2019.

Critics of the CTCL, like Mitchell, say its maneuvers are outright election manipulation. CTCL "consistently gave bigger grants and more money per capita to counties that voted for Biden," the CRC wrote in an analysis. The CTCL's advisory services to local election offices were often provided in conjunction with left-leaning organizations, such as the Brennan Center for Justice.

Open Secrets, a nonprofit research group tracking political financing, estimated in a March 2021 report that \$447 million in "dark money"—political donations with undisclosed sources—supported liberal groups at the federal level during the 2020 election cycle, while only \$190 million went to supporting conservative groups.

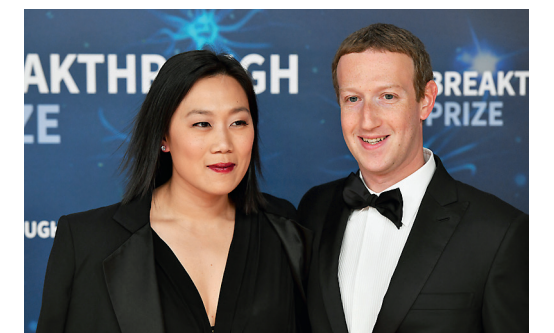
'Something They Will Never Have'

According to Mitchell, despite the uneven playing field in favor of elites on the left, conservatives have "something they will never have."

"Conservatives and patriots who believe in election integrity and the rule of law—the many volunteers who form the Election Integrity Network—will never have the money the left-wing billionaires have dedicated to building their sprawling election disruption enterprise," Mitchell said. "We will never have the sheer number of entities that the left has built over the past decade.

"But we have something they will never have: an army of citizen patriots who love America, and are tirelessly dedicated to becoming an integral part of the election process at every local election office in the nation—who are intent upon saving and preserving our Constitutional Republic—that is the mission of the network and the thousands of volunteers across the country who are part of this mission.

"That's why Conservative Partnership Institute is proud to have launched the network and why we continue to support and grow it." ■



"We just want to make sure that people feel confident and trust their vote."

Rep. Claudia Tenney

FROM: KENDRENO-POOL/GETTY IMAGES, ANDREW CABALLERO-REYNOLDS/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES/ANTUTITLE/GETTY IMAGES FOR BREAKTHROUGH PRIZE

LEGISLATURES

ROAD TO INTEGRITY

States have tightened election laws, but more remains to be done

BY DAN M. BERGER



Voters outside the Madison Community Center polling site in Arlington, Va., on March 3, 2020.

PHOTO BY SAMUEL CORUM/GETTY IMAGES

WITH WIDESPREAD worries about election integrity prompted by the controversy that followed the 2020 election, some states have reformed their laws and procedures, although much more remains to be done, according to an analysis by a conservative nonprofit.

States across the nation made major adjustments to the voting process in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, including a massive expansion to mail-in voting. Republicans argued that the expansion created loopholes for voter fraud due to a lack of safeguards and voter identification rules.

States have come a long way since 2020, says Hans von Spakovsky, a Heritage Foundation senior legal fellow and manager of its election law reform initiative. But they still have more to do.

The Heritage Foundation scored and ranked the states for election integrity. The foundation looked at 12 areas, with more than two-thirds of the score weighted for three: voter ID implementation, the accuracy of voter registration lists, and absentee ballot management.

States could score a maximum of 100 points. None do. If this were school, the best scores were only B's. Tennessee had the best election integrity procedures in the country with a score of 84, followed closely by Georgia at 83, Alabama at 82, and Missouri with 80.

Ranked 51st on the list—50 states plus the District of Columbia—was Hawaii, with 26. Only marginally better were Nevada at 28, California at 30, and Oregon at 38.

Fourteen states improved their scores from the previous year, while only two worsened, von Spakovsky and co-author Jack Fitzhenry wrote in *The Daily Signal* in August.

"Tennessee is No. 1, but it only got 84 out of 100," von Spakovsky told *The Epoch Times*. "Even the best state in the country needs to make improvements."

The top three things they need to do, he said, are to require voter ID for both in-person and absentee balloting, do a better job of maintaining and verifying accurate voter rolls, and strengthen rules for handling absentee ballots.

Von Spakovsky praised some of the states' reforms: Texas and Florida followed Georgia in adding identification requirements for absentee balloting. Those applying for absentee ballots must provide a photocopy of their driver's license or other identification, or its serial number, on the application form.

"This requirement is easily met," he said. "It won't stop all fraud, but it will make it signifi-



cantly more difficult."

Tennessee's new laws authorize officials to use commercial databases such as those of credit agencies to check and verify registration information, von Spakovsky said.

"This is a good change, one I've long been recommending. Credit agencies keep pretty good data, and it's usually much more current than the government databases," he said.

A Gallup poll showed that even before the 2020 presidential election, voter confidence in the integrity of elections was down:

"Although their faith has been shaken for some time, Americans are heading into their next presidential election with relatively little confidence in the honesty of the process. Four in 10 Americans (40 percent) interviewed in 2019 said they are confident in the honesty of elections in the country, while the majority (59 percent) said they are not," the venerable polling company wrote in February 2020.

And confidence had dropped even more by early this year.

People casting their votes at the North Yarmouth Community Center in North Yarmouth, Maine, on Nov. 3, 2020.

FROM L. MICHAEL M. SANTAGO/GETTY IMAGES, COURTESY OF THE HERITAGE FOUNDATION

Rigging Versus Suppression

An ABC/Ipsos poll found only 20 percent of the public saying it was very confident about the election system, down from 37 percent a year before in an ABC News/Washington Post poll. ABC attributed the drop to the events of Jan. 6, 2021, without explaining why election confidence had dropped even prior to that.

Election integrity means different things to different people. Those on the right often fear voter fraud and election rigging, while those on the left worry about voter suppression.

The Electoral Integrity Project at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government studied the issue by seeking the views of more than 1,000 academic political scientists and received 789 responses in the weeks following the November 2020 election.

Summarizing the study's key findings, Pippa Norris, a professor and director of the Electoral Integrity Project, writes:

"Election experts overwhelmingly rejected claims of widespread fraud occurring in their state

during the balloting and vote tabulation stages of the 2020 U.S. elections.

"At the same time, this does not imply that experts believe that the performance of all stages in the 2020 American elections should be given a clean bill of health."

The study cites problems such as gerrymandering favoring incumbents, unfair press and TV news coverage, lack of transparency for campaign finance, difficulties for minorities in voting, and barriers to female and minority candidates.

"Finally, expert assessments also indicate that compared with 2016, the performance of this contest displays several warning flags, namely worsening confidence in the integrity of American elections and falling public trust, challenges to legitimacy arising from threats of campaign violence, legal disputes about the process and results, and public protests about the outcome, as well as growing attempts at voter suppression," she writes.

Norris's study surveyed experts but didn't look directly at elections or fraud data.

It cited "right-wing misinformation and conspiracy theories" and the Trump campaign's extended challenges to the election results for the fact that about 4 in 5 Trump voters had little or no confidence in the election result, thought Trump shouldn't concede, and thought Joe Biden had legitimately won the 2020 election.

Norris's office didn't respond to requests for comment from *The Epoch Times*.

No Investigations

Von Spakovsky pointed to contrasting studies, both by the Public Interest Legal Foundation, that suggest that fears of election fraud do have a basis.

The Safe Harbor study requested state records or made Freedom of Information Act requests to the 10 biggest counties in Florida following the 2020 election, asking for all criminal referrals to local prosecutors. They followed up by seeking from the relevant Florida state attorney offices the records of prosecutions in those cases.

"They discovered not a single one of those criminal referrals had been investigated and prosecuted by local district attorneys," von Spakovsky said.

He said the Critical Condition study before the 2020 election obtained voter registration lists from 42 states and compared them with other records such as the Social Security master death index. The investigators found more than 144,000 potential cases of fraud, including people registered in two states and voting in both, people shown to be dead who voted after they died, and people registered twice in the same state and casting two ballots.

"There were a whole bunch of cases showing possible fraud. Not a single law enforcement



"Not a single law enforcement official in any state [requested data on possible fraud]."

Hans von Spakovsky, senior fellow, The Heritage Foundation



“I saw it done one way [during the primary] in alignment with the law, and in the general election, a different set of procedures, with no blocks and controls and checks and balances.”

Marci McCarthy,
GOP chairwoman,
DeKalb County

official in any state contacted them after their report came out to say, ‘Send us the data,’ or to offer to investigate double registrations,” he said.

In a nation of 340 million people, would 144,000 such discrepancies constitute a severe problem?

“Our database could be much, much larger if, in fact, states did a better job investigating these problems and if prosecutors did, in fact, investigate and prosecute them,” von Spakovsky said.

“Some are isolated cases, one voter taking advantage of the system and voting twice. But others are organized efforts, which result in elections later being overturned.”

Georgia passed the Election Integrity Act of 2021, which tightened up on absentee ballot voting. State officials have continued their push—begun when the current governor, Brian Kemp, was the state’s secretary of state—to purge problematic registrations from the voter rolls.

Kemp’s Democratic opponent in 2018 and again this year, Stacey Abrams, labeled bill provisions as “racist” in testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee in April 2021.

Abrams backed the pressure on Major League Baseball to move the 2021 All-Star Game out of Atlanta to punish the state for the new law. The game was then played in Denver.

“Like many Georgians, I am disappointed that the MLB is relocating the All-Star Game; however, I commend the players, owners, and League commissioner for speaking out,” Abrams posted on Twitter on April 2, 2021.

“I urge others in positions of leadership to do so as well. As I have stated, I respect boycotts, although I don’t want to see Georgia families hurt by lost events and jobs. Georgians targeted



by voter suppression will be hurt as opportunities go to other states. We should not abandon the victims of GOP malice and lies—we must stand together.”

Abrams and her allies have since tried to walk back her position.

Working Together

How elections run can be as much a grassroots matter as a state one.

Marci McCarthy, the Republican chairwoman for the heavily Democratic DeKalb County in the Atlanta metro area, said the county had made much progress through its elections board and a broader stakeholders’ committee to improve election transparency and integrity.

Republicans appoint two of the five members, Democrats two more, and the fifth is an at-large seat appointed by a judge. McCarthy said the fifth usually votes with the Democrats, and many votes split on party lines, 3 to 2.

McCarthy sits on the stakeholders’ committee, which includes representatives of both parties and party-aligned groups and leaders of both the elections board and the elections office. The body, which she describes as a “working group,” sits down for a few hours before an election to air concerns and head off problems before they occur.

“It’s truly extraordinary,” she said. “We have a strong working relationship. We have the process to resolve all incidents overall. The Election Integrity Network has used DeKalb as an example of how it can be done right in a county that’s 70 percent Democrat.”

One victory she cited was the board’s handling of discrepancies in the May 24 Democratic primary for the DeKalb County Commission District 2 race.

Michelle Long Spears, the candidate who ran third and was eliminated from the runoff, started examining returns precinct by precinct. She found she had received zero votes in 14 precincts—including her own, where she and her husband, at the very least, had voted for her.

The elections board didn’t split along party lines, voting promptly and unanimously not to certify the election, and instead doing a full hand recount over Memorial Day weekend. The hand recount showed Spears gaining 3,299 votes and now in first place, while the previous leader, Marshall Orson, dropped to third place. Spears later won the runoff.

The discrepancy was traced to a single process error, McCarthy said. A fourth candidate had withdrawn late in the race. While a standard elections audit had earlier confirmed the DeKalb ballots’ accuracy, the audit—a lengthy and tedious process—wasn’t redone after the candidate’s withdrawal.

So a glitch wasn’t spotted: Some ballots still listed the fourth candidate. In those precincts, Spears’s name alphabetically was listed fourth, McCarthy said. But the system now had only three buckets, so to speak, into which to place votes. In those cases, votes for Spears were just dropped.

In Georgia, a voter uses a touch screen to select candidates and, when finished, receives a paper printout showing his or her votes, confirming those cast. The paper ballot, with a QR code, is

(Above Left)
Protestors opposing an election reform bill outside the Georgia Capitol in Atlanta on March 3, 2021.

(Above Right)
Protestors in support of the bill.

deposited into a separate machine reading the QR code. That system had nowhere to go with votes for Spears when she was listed fourth on the ballot, and those votes just vanished. But they were picked up during the hand recount.

“We’re not adversarial,” McCarthy said. “We’re all on the same team. We all want fair and transparent elections. Ultimately, we want to have elections we can stand by. It’s hard to look at when there’s such distrust between Republicans and Democrats across the board.”

“I’m not saying cheating can’t happen, but if you have a working relationship, you have conversations before you start shooting arrows out the gate.”

McCarthy was one who questioned the 2020 election results and integrity. Even before that election, she was registering her complaints about sudden new COVID-related changes in procedure between the primary and general elections of that year.

“I saw it done one way [during the primary] in alignment with the law, and in the general election, a different set of procedures, with no blocks and controls and checks and balances. It was completely disturbing. I saw something and said something,” she said.

“I reported to the elections board the irregularities and things I saw. No one wanted to examine them.

“We’re not friends. There’s still a great distrust. But there’s a common ground where we come together with an agenda and a list of items we’re going to agree on.” ■



Stacey Abrams, Gov. Brian Kemp’s Democratic opponent in 2018 and again this year, speaks at an event in Atlanta on Sept. 19, 2022.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: MARCI MCCARTHY; NAROUS INGRAM/GETTY IMAGES; MEGAN VARNER/GETTY IMAGES

WISCONSIN

'Nothing Has Changed'

Lawmaker fears loophole in Wisconsin elections will make midterms a rerun of 2020

By Steven Kovac

WISCONSIN STATE Assemblywoman Janel Brandtjen, a Republican, worries that not enough has been done to prevent the upcoming midterm election from becoming a replay of 2020.

"Going into the midterms, a person can still register, get a ballot, and vote before his or her identity and address are verified with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, as required by law," Brandtjen told The Epoch Times. "I saw this going on in the August primary. Nothing has changed since 2020. There is still no instantaneous identity check for the thousands of people utilizing Wisconsin's same-day registration law.

"There remains continuing opportunity for bad actors to take advantage of this and other security vulnerabilities in the balloting process."

According to law, local clerks have 30 days after a state election and 45 days after a federal election to verify a same-day voter's ID and address.

"What good does that do? By that time, the election is already over, and there is no way to take a potentially illegal

vote back or to link the ballot with the unqualified voter who cast it," she said. "This is not the fault of the local election clerks. They have not been provided the equipment they need, nor is there a process in place for an instant identity check for same-day registrants who vote that day.

"The Wisconsin election system has a poor balancing process and is very bad about removing any names from the voter rolls. Many of these problem names and addresses are likely still on the rolls."

the rolls."

The Wisconsin Legislative Audit Bureau documented the size of the 2020 problem in a report published in October 2021.

The audit discovered that the identity and address information of more than 46,000 same-day voting registrants didn't match the information in the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT) database.

Brandtjen said some of these may be explainable by things such as spelling errors, but the sheer number discovered is cause for concern.

"It also doesn't change the fact that the errors that were caught were found after the person voted," she said.

60,000 VOTERS

NEARLY 60,000 WOULD-BE voters appeared before municipal election officials, asked to be registered, and received a ballot without their names and addresses being verified with the DOT database until after the election or not at all, an audit of the 2020 election reveals.



Election officials count absentee ballots in Milwaukee, Wis., on Nov. 4, 2020.

According to the audit, in the case of 13,800 people, "no attempt was made to match the information."

The audit stated that the Wisconsin Elections Commission (WEC) offered several technical reasons why it made no attempt to match the identity and address of 13,800 would-be voters with DOT records, explaining that it was, in part, due to some of them being "in the military."

According to the website Governing: The Future of States and Localities, in September 2021, Wisconsin had 1,034 people on active duty in the U.S. military.

The audit revealed that a total of nearly 60,000 would-be voters appeared before municipal election officials, asked

to be registered, and received a ballot without their names and addresses being verified with the DOT database until after the election or not at all.

Brandtjen said the WEC ignored her letter about the audit's findings and recommendations.

According to the audit, nearly 960,000 people registered to vote in 2020, either online, in person, or by mail.

Of the 960,000 new registrants, nearly 94 percent of them presented identity and address information that matched the DOT database.

"That is no doubt the case, but the problem is centered on the lack of an in-person, same-day register and vote verification procedure," election integrity watchdog Peter Bernegger told The Epoch Times. "The responsibility lies squarely on WEC, which has done nothing

to fix this gaping hole in the security of Wisconsin elections.

"Going into next month's midterm election, nothing has changed. There is still no system in place to do an instant identity verification like what we see at our airports, party stores, and bars."

Bernegger alleged that some unverifiable names and addresses of people who received ballots weren't discovered until five weeks after the 2020 election.

"By then, the damage was already done," he said.

Bernegger said WEC's failure to implement an instantaneous verification system for the names and addresses of same-day registrants serves the political interests of the Democratic Party.

To determine the extent of the alleged abuse, he applied the state's 90 percent voter turnout rate in the 2020 presiden-

"There remains continuing opportunity for bad actors to take advantage of this [election]."

Janel Brandtjen,
Wisconsin state assemblywoman

tial election to the number of belatedly verified and unverifiable registrants flagged in the audit.

"Through that calculation, we estimate that 53,500 people were likely to have voted without verification of their names and addresses. And it's possible for them to do it again," Bernegger said.

Challenger Joe Biden defeated President Donald Trump by less than 21,000 votes in Wisconsin in 2020.

After the August primary, Bernegger filed a formal complaint with the WEC, alleging that its administrator, Meagan Wolfe, and all six commissioners (three Republicans and three Democrats) had neglected their sworn duty by not implementing an instant identity check system for same-day registration voting.

WEC officials didn't respond to a request from The Epoch Times for comment.

On Sept. 7, WEC returned Bernegger's complaint "without consideration or dismissal by the Commission."

In a letter to Bernegger, WEC recused itself and referred Bernegger to the circuit court, claiming that it would be unethical to adjudicate a complaint against itself.

Bernegger told The Epoch Times: "As a Wisconsin voter who had to have my identity and address match the DOT database before I voted, I believe my 14th Amendment rights of equal protection and due process have been violated by WEC's willful and selective omission of this requirement in the case of same-day voters.

"I am seeking legal counsel to fight for my rights in court." ■

TEXAS

Cash for Ballots

Bodycam footage shows man admitting to brazen election fraud

By Steven Kovac

THE RACE FOR COUNTY judge in Texas's Tarrant County, the state's third largest by population, was rocked last month when allegations of past fraudulent ballot harvesting surfaced against Democratic nominee Deborah Peoples.

Footage from a bodycam worn by a Fort Worth police officer shows a man telling a policeman that Peoples allegedly paid him \$200 cash for every fraudulently cast absentee ballot he could deliver in the months before the 2016 presidential election.

The footage of the Jan. 3, 2020, conversation was obtained through a public records request and first appeared in a Gateway Pundit article in mid-September. The Fort Worth Police Department confirmed the video's authenticity to The Epoch Times.



Deborah Peoples,

Democratic nominee for county judge in Tarrant County, Texas.

The video shows a nighttime discussion between the officer and a bicyclist he stopped for riding in the wrong direction on a public street.

After identifying the rider as Charles Jackson, the officer realized he was acquainted with Jackson from a previous encounter on the streets of Fort Worth in 2016.

During the first encounter, the homeless Jackson had difficulty explaining why he had \$1,000 in cash on his person. Jackson said it had something to do with the election.

At the time, the officer warned him that tampering with elections could

have severe consequences and let him go.

Jackson didn't heed the policeman's advice, and sometime after his 2016 brush with law enforcement, he was arrested and charged with providing false information on a voting application.

In the 2020 bodycam video, Jackson says that after his arrest, he was quickly bailed out of jail by a person he knew to be closely affiliated with Peoples.

He also says that the judge imposed a gag order on all parties to the case.

Jackson pleaded guilty in April 2019 in exchange for a lesser sentence.

"They trying to get me for 10 years. ... I didn't know it was that bad. ... It turned out they'd been stealing votes," he tells the policeman in the video.

Despite a record of previous felonies, which made him eligible to serve up to 10 years in prison, Jackson was sentenced to 10 days in jail with credit for 10 days served.

The gag order didn't stop Jackson from telling the policeman who pulled him over in 2020 that he was hired by Peoples, then-chairperson of the Tarrant County Democratic Party.

"I can talk now," Jackson says. "I'm done with it. ... Deborah gave me cash."

Jackson says he was provided with the personal voting registration information of elderly Texans.

His job was to visit them and deceive them into signing absentee ballot documents that he misrepresented as county election forms used to certify that their personal data was correct.

Jackson then voted for all the Demo-



\$200 CASH

FOOTAGE FROM A POLICE officer's bodycam shows a man telling a policeman that he was paid \$200 cash for every fraudulently cast absentee ballot he could deliver in the months before the 2016 presidential election.



(Above) Voters line up to cast their ballots in Fort Worth, Texas, on March 1, 2016. **(Left)** Charles Jackson told the police, in footage captured in a 2020 bodycam video, that Peoples personally paid him in cash to commit election fraud.

cratic candidates listed on the ballots and turned them in for cash.

The victims had no idea what was happening. Many were surprised when they requested an absentee ballot or showed up at the polls on Election Day and were told they had already voted.

In the video, Jackson alleges that Peoples personally paid him in cash for his services.

He says he was also rewarded with a moped and bonuses over the six months he engaged in the ballot har-

vesting scam—an enterprise that he claims earned him between \$900 and \$1,200 per week.

Peoples didn't respond to a request by The Epoch Times for comment.

On Sept. 26, the Fort Worth Star-Telegram newspaper cited Peoples as saying that Republicans were "disrespecting voters by leaning on false information from an outlet famous for spreading lies to serve an extreme agenda."

In an Oct. 4 phone interview with The Epoch Times, Timothy O'Hare,

Peoples's Republican opponent, explained that in Tarrant County, the position of county judge is akin to a county executive and carries immense administrative authority.

"It's like being the mayor of the county. Over 2 million people live here. We are the third-largest county in Texas and the 15th-largest in the United States," he said.

Commenting on the bodycam video, O'Hare said people should watch it and decide for themselves what to believe.

"If Deborah Peoples participated in an illegal voting operation, she is unfit to hold any public office and should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law," he said.

"If an investigation into the allegations referenced in the video has not already commenced, one should begin immediately."

Tarrant County Sheriff Bill Waybourn, a Republican, announced in a Sept. 26 statement that it would be "inappropriate" for the sheriff's office to investigate allegations of election fraud leveled at Peoples because he had endorsed O'Hare for County Judge.

The Tarrant County district attorney's office, the office of the Texas attorney general, and the Texas Ranger Division didn't respond by press time to questions from The Epoch Times about any potential or ongoing investigation of Peoples.

According to longtime Texas political consultant Aaron Harris, who said he isn't working for the O'Hare campaign, modern-day election fraud isn't unusual in the Lone Star state, especially in Tarrant County.

He told The Epoch Times that since 2015, the county has been at the forefront of exposing the Democrats' history of ballot harvesting and election fraud and that he was "shocked" when the party made Peoples their nominee for county judge.

"Make no mistake, Deborah Peoples [has long been] at the center of Tarrant County harvesting," he said.

"As the Democrat county chair. ... she operated a 'consulting' service whose specialty was mail-in ballots. Harvesting was her bread and butter."

Harris also stated that, in Texas, Democrats and Republicans had been involved in ballot harvesting schemes.

"Ballot harvesting in local elections is more about grift than ideology," he said. In 2018, four women were indicted by the Texas attorney general for alleged election fraud in Tarrant County.

The Texas secretary of state announced in 2019 that a cross-check of the state's voter rolls with its Department of Public Safety records uncovered that 95,000 noncitizens registered to vote, and 58,000 of them voted in one or more Texas elections. ■

WATCHDOG GROUPS ALLEGE ELECTION VIOLATIONS IN FLORIDA

1,100 ballots cast from undeliverable addresses

BY STEVEN KOVAC

Voter Name & Address / Nombre y dirección del votante Red Belly Rd Clermont FL 34711		Party Affiliation / Afiliación Partidista Rep
Voter Date of Birth / Votante Date de Nacimiento [REDACTED]		City or County / Ciudad o Condado CITY
Poll Location / Ubicación de la Encuesta Clermont City Center 620 W Montrose St., Clermont Precinct Number / Número de Recinto 155		Commission / Comisión 2
Issue Date / Fecha de Emisión Jul/14/2022		School Board / Consejo Escolar 3
Registration Number / Número de Registro 104		State House / Casa de Estado 25
		State Senate / Senado Estatal 13
		Congress / Congreso 11

A voter information card issued to a resident of 12th Street in Clermont, Fla., with an inaccurate address.

PHOTO COURTESY OF KRIS JURSKI

A GRASSROOTS GROUP presented evidence to Florida election officials and law enforcement last month showing that almost 1,100 mail-in ballots in one county were cast from undeliverable addresses in the state's Aug. 23 primary election.

Florida First Freedom Alliance gave state election officials a spreadsheet containing the results of a computer crosscheck conducted by another grassroots group. That audit represents "only a small sliver" of those who requested mail-in ballots in Florida's Orange County, according to Christopher Gleason, the group's spokesman.

The data allegedly show that almost 1,100 vote-by-mail ballots were sent to and cast from undeliverable addresses.

"The resulting problem is that there are thousands of completely undeliverable vote-by-mail ballots that were later turned in to election officials as legitimately cast vote-by-mail ballots," Gleason told The Epoch Times. "This is what happens when dirty voter registration rolls result in massive numbers of undeliverable ballots. The question is, who is voting them?"

The Orange County Supervisor of Elections office didn't respond to a request for comment.

Gleason's group used data obtained and analyzed by another grassroots group, the Lake County Election Integrity and Voter Protection Coalition.

"There are thousands of people across Florida listed on the voter rolls whose ad-

dress is flawed, with either incomplete or inaccurate information—missing a digit in the ZIP code; an apartment complex with inaccurate, incomplete apartment numbers or none at all; and misspelled words. Small errors, but just enough to render a mail-in ballot undeliverable," Kris Jurski, spokesman for the Lake County group, told The Epoch Times.

"The whole game is to generate undeliverable ballots—a portion of which are somehow being obtained and voted by somebody else."

After analyzing the July voter rolls, Jurski's group informed Florida elections officials that in just one of the state's 27 U.S. congressional districts (District 11) nearly 60,000 residential addresses were in need of updating and correction.

The group found more than 30,000 residential addresses that were designated by the U.S. Postal Service as undeliverable.

Jurski said there were thousands of address splits in which voters had their addresses temporarily altered in 2020 and that the practice continues today.

"Performing the switch is how an unauthorized actor could get a person's mail-in ballot without his or her knowledge," he said. "This may be why there are so many obviously faulty addresses

kept on voter registration rolls."

It may also explain the experience reported by many in-person voters who showed up at their polling places to vote on Election Day and were told by election workers that they had already voted, according to Jurski.

"Thousands of these ballots are being voted by someone—then just in time for the election, the addresses are electronically switched back, making

the scheme all but undetectable by local election officials," he said. "This is classic identity theft."

Jurski said the voter's name, ID number, house number (but not his street name), and all other information in his voting records remain the same on the registration rolls.

He said the switches are done in low volume over a wide area of jurisdictions and that there's less such

activity during primaries because fewer votes are needed to affect the outcome of races than in general elections.

"Many elections in Florida are decided by less than 1 percent or even by just a handful of votes, so the situation is very concerning."

Jurski told The Epoch Times that a citizens' canvass of 12th Street in the city of Clermont in Lake County that was conducted on Aug. 27, just days after



Christopher Gleason, spokesperson for the Florida First Freedom Alliance.

COURTESY OF CHRISTOPHERGLEASON



Voters wait in line to drop off their ballots at the Miami-Dade Election Department headquarters in Doral, Fla., on Oct. 14, 2020.

Florida's Aug. 23 primary election, found that residents were completely unaware of a switch that was made to their voter registration records.

Without their knowledge, request, or assent, all of the 12th Street voters surveyed had their addresses electronically changed to say Red Belly Road and then changed back again weeks later.

"We obtained 37 sworn affidavits from the 37 people registered to vote on 12th Street attesting that they never requested a change of address," he said.

"A married couple residing on 12th Street showed us two voter information cards displaying their names and inaccurately listing them as living on Red Belly Road."

Alan Hays, the supervisor of elections in Lake County, told The Epoch Times in a Sept. 5 phone interview that he was aware of the 12th Street incident.

Hays, a Republican, said he wants to assure people that every change on the Lake

County voter rolls was made by "authorized personnel, either directly employed by Lake County or contracted with it."

"We are not in violation of any law," he said. "We completely follow the letter of the law."

"I don't question the intent of the citizens' groups. In fact, I share their desire for pure and clean elections."

Hays said the 12th Street changes (to Red Belly Road and back to 12th Street again) resulted from the U.S. Postal Service referring to the block as 12th Street, while the Lake County E-911 System calls the same thoroughfare Red Belly Road.

"As we were in the process of making our precincts coincide with newly redrawn district lines, the consultant we employed used the E-911 designation of Red Belly Road instead of the name 12th Street," he said. "Our office chose to use the E-911 Geo Point Data System for our redistricting work."

Greg Holcomb, director of public

safety support and 911 coordinator for Lake County, told The Epoch Times: "We have never referred to 12th Street in Clermont as Red Belly Road. It has never been named Red Belly Road."

"There was a 12th Street in the Wekiva Falls RV Resort that was renamed Red Belly Road, but that was in Sorrento and has nothing to do with the 12th Street in Clermont. They are on opposite ends of Lake County."

U.S. Postal Service records show that the communities have different ZIP codes.

In all but the above-mentioned case of the married couple's voter information cards, the Postal Service considered the block residents' mail undeliverable if it bore the Red Belly Road address.

According to Jurski, the longtime acquaintance between the couple and their mail carrier may have been a factor in their receiving the misaddressed envelopes containing the inaccurate voter information cards.

CLOCKWISE FROM L.: JOE PAULI/GETTY IMAGES'S COURTESY/OF CHRISTOPHER GLEASON; JOE PAULI/GETTY IMAGES

In his letter to election officials, Gleason wrote that the existing safeguards provided by Florida law to prevent the misuse of mail-in ballots are being ignored by many county election supervisors.

He pointed to a Florida law governing mail-in ballot procedures that reads, in part, that "ballots shall be addressed to each elector at the address appearing in the registration records and placed in an envelope which is prominently marked Do Not Forward."

Florida First Freedom Alliance provided election authorities with screenshots of mail-in ballot envelopes sent to voters that don't bear what they allege to be the statutorily required instruction: "Do Not Forward."

Instead, the envelopes only read, "Return Service Requested."

"That is a clear violation of the plain language of the law," Gleason said. "Specific words have specific meanings in the law and in postal regulations."

Gleason said the deficient labeling doesn't clearly and definitively inform apartment managers, RV park managers, or mailroom clerks handling other people's mail that it shouldn't be forwarded.

As evidence of the problem, Gleason's group provided authorities with a screenshot of a vote-by-mail ballot envelope that had been forwarded in Pinellas County.

Evidence of similar occurrences in other Florida counties, such as Pasco, has also been sent along to election officials.

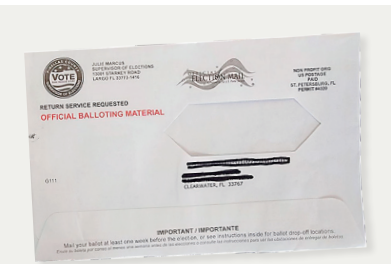
Dustin Chase, deputy supervisor of elections in Pinellas County, disagrees that the envelopes used by his office violate the statute.

"From our perspective and that of our attorneys, we are conducting elections legally pursuant to all laws," Chase told The Epoch Times.

He described Gleason's group as "a very sincere group of patriots that is dedicated to ensuring the integrity of our elections. We respect them."

However, Chase said the group doesn't understand that the section of the Florida election law that it's citing applies only to "all-mail-in elections," such as referendums, where no candidates or offices appear on the ballot and there's no in-person voting.

Gleason said the plain statutory language governs the handling of mail-in



An envelope containing mail-in ballot materials sent by nonprofit mail by Pinellas County, Fla.

**1,100
BALLOTS**

ALMOST 1,100 VOTE-BY-MAIL ballots were sent to and cast from undeliverable addresses in a Florida county, a group says.

**60,000
ADDRESSES**

IN JUST ONE OF FLORIDA'S congressional districts were in need of updating and correction, the July voter rolls show.

ballots in all elections.

He also said the same statute mandates that mail-in ballots be sent by First Class mail, yet his group found that many mail-in ballot envelopes are sent by bulk mail or nonprofit mail.

He also presented evidence that a large number of mail-in ballots were sent to voters in apartment houses or complexes with no individual apartment numbers specified, a practice that he says opens the door to potential voter fraud.

When Chase was asked by The Epoch Times about mail-in ballots being cast from undeliverable addresses, he replied: "I'm not sure if it did happen, but if it did and someone knows about it, they should report the fraud to law enforcement immediately."

Gleason and his group are awaiting the response from state and local election officials.

He criticized the hesitancy of some election officials to cooperate with concerned citizens.

"We are often told that data we request is nonexistent or that we don't have a right to see it. They also tack on exorbitant fees to some requests," Gleason said.

Jurski said his group is running into the same resistance from election authorities.

"Our problem is not with the honest, hardworking, conscientious election workers. It is with their superiors." ■



A Miami-Dade County elections worker wheels a cart of vote-by-mail ballots at the Miami-Dade Election Department in Miami on July 21.

Mail-in ballots held for review due to signature discrepancies, at the Miami-Dade County Elections Department in Doral, Fla., on Oct. 15, 2020.

PHOTO BY JOE RAEDLE/GETTY IMAGES

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

WARNING

THE STEAL

VOTER FRAUD HAS SWUNG 16 US ELECTIONS SINCE 2020

Election fraud comes in all shapes and sizes, and has changed the outcomes of US elections

By Dan M. Berger

News Analysis

VOTER FRAUD IS surprisingly common. Prosecutions for it can range from small-scale cases, such as someone with two residences voting in both states, to large-scale crimes that changed electoral outcomes, affected hundreds or thousands of votes, and ranged across multiple states.

An extensive database maintained by The Heritage Foundation has logged 1,384 proven cases of voter fraud, resulting in 1,191 criminal convictions, 48 civil penalties, and 103 defendants ending up in diversion programs. And the foundation says the list doesn't come close to being comprehensive.

The database, which dates to 1992, lists 19 elections overturned due to

fraud, 16 of those since 2000.

Such fraud isn't linked to any particular party or ethnicity. Republicans do it. Democrats do it. Blacks, whites, and Hispanics all do it.

Candidates cheat to get elected, falsely registering inside a district where they don't live. Or they arrange for illegal votes in their favor. Parties and activist groups do it to win elections or to look good padding their voters-registered counts and maybe getting a bonus for making their quota.

"That database represents only a sampling of cases. It's not comprehensive. It's only cases that were investigated and prosecuted," the foundation's elections expert Hans von Spakovsky told The Epoch Times.

"There are plenty of examples of lo-

cal prosecutors not being interested in and not pursuing these cases; also, federal prosecutors. It's a potential problem much larger than our database indicated."

The database breaks down the cases in several ways. It can be sorted by date, year, the outcome such as a criminal conviction or civil penalty, and by the following categories of infractions: altering the vote count; ballot petition fraud; buying votes; duplicate voting; election overturned; false registrations; fraudulent use of absentee ballots; illegal assistance at the polls; impersonation fraud at the polls; and ineligible voting.

Judges and other authorities have overturned numerous elections in recent years for voter fraud. Races in small towns or for obscure public

Votes are tallied for the 2020 presidential election at the historic Balsams Resort in Dixville Notch, N.H., on Nov. 3, 2020.

boards seem particularly vulnerable, perhaps because the small numbers of votes make the election easier to steal.

"If you look at the cases in our database, some are isolated cases, one voter taking advantage of the system and voting twice," Von Spakovsky said. "But others are organized efforts, which result in the election later being overturned."

Here are a few elections overturned recently:

A city council election in Compton, California, which hinged on a single vote, was overturned earlier this year because, prosecutors showed, voters who didn't live in the district had cast at least four ballots for the initial winner. The judge awarded the election to runner-up Andre Spicer, and initial winner Isaac Galvan, a two-term incumbent, has been charged with election rigging and bribery.

"Fraud is a regular practice here," Spicer told *The Daily Signal*, referring to Compton. "This is the first time it has gotten this far. He got arrested for fraud and bribery. That's what put him up by one vote."

In 2018, the election for North Carolina's 9th Congressional District was overturned, and a new election was held in 2019 because an operative for the Republican winner, Mark Harris, had led a team committing absentee ballot fraud. Four defendants pleaded guilty to misdemeanors last month, six others have charges pending, and the team leader died in April while under indictment. Harris, who wasn't charged, didn't run in the new election. Workers said they gathered blank or incomplete absentee ballots by offering to mail them, then filling them in or forging signatures.

In 2021, a city council election in Aberdeen, Mississippi, was overturned after a judge found that 66 of the 84 absentee ballots cast were invalid. A notary admitted she violated notary laws by putting her notary seal on about 30 such ballots in the home of a city alderwoman without the ballots having been signed in her presence. The first election's runner-up, who had lost by 37 votes, won the ensu-



"There are plenty of examples of local prosecutors not being interested in and not pursuing [voter fraud] cases. Also, federal prosecutors."

Hans von Spakovsky, elections expert

ing special election.

In 2020, a town council election in Eatonville, Florida, decided by one vote was overturned after a judge found two of the initial winner's votes invalid. One was a vote in the name of a man who later testified he never voted in the election, and the other came from a woman who testified she'd been threatened with eviction by her landlord into voting. Candidate Marlin Daniels initially led by one vote but fell behind when the Orange County Canvassing Board in April added two votes that hadn't been counted for his opponent, Tarus Mack. Daniels sued and, in October 2020, was declared the winner by the judge.

No venue is off-limits.

Even the legendary New Hampshire town of Dixville Notch has had a case.

Since it first gained the right to run its own elections in 1960, the hamlet has become a piece of American political lore as

FROM L.: JOSEPH PREZIOSO/AFPA/GETTY IMAGES; RACHEL LAURAY/GETTY IMAGES FOR DREAM HOLLOWOOD

the first in the nation to vote and report its election results for each New Hampshire presidential primary—the nation's first each cycle—and the election itself.

A dozen or two voters gather in a resort hotel ballroom. The polls open as the clock ticks midnight into Election Day, then close a minute later after all the eligible voters have cast ballots. The wire services beam the results out to the nation, and it often leads the news on Election Day morning. But two individuals voted in 2016 in Dixville Notch's primary, despite not residing or having established a domicile there. They were warned they would face criminal prosecution if they did it again.

The activist group Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) was driven out of existence in the United States—an international branch remains—because its organizers and petition gatherers

were found to have fabricated so many voter registrations in at least six states between 2007 and 2011, mostly for the 2008 election of President Barack Obama. He at one time had represented the group as a lawyer.

At least 30 ACORN workers in six states were convicted of crimes, with most of them sentenced to jail. Two senior organizers in Las Vegas were among those convicted after starting a scheme to pay hourly petition gatherers a \$5 bonus for registering 21 people. ACORN was fined \$5,000 in that case, and the state passed a law forbidding the bonus-paying practice.

ACORN workers in Seattle committed what the secretary of state labeled as the worst case of voter registration fraud in Washington's history.

When ACORN's national office threatened to shut down the group's local office, Clifton Mitchell and his team began using fake names, addresses, birthdays, and Social Security numbers to meet voter registration quotas.

In a candid interview with CNN following his conviction, Clifton relayed how he and his fellow ACORN co-workers would take addresses from homeless shelters or use baby books and phone books to generate fake information.

In total, the group submitted 1,762 fraudulent voter registration forms. Mitchell was convicted of false registrations and served nearly three months in jail. Four other ACORN workers on his team also received jail time.

Additionally, prosecutors ordered ACORN to increase its oversight under threat of prosecution and fined the organization \$25,000 to cover the investigation cost.

Despite the numerous prosecutions and convictions spread across multiple states, defenders poooh-pooohed the issue and maintained that widespread voter fraud is a myth.

"If we are doing our jobs right, you never hear about us in the media, right?" New Mexico's incumbent secretary of state, Maggie Toulouse Oliver, told the *Santa Fe New Mexican* in a phone interview earlier this month. "That these questions [about election fraud] have arisen based on lies and misinformation, yes, the position has been elevated in the eyes of the public."

The Brennan Center for Justice, in a 2017 article "Debunking the Voter Fraud Myth", lists more than a dozen studies purporting to show the problem is vastly overstated.

"There are no known instances of fictitious people actually voting," University of Washington law professor Eric Schnapper told CNN in 2008 regarding the ACORN case. "You look at some of the names: Mickey Mouse. Dr. Seuss. Mickey Mouse only votes in Disneyland. He's not going to show up at a critical precinct in West Virginia or North Carolina."

Schnapper told CNN that if anyone should be upset, it's ACORN.

"The victims of this are the people who paid these workers \$8 an hour to go out and find legitimate voters, and ... they didn't get their \$8 worth; they put down phony names," Schnapper said.

Attitudes like these are part of the problem, Von Spakovsky and co-author John Fund wrote in their book, "Our Broken Elections: How the Left Changed the Way You Vote."

"They have pushed the false narrative that there is no fraud in our elections or that it is so minimal that we should not be concerned about it. They have also, with their willing allies in the media, falsely labeled any efforts to implement needed reform as 'voter suppression.'" ■



Compton City Council member Isaac Galvan (L) presents rapper Ice Cube with a "Celebration of Life" award from the City of Compton, in Los Angeles on June 14, 2018. Galvan's reelection was overturned by a judge, and he's now facing criminal charges for election fraud.



A voter shows his photo identification to a poll worker as he arrives to cast his ballot at Worthington Kilbourne High School in Worthington, Ohio, on May 3.

PHOTO BY DREW ANGERER/GETTY IMAGES

REFERENDUM

NEBRASKA, ARIZONA TO DECIDE ON VOTER ID PROPOSALS

The ballot proposals seek to add more stringent ID requirements to state election laws

BY JOHN HAUGHEY

NEBRASKANS WILL BE asked to make their state the 22nd to require valid photo identification to vote when they go to the polls on Nov. 8, one of four election integrity measures on ballots nationwide this fall.

Nebraska's Initiative 432 and Arizona's Proposition 309 seek to incorporate more stringent ID requirements into state election laws. Proposed measures in Ohio and Louisiana would ban municipalities from allowing noncitizens to vote in local elections.

The four measures are among 137 proposed state constitutional amendments that qualified for 2022 ballots across 37 states. Voters in four states have already cast ballots on five proposed measures, with Louisianans to see three in December, including the noncitizen vote question.

Nebraska

The Photo Voter Identification Initiative would amend the state constitution to require valid photo identification to vote and authorize the state Senate to stipulate what those ID requirements would be.

Nebraska is one of 15 states without voter ID requirements in its constitution. If Initiative 432 is adopted, Nebraska would join 21 states that require a photo ID and 36 that require an ID to vote in person.

The Nebraska proposal is the sixth measure presented to voters nationwide seeking to enact voter ID requirements since 2011, according to Ballotpedia. Voters in four states—Arkansas, North Carolina, Missouri, and Mississippi—approved such measures between 2011 and 2014. Minnesotans rejected one in 2012.

After Nebraska lawmakers failed to pass voter ID bills at least seven times

in the past decade, Citizens for Voter ID got the proposed amendment on the ballot by submitting more than 172,000 signatures, nearly 50,000 more than required, before the June 7 deadline.

Citizens for Voter ID is led by state Sen. Julie Slama, a Republican, and supported by Nebraska Gov. Pete Ricketts, also a Republican.

"Showing ID when they go to vote, it's one of the ways we can strengthen the integrity of our elections," Ricketts said in a statement. "It's a great opportunity for the second house, the people of Nebraska, to be able to weigh in a way where the Legislature has not been able to get it passed."

Citizens for Voter ID raised \$2.08 million for its campaign as of Aug. 1, according to the Nebraska Secretary of State's Office. The bulk—\$1.88 million—is from Marlene Ricketts, Pete Ricketts's wife.

In campaign rallies, Slama noted

that 35 states have enacted ID requirements to vote and cited a succession of surveys that show overwhelming support among voters for requiring ID to cast ballots, including 81 percent in a nationwide 2021 Monmouth University poll, with 62 percent of Democrat respondents.

Initiative 432 (I-432) is opposed by NoTo432.org, a coalition spearheaded by Nebraskans for Free and Fair Elections that includes Civic Nebraska, Black Votes Matter, the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance of Metropolitan Omaha, the League of Women Voters of Greater Omaha, and the Nebraska NAACP.

Opponents have raised \$68,000 in in-kind contributions in their campaign against I-432, according to Aug. 1 filings, arguing that the proposed voter ID requirements add unneeded complications and seek to solve a problem that doesn't exist.

According to Nebraskans for Free and Fair Elections, if adopted, I-432 would prevent between 54,500 and 70,000 otherwise eligible state residents from voting.

Nebraska is one of 15 states without voter ID requirements in its constitution.

Civic Nebraska maintains that the four states that have imposed an ID requirement to vote saw 2-to-3 percentage point declines in voter turnout once the new rules were in place.

I-432 is one of two ballot measures on Nebraska's Nov. 8 ballot. The other is Initiative 433, a proposed Minimum Wage statute that would raise the minimum wage to \$15 per hour by 2026.

Mail-in ballots have already been dispatched to voters who have requested them. In-person early voting is from Oct. 11 to Nov. 5. The last day to register to vote in-person is Oct. 28 and Oct. 21 to register to vote by mail.

Arizona

The Arizonans for Voter ID Act would require dates of birth and voter ID numbers for mail-in ballots and eliminate

the current two-document alternative to photo ID for in-person voting.

Under Proposition 309, voters must present either a state-issued ID number, such as a driver's license, or the last four digits of their social security number and their birthday on mail-in ballots. Right now, only a signature is needed.

State Sen. J.D. Mesnard, a Republican, sponsored the legislation adopted by super-majorities in both chambers after a coalition of conservative groups, organized as Arizonans for Voter ID, mounted a campaign beginning in June 2021 to get such a proposal before voters in 2022.

Arizonans for Voter ID is spearheaded by the Arizona Free Enterprise Club, which maintains that residents support "creating universal voter ID requirements ensuring that no matter when you vote, where you vote, or how you vote, identification will be required."

Arizona law allows voters without a photo ID to present two documents with their name and address on them to cast a ballot. The proposed amendment would eliminate that option but offer a voter photo ID card, currently available for \$12, for free.

The measure is opposed by an array of civic and progressive groups, including the League of Women Voters of Arizona, Opportunity Arizona, One Arizona, Defend Arizona Rights, the Arizona Education Association, and Activate 48, a coalition led by Living United for Change in Arizona, which includes Mi Familia Vota, Our Voice Our Vote Arizona, and Chispa Arizona.

"By one estimate, if this measure is approved by the voters, 396,000 voters may have their ballots thrown out," Defend Arizona Rights Chair Tom Ryan said in a statement. "We are all for integrity and security in voting. We need the public to have confidence in the voting system. The danger of Prop 309 is it goes the other way—it creates so many traps and gimmicks that voting becomes a minefield. Make it simple. Keep it secured."

Prop 309 is one of 10 ballot measures Arizonans will see on Nov. 8, including an amendment to create a lieutenant governor's office. There are three virtual "town halls" on the Arizona secretary of state's website explaining the proposals.



Voters wait in line to cast their ballots at a polling station in Scottsdale, Ariz., on Nov. 8, 2016.

Early voting is from Oct. 12 to Nov. 4. The voting registration deadline is Oct. 11. The deadline to request a mail-in ballot is Oct. 28.

Ohio

The Ohio Citizenship Voting Requirement Amendment would prohibit local governments from allowing noncitizens, or those who "lack the qualifications of an elector," to vote in local elections.

Noncitizens have been formally prohibited from voting in federal elections since the 1996 adoption of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act, but federal law doesn't address state or local elections, leaving the matter to states

and even local governments to decide.

While no state allows noncitizens to vote in statewide elections, 15 municipalities in at least four states permit noncitizens to cast ballots in some local referendums. That includes 11 Maryland municipalities and two in Vermont.

San Francisco has permitted noncitizens to vote in school board elections since 2016. In 2021, the New York City Council adopted a measure allowing 800,000 noncitizens to vote in municipal elections starting in January 2023.

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, only the Alabama, Arizona, Colorado, Florida, and North Dakota constitutions stipulate that "only" a citizen can vote. The "only" wording has been installed in all five since 2018. Ohio and Louisiana could join them by year's end. Iowa voters will see a similar measure on their

2024 ballots.

The Ohio Constitution reads, "Every citizen of the United States ... is entitled to vote at all elections." If adopted, Issue 2 would change that wording to "Only a citizen of the United States ... is entitled to vote at all elections."

The measure was placed on the ballot by super-majorities of both state legislative chambers in response to a noncitizen voting referendum proposed by the Yellow Springs Village Council and approved by 58 percent of the vote.

The village council's "misguided" referendum drew a sharp rebuke from Republican state lawmakers and Republican Secretary of State Frank LaRose, who lobbied lawmakers to put the proposed measure on the ballot as a "smart preventative measure."

Among Issue 2 supporters are the Ohio Chamber of Commerce and the Federation for American Immigration Reform. Among opponents are Democratic lawmakers and an array of civic, minority, and progressive organizations.

It's one of two proposed constitutional amendments on Ohio's Nov. 8 ballot. Issue 1 addresses how Ohio judges set bail amounts and conditions.

Early in-person voting in Ohio began on Oct. 12. Voters can request a mail-in ballot through Nov. 5.

Louisiana

Louisiana's Citizen Requirement for Voting Measure would also prohibit local governments from allowing noncitizens to vote and add a section to the state constitution stating, "No person who is not a citizen of the United States shall be allowed to register and vote in this state."

Amendment 1 is supported by Louisiana's Republican Secretary of State, Kyle Ardoin, who maintains that the constitution's reference to being a "citizen of the state" is confusing because a foreign citizen can be a Louisiana resident.

The measure was placed on the ballot by supermajorities in both state legislative chambers of the Republican-controlled legislature via legislation sponsored by state Rep. Debbie Villio, a Republican, who cited New York City's 2022 measure as motivation.

Democratic lawmakers generally oppose the measure, but few objected to the legislation. There's little organized opposition against the measure or, for that matter, concerted campaigning for its adoption.

15 | IN AT LEAST FOUR U.S. states permit noncitizens to cast ballots in some local referendums.

Municipalities

It's one of 11 proposed constitutional amendments Louisianans will vote on this fall, with eight set for Nov. 8 and three—including Amendment 1—slated for Dec. 10.

Early in-person voting runs from Oct. 25 to Nov. 1, with Nov. 4 being the deadline to request mail-in ballots. ■

18 States Changed Mail-in Voting Rules for 2022



EIGHTEEN OF AMERICA'S STATES have changed their rules for absentee voting in 2022. Some of the most substantial changes have come in response to the unprecedented use of mail-in voting in 2020. While blue states tend to focus on cementing the mail-in voting expansion executed during the COVID-19 pandemic, red states lean toward restrictions addressing the 2020 election controversies.

Arizona TIGHTENS RULES



SCR1012, Proposition 309

On Feb. 28, the Arizona House of Representatives passed a resolution to introduce a ballot measure amending election rules. It would require voters to add an ID number and a date of birth on their mail-in ballots in addition to their signature.

HB 2492

On March 30, Gov. Doug Ducey signed a bill that tightens proof-of-residence and proof-of-citizenship rules for voter registration. Registrants would need to present an ID acceptable for voting in person, such as an Arizona driver's license or a state ID number.

LOOSENS RULES

SB 1460

On June 7, Ducey signed a bill that allows people to vote a regular ballot in person even if they were sent an absentee ballot as long as the absentee one is marked in an electronic voting system as not returned or accepted or the person surrenders the ballot. Previously, all voters who were sent an absentee ballot had to vote a provisional one in person.

SB 1411

On July 6, the state passed a law requiring counties that use mail-in ballots to offer online ballot tracking to voters.

AB 2608

On Aug. 22, Gov. Gavin Newsom signed a bill that relaxes ballot harvesting rules in California. People returning ballots on behalf of others no longer have to write on the envelope their relationship with the voter. They still need to put their name and signature on the envelope. The bill also allows voters to have a representative pick up a replacement ballot for them. The voter just needs to sign a request, and the signature needs to match the one on file with the election authorities.

California LOOSENS RULES



SB 504

On March 31, California enacted a law that requires convicted felons to get notified when their eligibility to vote is restored based on information provided by the state's corrections department to the secretary of state. If people get such a notification and don't know that they are in fact still not eligible to vote, such people would be immune from prosecution if they tried to vote. County election officials are also immune from prosecution if they act or fail to act based on erroneous information from the secretary of state.

Connecticut LOOSENS RULES



HB 5262

On April 8, Gov. Ned Lamont signed a bill that expands valid excuses for absentee voting. In addition to people with an illness or disability, those caring for people who are sick or disabled are now also eligible.

Delaware LOOSENS RULES



SB 320

On July 22, Gov. John Carney signed a bill that codifies a lot of the temporary provisions put in place during the COVID-19 pandemic. Residents can vote absentee without a valid excuse as long as they put an ID number or the last four digits of their Social Security number on the return envelope. With a valid excuse, they don't need to include the number. The bill also authorizes ballot drop boxes, which were already used in 2020.

Idaho TIGHTENS RULES



SB 1352

On March 23, Gov. Brad Little signed a bill that requires that officials investigate a voter's registration if an absentee ballot sent to them is returned as undeliverable.

Kentucky TIGHTENS SOME RULES, LOOSENS OTHERS



HB 564

On April 7, Gov. Andy Beshear signed a bill that expands early voting options. It also explicitly bans connecting election equipment to the internet.

Louisiana TIGHTENS RULES



SB 144/Act 539

On June 17, Gov. John Bel Edwards signed a bill that bans alternative drop-off sites for hand-delivered absentee ballots.

Massachusetts LOOSENS RULES



SB 2924

On June 22, Massachusetts enacted an election reform that expands mail-in voting. Each voter will be sent a mail-in ballot application before an election. Voters can also apply online and for their family members, not just for themselves, and return ballots for their family members. The law explicitly allows ballot drop boxes. It requires signatures on mail-in ballots to be matched against the signature on the bal-

Florida TIGHTENS RULES



SB 524

On April 25, Florida enacted a law that toughens penalties for election violations, ramps up the state's election fraud investigation apparatus, and improves voter roll maintenance. It also limits drop boxes to select election supervisor offices. Some measures were amended out of the bill, such as the requirement to put an ID number on one's mail-in ballot. Instead, it requires a feasibility study on the ID requirement.

Illinois LOOSENS RULES



SB 829

On May 13, Gov. J. B. Pritzker signed a bill that allows people with "print disabilities" to receive and sign an absentee ballot electronically, print it out, and return it as a regular ballot. Such voters can also sign up for the permanent absentee list, receiving their ballots this way automatically for each election. The bill also allows poll workers to duplicate ballots that can't be counted by tabulation machines, even if those ballots aren't damaged or defective.

Michigan TIGHTENS SOME RULES, LOOSENS OTHERS



HB 4491

On Oct. 7, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer signed a bill that allows pre-processing of absentee ballots on the Sunday and Monday before Election Day in cities with over 10,000 residents. It also requires the appointment of partisan inspectors to observe the pre-processing and allows for the appointment of one challenger for every six inspectors. The bill also specifies some rules regarding ballot drop boxes, such as how often they need to be emptied. It says that only drop boxes installed after Oct. 1, 2020, need to be video monitored.

lot application, unless a family member was the one who applied on the voter's behalf. Eligible voters are also no longer allowed to opt out of automatic registration during interactions with authorities, such as when applying for a driver's license. Now they need to wait for the mailed registration notification, and only then can they opt out. Municipal clerks will also be able to hire poll workers regardless of party affiliation and other requirements if they have a shortage of qualified workers.



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Missouri



TIGHTENS SOME RULES, LOOSENS OTHERS
HB 1878

On June 29, Gov. Mike Parson signed a major bill that changes absentee and early voting rules. The law establishes no-excuse early voting. Previously, the state only allowed voting early or by mail with a valid excuse. The bill eliminates the option to vote a regular ballot in person without an ID. A provisional one would have to be cast.

The bill bans using ballot drop boxes, connecting election machines to the internet, and soliciting voters to get absentee ballot applications. People won't be allowed to get paid for soliciting voter registrations, except with government money. The bill also

prohibits vote-by-mail elections and bans officials from altering election laws through settlement agreements. This was a hot-button issue in the 2020 elections, when officials and advocacy groups in some states circumvented legislators and changed election procedures by entering into settlement agreements over civil litigation. The bill also prohibits election officials from accepting private funding except for some in-kind donations. This measure is an apparent response to the hundreds of millions poured into local election offices by Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg ahead of the 2020 election. Some research indicated that the donations disproportionately benefited Democrats.

Nebraska



TIGHTENS RULES
LB 843

On April 19, Gov. Pete Ricketts signed an election reform bill that imposes some regulations on the use of ballot drop boxes, such as requiring them to be fastened to the ground and surrounded by a 200-foot no-electioneering zone. It also bans private funding from elections, except for donations of food and space.

New Jersey



LOOSENS RULES
AB 3822

On July 28, Gov. Phil Murphy signed a bill that allows officials to open absentee ballots' inner envelopes five days before Election Day instead of on Election Day.

Oklahoma



TIGHTENS RULES
HB 3364

On May 20, Gov. Kevin Stitt signed several election-related bills. One requires voters to put their ID number and birth date on an absentee ballot application in addition to their signature. The information must match the voter file. But if there's no birth date or ID number on file, voters don't need to provide it. days before Election Day instead of on Election Day.

HB 3321

Another bill makes a number of changes to the election code. It bans connecting election equipment to the internet, albeit with some exceptions. It also pro-

hibits people from distributing absentee ballot applications under the official letterhead of a candidate or an elected official.

HB 3365

Yet another bill aims at improving voter roll maintenance. It requires voters to be removed from the roll if the authorities get information that the voter is no longer eligible to vote at their current address, such as by registering to vote in another state or not responding to an address confirmation letter upon missing two election cycles. Previously, the law allowed removal of such registrations, but didn't require it.

Pennsylvania



TIGHTENS RULES
SB 106

In July, Pennsylvania passed a constitutional amendment resolution that would enshrine voter ID rules into the state's constitution. To come into effect, the amendment would have to be passed again next year and then put up for a public vote.

Rhode Island



TIGHTENS RULES
HB 7428

On June 7, Rhode Island enacted a law that sets a specific absentee ballot signature verification process. Two reviewers need to agree on a signature match. If they don't, two supervisory reviewers need to. If they don't, the voter will be notified to cure the ballot defect. The law also allows absentee ballot processing to start 20 days (instead of 14 days) before an election and requires that the ballots be under constant video monitoring from the moment they are received. It also lets the election board set new rules for challenging mail-in ballot certifications.

South Carolina



TIGHTENS SOME RULES, LOOSENS OTHERS
SB 108

On May 13, South Carolina enacted an expansive set of election reforms. Among other measures, it prohibits ballot drop boxes; requires photo ID for returning an absentee ballot in person; requires the last four digits of one's Social Security number for requesting an absentee ballot; requires that absentee ballots be requested at least 11 days before an election, instead of four; constrains ballot harvesting by prohibiting a person from requesting or returning more than five absentee ballots other than his own; narrows valid excuses for absentee voting, such as by eliminating jury service and death in the family as excuses;

bans campaign volunteers, not just paid campaign staff, from requesting an absentee ballot on somebody else's behalf; bans election officials from sending out unsolicited absentee ballot applications; makes it a felony to give or accept anything of value for requesting, collecting, or delivering an absentee ballot; requires absentee ballots to include security features; allows campaign-appointed watchers to observe absentee ballot opening, but not so closely as to identify how specific people voted; elevates several election-related crimes, such as double-voting, to felonies; and bans election officials from accepting private funding. The bill also establishes early voting in the two weeks preceding an election.



LOOSENS RULES
HB 7100

Also on June 7, the state enacted an election reform that establishes no-excuse absentee voting. It removes the requirement to have notarized signatures on absentee ballot return envelopes. Voters can apply for absentee ballots online and sign electronically if they provide their ID number and date of birth. The law also mandates the use of ballot drop boxes.



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SOS

SECRETARY OF STATE **RACES RISE** TO NATIONAL SPOTLIGHT

Following the discord in 2020, both parties are paying close attention to the usually uneventful races

BY JEFF LOUDERBACK

The City of Detroit Department of Elections performs a Public Accuracy Test of its equipment, which is made by Dominion Voting Systems, at its office in Detroit on July 28.

PHOTO BY JEFF KOWALSKY/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



AT A RALLY WITH FORMER President Donald Trump on Oct. 8, Nevada's Republican secretary of state nominee Jim Marchant encouraged an enthusiastic MAGA crowd to cast their vote for him on Nov. 8 and added his belief about the 2020 election. "We have something in common," said Marchant, a businessman and former Nevada state Assembly member. "President Trump and I lost an election in 2020 because of a rigged election." Marchant also pledged to ensure election integrity in Nevada and help to secure a Trump victory in 2024 if Trump runs for president.

"When I'm secretary of state of Nevada, we are going to fix it," he said. "And when my coalition of secretary of state candidates around the country get elected, we're going to fix the whole country, and President Trump is going to be president again in 2024."

Until the aftermath of the 2020 presidential election, secretary of state races took a back seat to higher-profile offices. Now, with midterms less than a month away, both parties are prioritizing those races, especially in states with Trump-endorsed candidates.

Marchant, who holds a lead in multiple polls over Democratic opponent Cisco Aguilar, formed the America First Secretary of State Coalition, which consists of more than a dozen Republicans running for secretary of state and other offices that have an impact on elections.

Among the states the coalition is tar-



Former U.S. President Donald Trump speaks during a Save America rally at Macomb County Community College Sports and Expo Center in Warren, Mich., on Oct. 1.

getting are Arizona, Michigan, Nevada, and Pennsylvania. These four states certified Biden as the winner in 2020, but Trump has challenged the official outcomes in each.

"If we get all of our secretaries of state elected around the country like this, we take our country back," Marchant said at the rally.

The Democratic Association of Secretaries of State (DASS), which serves as the party's main campaign arm, has booked \$11 million in TV spots in Michigan, Minnesota, and Nevada.

Among the secretary of state's responsibilities are supervising and monitor-

ing elections, providing campaign finance disclosures, and managing and preserving public records.

Here's a look at four of the most prominent secretary of state races in the country:

Nevada

Marchant has been outspent by Aguilar, but polls have consistently shown the Trump-endorsed candidate in the lead.

Donna West, who is the former chair of the Clark County Democratic Party and who now volunteers as an organizer for the same county party, told NBC News: "Marchant can't be trusted, but I

just don't think a lot of people are even paying attention to the race. We've been knocking on doors, and people aren't aware of the race. They still don't understand what the secretary of state does."

Democratic-tied organizations have released TV ads criticizing Marchant for his beliefs on election fraud and his statement that he wouldn't have certified the 2020 presidential election results in Nevada.

Aguilar and groups that support him have poured \$1.3 million into ads since Sept. 1, according to AdImpact, a political ad-tracking group.

Multiple national polls this year have indicated that voters trust Republicans over Democrats by a wide margin on economic issues.

Aguilar, an attorney who served as a staffer for former Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, told reporters that voters are "looking at gas prices and especially rent. It's a kitchen table issue." That hurts Democratic candidates, he added.

Marchant still holds leads in the polls. In early October, a survey by The Nevada Independent/OH Predictive Insights showed Marchant ahead of Aguilar, 39 percent to 31 percent, respectively.

CNN published a poll on Oct. 6 with Marchant carrying a 46 percent to 43 percent advantage among likely voters, with 11 percent saying they will vote for neither candidate, not vote, or had no opinion.

Marchant has frequently said that he investigated what he called a "rigged election" from 2020 and uncovered "horrifying" irregularities, though he

has provided no details.

Election fraud in Nevada has existed for years, Marchant claims.

"In Nevada, and maybe other places all over the country—we haven't, in Nevada, elected anybody since 2006," Marchant said in a January podcast. "They have been installed by the deep state cabal."

It was "statistically impossible that Joe Biden won" Nevada in the 2020 presidential election, Marchant has argued.

This week, Aguilar is launching a television spot as part of a \$1 million ad campaign. In the ad, Aguilar claims that Marchant is "too dangerous" to be secretary of state.

The spot also showcases Marchant's own words talking about his work to "try to fix 2020" and his preference to "get rid of early voting."

Aguilar concludes the ad by saying, "I will defend your right to vote."

Arizona

Mark Finchem, the Republican nominee for secretary of state in Arizona, was in Washington on Jan. 6, 2021, for the "Stop the Steal" rally.

Endorsed by Trump, Finchem also has said that the 2020 presidential election was stolen. He has encouraged decertifying the 2020 results in Arizona, where Biden won by a little more than 10,000 votes. Finchem also supported Maricopa County's ballot recount.

On the one-year anniversary of the Jan. 6, 2021, U.S. Capitol breach, Finchem said on Twitter that "the real insurrection was how Democrats 'rigged the

vote in Arizona with tens of thousands of fraudulent votes."

A CNN poll released on Oct. 6 showed Finchem leading Democrat Adrian Fontes 49 percent to 45 percent among likely voters.

Finchem and Fontes met on the debate stage on Sept. 20.

"Do you think Arizona voters want their chief election officer at a riot at the U.S. Capitol to overthrow an election?" Finchem was asked by the moderator. "Is that what you think Arizona resident voter citizens want?"

"The last I checked, [being] where something is happening is not illegal. I have been treated as a witness, not as a suspect," Finchem responded.

Finchem was the main subject of questions for the next 26 minutes.

Fontes has characterized Finchem's views about the 2020 election as "dangerous," a common buzzword for Democrats when discussing Jan. 6, 2021.

During the debate, Fontes said that the race isn't only about preserving mail-in ballot voting in Arizona, but it's also about defending democracy from threats posed by "the far right."

Finchem's presence at the Jan. 6, 2021, protest illustrates political extremism, Fontes stated.

"What [Finchem] did was engage in a violent insurrection resulting in the deaths of police officers," Fontes said, not mentioning the protesters who died. "He is part of an organization that has called for the violent overthrow of this country."

Fontes, who served as the Mar-



(Left) Nevada's Republican secretary of state candidate Jim Marchant speaks during the Florida Election Integrity Public Hearing event, in West Palm Beach, Fla., on Sept. 10. (Right) Nevada's Democratic secretary of state candidate Cisco Aguilar.



(Left) Arizona Republican secretary of state candidate Mark Finchem speaks on the National Mall in Washington on Dec. 12, 2020. (Right) Arizona Democratic secretary of state candidate Adrian Fontes.



COURTESY OF CISCO AGUILAR; TOP: JEFF KOWALSKI/AP; VIAGETTY IMAGES; REUTERS/MARCO DELLO; CISCO AGUILAR; SAMIRA BOUADOU/THE EPOCH TIMES; ELEC/FONTES.COM

icopa County recorder from 2017 to 2021, created his own election law for political reasons while serving in that position by printing illegal ballots.

The ballots included illegal voting advice and were mailed to thousands of voters—until a Superior Court judge in Arizona blocked Fontes in 2020, Finchem pointed out.

Arizona Secretary of State Katie Hobbs, the 2022 Democratic nominee for governor, learned about Fontes’s action and wrote a letter calling it illegal.

After the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors and Hobbs said Fontes ignored their orders not to mail out the ballots, Arizona Attorney General Mark Brnovich filed suit.

“The Maricopa County Recorder cannot unilaterally rewrite state election laws,” Brnovich said in a press release.

“Fontes is creating chaos in our elections during an already difficult time. In times of crisis, the public looks to our elected officials to follow the law—not make reactionary decisions for political gain.”

Evidence of ballot fraud to a degree that would overturn the 2020 election in Arizona “doesn’t exist,” and “it’s time to move away [and] not rehash old issues,” Fontes said at the debate.

Finchem shot back, saying: “We need to build confidence. We need a secretary of state who follows the law, not make up law as he goes along.”

Michigan

Election integrity is the central issue

in the Michigan secretary of state race between incumbent Democrat Jocelyn Benson and Republican nominee Kristina Karamo.

Supporters have donated \$4.2 million to Benson, who has said that “election deniers want to take over statewide offices so they can potentially be in a position to block or undo, or fail to certify election results.”

Karamo has raised about \$900,000. Benson has held a double-digit lead in the polls.

One ad from the Karamo campaign said that Benson is part of a George Soros-funded plan to “place politicians where the races are close.” The ad claims that Benson has “influenced” Michigan elections and that “she could alter the course of presidential history in 2024 if she were reelected.”

During the Michigan Republican Party convention in August, Karamo said, “I’m pro-life from conception to natural death, and that’s the reason I got into politics ... to fight against abortion.”

DASS’s Michigan TV ad attacks Karamo for her pro-life stance on abortion and her comments that it’s “child sacrifice” and “a very satanic practice.”

“Why is Kristina Karamo running for secretary of state? That’s a good question,” the spot’s narrator asks.

A former community college instructor, Karamo drew attention when she alleged there was illegal vote counting at the former TCF Center in Detroit where she was a self-appointed

“poll challenger.”

She stated her claims in an affidavit and told the Detroit Free Press: “The allegations in my affidavit are accurate. I submitted an affidavit regarding what I personally witnessed. You have never investigated the specific allegations in my affidavit, nor has anyone else. Therefore, you cannot claim my allegations were inaccurate.”

Karamo is endorsed by Trump and decisively won the Michigan Republican primary.

Karamo has been outspoken this year about abortion, LGBT issues, and religion. On a Michigan radio show in August, she called abortion “the most wicked thing ever” and that “it’s far more wicked than slavery.”

She told talk show host David Harris: “The reason why I say it’s far more wicked than slavery—because you and I are evidence that the slaves, many slaves, survived—aborted children don’t survive because ... the whole premise is to kill them. And so when we enter into a point in society that murdering other people is permissible to make my life better, then that’s human sacrifice.”

Benson supports abortion rights but has been campaigning on customer service at secretary of state branches, voting rights, and election security.

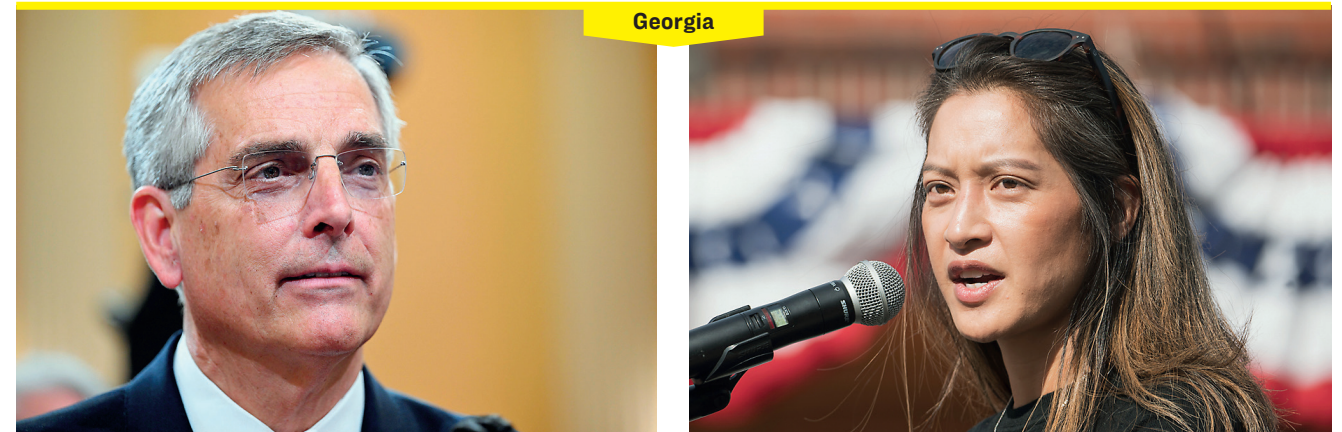
Benson was quickly thrust into the national spotlight during her first term as secretary of state.

She oversaw the 2020 Michigan election that became a spotlight for



(Left) Michigan Republican secretary of state candidate Kristina Karamo waves to the crowd before she speaks during a Save America rally in Warren, Mich., on Oct. 1. (Right) Michigan Democratic secretary of state candidate Jocelyn Benson speaks in Detroit on Aug. 18, 2020.

FROM LEFT: EMILY ELONIN/GETTY IMAGES; REBECCA COOK/REUTERS; MANDEL NGAN/AP VIA GETTY IMAGES; MEGAN WARREN/GETTY IMAGES



(Left) Georgia Republican secretary of state Brad Raffensperger arrives at a hearing at the U.S. Capitol in Washington on June 21. (Right) Georgia Democratic candidate for secretary of state Bee Nguyen speaks outside of the Liberty Theater in Columbus, Ga., on Oct. 8.

Trump and his supporters regarding election fraud.

Benson has said it was the most secure election in Michigan’s history.

She spearheaded the implementation of absentee voting expansion that allows voters to mail in or drop off their ballots, and she used \$4.2 million in federal money to mail applications to voters in 2020 when the pandemic was active.

Benson was first elected in 2018 after losing to former Secretary of State Ruth Johnson in 2010.

She served as CEO and executive director of the Ross Initiative in Sports for Equality and is the former dean of Wayne State University Law School.

Benson authored a book that looks into the role of secretaries of state in overseeing elections and enforcing voting laws.

The Michigan secretary of state race is presented as a choice between one candidate who would honor voter integrity and another who wouldn’t allow valid election results.

“It is not hyperbolic to say that the future of our democracy is on the ballot this fall,” Benson told Michigan media outlets.

Georgia

Georgia’s Republican incumbent Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger drew criticism from Trump and his supporters for refusing demands from Trump to overturn the 2020 presidential election results in the state.

Raffensperger is running against Democratic nominee Bee Nguyen, a Georgia

state representative who says he is no hero.

A September poll by the Atlanta Journal-Constitution showed that Raffensperger had a 19 percent lead over Nguyen and carried 20 percent support from Democrats.

\$11 MILLION

THE DEMOCRATIC ASSOCIATION of Secretaries of State has booked \$11 million in TV spots in Michigan, Minnesota, and Nevada.

\$1.3 MILLION

DEMOCRATIC NEVADA SECRETARY of state candidate Cisco Aguilar and groups that support him have poured \$1.3 million into ads since Sept. 1, a group says.

“I will stand for the voters of Georgia to make sure we have fair and honest elections for everyone. That is my solemn pledge,” Raffensperger said during a forum at a Macon African Methodist Episcopal church on Oct. 6. “I’m not looking left. I’m not looking right.”

Nguyen has challenged this claim, saying Raffensperger didn’t protect vot-

ers when he backed Senate Bill 202, or Georgia’s voting law, which was passed last year.

The GOP-led Georgia General Assembly required additional ID for absentee voting, eliminated paperless online absentee ballot requests, and limited drop boxes.

“I voted against that voter suppression bill, and he has fully embraced that bill even though he says we’ve had a secure election,” said Nguyen, who served as a state representative in the same district formerly held by Georgia Democratic gubernatorial nominee Stacey Abrams. “I believe that our democracy in our country is made better when more people are able to participate.”

In May, Raffensperger defeated Trump-endorsed U.S. Rep. Jody Hice in the Republican primary.

Trump had said that Raffensperger did a “terrible job of watching over Voter Integrity in Georgia” and hoped for a Hice victory.

Hice focused his campaign on election integrity and claimed there was fraud in the state’s 2020 voting count.

Raffensperger defended the results as accurate.

Before being elected as secretary of state in 2018, Raffensperger was a state representative and CEO of a contracting and engineering design company.

“I’ve grown a broad-based coalition because I’ve done my job,” he told the Atlanta Journal-Constitution. “People respect that with tremendous pressure, I did not waver. I stood on the rule of the law and the Constitution.” ■



Poll workers check voters' identification at The Orpheum Theater in Madison, Wis., on Nov. 3, 2020.

PHOTO BY ANDY MANIS/GETTY IMAGES

MIDTERMS

ELECTION REFORM A TOP ISSUE IN WISCONSIN RACES

NEITHER US SENATE CANDIDATE WILL COMMIT
TO ACCEPTING THE ELECTION OUTCOME

BY JEFF LOUDERBACK

DEMOCRATS AND THE LEGACY media call it the “Big Lie.” Former President Donald Trump, “America First” advocates, and select conservative media columnists call it the “Steal.”

Opinions on the subject vary, but one point is certain—the outcome of the 2020 presidential election and the topic of election integrity are widely discussed issues as the midterm election races reach their final stretch.

That’s especially true in Wisconsin.

A Sept. 22 poll from Marquette University Law School in Wisconsin illustrates the division over the topic of election integrity between the two parties.

Among likely voters surveyed, 86 percent of Democrats and 12 percent of Republicans are “very confident” that votes in Wisconsin were accurately cast and counted in the 2020 presidential election.

Those figures include independent voters who lean Democratic or Republican.

The poll also revealed that 62 percent of Republicans weren’t too confident or weren’t confident at all in the results of the 2020 presidential election in the state while 6 percent of Democrats feel that way.

Republican Robin Vos, the state’s Gen-

eral Assembly speaker, has raised questions about the outcome of the 2020 presidential election, but has refused to decertify the results. Vos won a closely contested Republican primary on Aug. 9 over Trump-endorsed Adam Steen.



“No one knows what the extent of the election fraud was, and that’s the problem.”

Tim Michels, Wisconsin GOP gubernatorial nominee

In July, the Wisconsin Supreme Court banned the use of absentee ballot drop boxes in the state. Only the voter can return a ballot in person, the conservative-led body determined.

A federal judge later ruled that voters with disabilities are allowed to obtain third-party assistance for mailing bal-

lots or delivering them to a clerk.

Wisconsin Republican gubernatorial nominee Tim Michels and incumbent U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wis.) believe in election reform.

Neither candidate will commit to accepting the outcome of their elections when the results are certified. Their opponents, incumbent Democratic Gov. Tony Evers and Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes, have said that they’ll accept the Nov. 8 results, win or lose.

Michels would accept the election results “provided the election is conducted fairly and securely,” a spokesperson recently said.

When asked if Johnson would concede if he loses on Nov. 8, Johnson campaign spokesperson Alec Zimmerman said that “it is certainly his hope that he can.”

“He would feel much better about the 2022 election had Governor Evers signed bills the legislature passed to restore confidence in our election system,” Zimmerman said. “That said, we are doing everything we can to ensure guidances and election procedures comply with state law. We will be monitoring everything closely.”

>>Wisconsin’s Republican-led state Legislature said it wanted to restore

SCOTT OLSON/GETTY IMAGES



Poll workers check in a box of absentee ballots at Sun Prairie High School in Sun Prairie, Wis., on Nov. 3, 2020.

confidence in the state's elections, which is why it has passed several voting measures in 2022.

In 2021, the state's Legislative Audit Bureau announced that it didn't uncover evidence of widespread fraud in the 2020 election, but it did issue multiple recommendations for improvements.

Evers vetoed all of them and noted that he wouldn't sign any measure that he believes would make voting more difficult.

One vetoed piece of legislation would have authorized the Republican-controlled budget committee to enforce staffing cuts or decrease funding at state agencies if the committee determined that the departments didn't follow election laws.

He also refused to sign a measure that would have required the Elections Commission to first provide any guidance sent to elections officials to the Legislature's rules committee.

In most cases, citizens who can't visit the polls and request absentee ballots can do that without submitting a photo ID. The Legislature passed legislation

that would have limited who could claim "indefinitely confined" status. Evers rejected the measure.

The Legislature passed legislation that would have prevented election clerks from filling in missing details on absentee ballot envelopes and banned any person other than a voter, designated individual, guardian, or immediate family member from returning an absentee ballot. Evers vetoed that measure, too.

In early October, a Waukesha County judge ruled that the elections commission wasn't permitted to allow clerks to fill in missing information on the envelopes. The agency has instructed clerks that they can't correct mistakes on absentee ballot witness certificates.

"All Wisconsinites would feel more confident in the process had Tony Evers signed the numerous election integrity bills sent to his desk, but provided the election is conducted fairly and securely thanks to the historic efforts to ensure election integrity this cycle, we'll accept the outcome," Michels spokesperson Anna Kelly told Madison.com.

The 60-year-old Michels is co-owner

of Michels Corp., an energy and infrastructure contracting business that's regarded as one of the world's top petroleum contractors.

He entered the Republican primary in the later stages and defeated his main challenger, Rebecca Kleefisch, with a boost from Trump's endorsement.

Michels said he would consider decertifying the 2020 presidential election results if he's elected. He also believes that the Wisconsin Elections Commission should be banned and that all rules the commission establishes for local commissions to administer elections should be eliminated.

If he defeats Evers on Nov. 8, Michels said he'll work with the state Legislature to repair the "big problems" from 2020, referencing the use of ballot drop boxes and private grant funding to spearhead elections.

"No one knows what the extent of the election fraud was, and that's the problem," Michels told the Wisconsin State Journal. "A lot of people have questions about the 2020 election, as do I. Here's what is very concerning to me; we are

among likely independent voters.

Meanwhile, the governor's race has tightened, according to the Marquette survey, with Evers leading Michels 47 percent to 46 percent, within the margin of error. The nonpartisan Cook Political Report rates the contest as a toss-up, while the RealClearPolitics polling average shows the support for each candidate tied at about 48 percent.

Crime and abortion are hot-button topics in both races, but election reform remains a prominent subject in the state.

On Oct. 5, Waukesha County Circuit Judge Brad Schimel ruled that Wisconsin voters can't cancel their ballot and cast a new one once a vote has been cast.

Schimel granted a request for a temporary injunction against the practice, which is known as ballot spoiling and was encouraged by the Wisconsin Elections Commission (WEC) at offices throughout the state.

Wisconsin voter Nancy Kormanik sued the WEC over its guidance that states that clerks can give completed and submitted absentee ballots to voters. Doing so violates a Wisconsin law that states that the clerk "shall not return the ballot to the elector" once submitted, according to the lawsuit.

The guidance was issued after multiple candidates dropped out of high-profile races, including Democratic candidates for the U.S. Senate.

A Republican and former Wisconsin attorney general, Schimel sided with Kormanik and ordered an injunction effective Oct. 7.

Restoring Integrity and Trust in Elections is representing Kormanik.

"Today's ruling is another major victory for Wisconsin voters. WEC's unlawful guidance destroys voter confidence and taints the integrity of Wisconsin's elections. Once a vote is cast, it is cast. Period," Derek Lyons, president and CEO of Restoring Integrity and Trust in Elections, said in a statement.

The Democratic National Committee is siding with the WEC.

"We disagree with this decision to restrict voting access in Wisconsin," a committee spokeswoman told media outlets in a statement. "Particularly as voters in the state have already begun to cast their ballots." ■

18 months now from the 2020 election. And we're still having a conversation here in Wisconsin, here in America, about the election in 2020. That is absolutely insane.

"We are not a Third World country. We are not a banana republic. This is the United States of America. People should not have questions about the integrity, the transparency, and the honesty of an election."

Earlier this year, Johnson trailed in the polls, but has surged in recent months.

While Johnson trailed Barnes by 7 points in a Marquette University Law School poll in August, by Sept. 14, Marquette polling showed that Johnson had taken a 49 percent to 48 percent lead over Barnes. A new survey conducted by Marquette among likely voters between Oct. 3 and 9 shows Johnson polling at 52 percent, six points ahead of Barnes.

An AARP survey showed that Johnson leads Barnes 51 percent to 46 percent. The survey of likely voters, which was conducted from Sept. 18 to Sept. 25 and has a margin of error of 4.4 percentage points, also discovered that Johnson has a 10-point advantage over Barnes

FROM LEFT: ANDY MANS/GETTY IMAGES; MANDEL NGAN/AP VIA GETTY IMAGES

In July, the Wisconsin Supreme Court banned the use of absentee ballot drop boxes in the state.

86%

OF DEMOCRATS AND 12 percent of Republicans in Wisconsin are "very confident" that votes in the state's 2020 presidential election were accurately cast and counted.

62%

OF REPUBLICANS IN WISCONSIN aren't too confident or aren't confident at all in the state's results from the 2020 presidential election, while 6 percent of Democrats feel that way.



Wisconsin Gov. Tony Evers has vetoed all election integrity bills and noted that he wouldn't sign any measure that he believes would make voting more difficult.

CONSTITUTION

Advocates Cheer State
Legislature Case

BEFORE SUPREME COURT

*Lawsuits after the
2020 election ignited
interest in long-debated
election impasse*

BY JOHN HAUGHEY

*The Authority of Law statue rests
on the side of the Supreme Court in
Washington on Sept. 28, 2020.*

PHOTO BY AL DRAGO/GETTY IMAGES



THE U.S. SUPREME COURT convened its new session in Washington on Oct. 3 with a crowded docket that included cases related to affirmative action, LGBT issues, and freedom of speech and religion.

Among the most closely watched cases slated for the term, which could see hearings extend into next summer, is a challenge to the North Carolina Supreme Court's 2021 rejection of the state Legislature's revised post-2020 census maps for the state's 14 congressional districts.

In placing *Moore v. Harper* on its docket, the nation's highest court has agreed to resolve a decades-long debate over the "independent state legislature theory," which maintains that the U.S. Constitution vests election regulation entirely with state lawmakers to the exclusion of other elected officials, appointed bureaucrats, and the courts as long as their actions comply with state and federal laws.

In their appeal of the North Carolina Supreme Court's ruling, which determined that the redrawn congressional district maps were unconstitutionally gerrymandered, lawmakers argue that under their interpretation of the U.S. Constitution, the "independent state legislature theory" renders state courts powerless in matters relating to federal elections, including how state lawmakers draw congressional district maps.

Several briefs have been filed in the appeal. Through late September, 21 briefs had been lodged, with 16 in support of the appellants and five arguing for "neither party."

Theory proponents, including election integrity advocates and conservative groups from across the country, say they seek to cuff state courts from "acting like super legislators" while asserting state legislatures' right as "necessary parties" to participate in all election-related lawsuits.

Among groups filing briefs in support of the theory are the Honest Elections Project (HEP), the Republican National Committee, the Republican Caucus of the Pennsylvania Senate, the Citizens United Foundation, and the American Legislative Exchange Council.

"It is interesting" how the theory



A poll worker assists a voter at the Spectrum Center, during the first day of early voting in Charlotte, N.C., on Oct. 15, 2020.

"has attracted a lot of attention" in the past two years despite being "teed up many times over the years" with little notice, HEP Executive Director Jason Snead told *The Epoch Times* on Oct. 3.

The theory isn't new, but "because so many election lawsuits have been filed" since the 2020 election, he said its validity must be verified to end judicial activism and reaffirm the Constitution's original intent.

"The courts have been willing to involve themselves" into elections by issuing "election-determinative rulings" and "black-letter election laws," which appellants argue are unconstitutional and should be clearly defined as such, Snead said.

HEP, created in February 2020 by the Federalist Society to spearhead election integrity initiatives, maintains in its brief that the North Carolina Supreme Court used "unprecedented interpreta-

tions of vague parts of the state constitution to seize control over congressional redistricting" and that its ruling "sets a dangerous precedent: that rogue courts can ignore the U.S. Constitution and rewrite the laws of our democracy behind closed doors."

The theory is rooted in two articles of the U.S. Constitution.

Article I states that state legislatures have the authority to determine "times, places and manners of holding elections for Senators and Representatives." Article II states, "each state shall appoint, in such Manner as the Legislature thereof may direct, a Number of Electors" in presidential and vice presidential elections.

Snead said HEP's brief "is pointing out that the word 'legislature' in the election clause has a meaning ... [that] legislatures are specifically selected to be the main body in crafting election laws," and that the "legislature is not part

The case isn't about giving state legislatures more authority, but about reclaiming it from the courts, an expert says.

states that each citizen's vote must be counted and cite safeguards in the U.S. Constitution and federal law, such as the Electoral Count Act's "safe harbor" provision, that ensure that the popular vote determines Electoral College electors and, thus, can't be determined by state lawmakers.

Critics say the theory gives "intellectual cover" to a gambit by Republicans to "solely" grant state legislatures the power to override popular votes.

The left-leaning Brennan Center for Justice stated that if the court embraces the "theory for the first time ... it could wreak havoc on American democracy."

"The benefit of technical arguments under the independent state legislature doctrine to subvert election results is (proponents) have an aura of respectability and expertise," University of California-Irvine School of Law legal scholar Richard Hasen wrote in a 2021 *Harvard Law Review* Forum article, calling the doctrine "a strong vehicle for a bloodless coup."

Snead and Hans von Spakovsky, the Heritage Foundation's election law reform initiative manager, say that much of the criticism is politically motivated.

"I think it's a great case," von Spakovsky told *The Epoch Times* on Oct. 4. "What astonishes me is seeing the hysteria on the left about this case and the complete and total exaggerations being made," claiming that if the court upholds the appeal, "it will destroy voting rights in this country and state legislatures would have the green light to do anything they want. That is an absurd claim."

The question to be resolved in *Moore v. Harper* is "whether a state's judicial branch may nullify the regulations governing the 'manner of holding elections for Senators and Representatives ... prescribed ... by the Legislature thereof, and replace them with regulations of the state courts' own devising, based

on vague state constitutional provisions purportedly vesting the state judiciary with power to prescribe whatever rules it deems appropriate to ensure a 'fair' or 'free' election."

Von Spakovsky said the case isn't about giving state legislatures more authority, but rather about reclaiming it from the courts, noting that there are some states where a state legislature can't defend its laws as a litigant when a law it passed is challenged in court. The state itself defends the law.

Appellants want state legislatures' right as "necessary parties" to participate in all election-related lawsuits affirmed and state courts' ability to intervene restricted.

Under the U.S. Constitution, legislators are "not bound by state laws, but obviously, they are bound by the federal Voting Rights Act, which says they cannot discriminate," according to von Spakovsky.

He said the appeal seeks a verdict that states that "the state Supreme Court cannot simply step in when there is no evidence of any kind that the state Legislature has violated the state constitution or state laws or federal laws, saying, 'You know, you use too much politics, so we're going to do the district maps.'"

When the court agreed in June to hear the case, three justices—Samuel Alito, Clarence Thomas, and Neil Gorsuch—expressed interest in discussing the theory. Justice Brett Kavanaugh said he saw "serious arguments" on both sides.

In accepting the case, Thomas said there was an urgency to resolve the issue "outside the crucible of a presidential election." Snead noted that the case hasn't "been calendared" through November, suggesting that the soonest it will be heard is in December. ■



Hans von Spakovsky, manager of *The Heritage Foundation's* election law reform initiative, at a Washington event in October 2017.

FROM TOP: GRANT BALDWIN/AP/GETTY IMAGES; THE EPOCH TIMES

The Week

Russian analyst Igor Danchenko walks to the Albert V. Bryan U.S. Courthouse during a break in his trial in Alexandria, Va., on Oct. 11..

PHOTO BY DREW ANGERER/GETTY IMAGES



Key Source for Anti-Trump Dossier Acquitted on All Counts

IGOR DANCHENKO, A KEY SOURCE for the anti-Donald Trump dossier authored by former British spy Christopher Steele, has been acquitted on four counts of lying to the government, after about 10 hours of jury deliberations.

Danchenko, 44, has said that he was the primary source for the dossier compiled by Steele, who was paid by Democrats including Hillary Clinton.

A team led by special counsel John Durham prosecuted the case. U.S. District Judge Anthony Trenga, a George W. Bush appointee, said the prosecutors didn't prove Danchenko lied.

Danchenko was charged in November 2021 with five counts of lying to FBI agents during interviews about the dossier. The fifth count was thrown out by Trenga before reaching jurors.

The only other trial led by Durham's team so far also ended in a not guilty verdict.

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“Some of the inflation in our country sprang from the fact that this president created nearly 10 million, at least 9 million jobs working with the private sector.”



House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, in an interview with MSNBC.

68% of global fund managers have said that **the U.S. dollar is being overvalued, according to Bloomberg.**

“We must put American hard power in [Chinese leader Xi Jinping’s] path before it’s too late.”

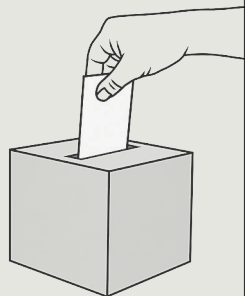
Rep. Mike Gallagher, in a speech at The Heritage Foundation.



50% of Americans think social media companies are biased when it comes to fact-checking and censoring posts, a YouGov poll shows.

2.7 Million

people have already voted in more than a dozen U.S. states, with 2.3 million voting via mail-in ballots, according to the University of Florida’s U.S. Elections Project.



5,000
BALLOTS

Around 5,000 residents of Riverside County in California have received a duplicated ballot ahead of the November midterm elections, which officials blamed on a computer system error.

\$24 Million — A court in Washington state has been urged to make Facebook parent company Meta pay more than \$24 million for intentionally violating the state’s Commercial Advertiser Law.

THIS PAGE FROM TOP: ALEX WONG/GETTY IMAGES; ANNA MONEVMAKER/GETTY IMAGES; MATTE MUELLER/GETTY IMAGES; RIGHT PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: COURTESY OF ARIZONA GOVERNOR’S OFFICE; STAN HONDA/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES; ANNA MONEVMAKER/GETTY IMAGES

COVID-19

Boston University Defends Controversial Study on COVID Hybrid Strain

BOSTON UNIVERSITY has issued a statement defending its research of a COVID-19 Omicron strain, in which scientists took the variant’s spike protein and attached it to the original COVID-19 strain, leading to a higher mortality rate in a certain species of mice.

The university received criticism from lawmakers after a preprint research paper detailing the experiments was released on Oct. 14.

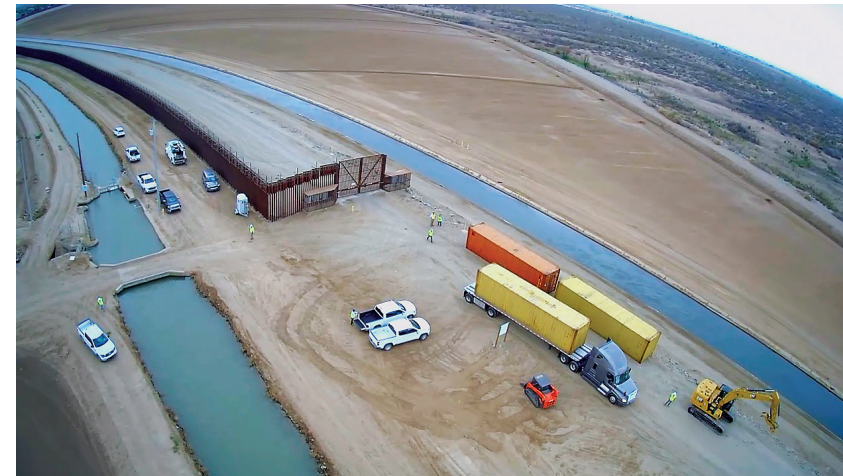
“The Omicron S-bearing virus robustly escapes vaccine-induced humoral immunity, mainly due to mutations in the receptor-binding motif ... while Omicron causes mild, non-fatal infection, the Omicron S-carrying virus inflicts severe disease with a mortality rate of 80 percent,” the preprint study reads.

Sen. Roger Marshall (R-Kan.) said that the research entailed “lethal gain of function virus research” that creates the “potential to kill more people than any singular nuclear weapon.” Marshall, a doctor, added that “viruses have managed to escape even the most secure labs” and said such “research must stop immediately while the risks and benefits can be investigated.”

Emily Erbelding, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases’s division of microbiology and infectious diseases, told Stat News that the university’s grant application didn’t specify that researchers wanted to perform experiments that could possibly enhance a COVID-19 variant. An investigation is now underway, she said.



A sign at the entrance of Boston University in Boston, in this file photo.



Contractors begin stacking shipping containers in border fence gaps near Yuma, Ariz., on Aug. 12.

US-MEXICO BORDER

Biden Admin Tells Arizona Using Shipping Containers in Border Wall Gaps Is Illegal

USING SHIPPING CONTAINERS to plug gaps in the U.S.–Mexico border wall violates federal law, a Biden administration official told top Arizona officials in a recent letter.

“The unauthorized placement of those containers constitutes a violation of federal law and is a trespass against the United States,” Jacklynn Gould, a regional director for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, told Arizona Homeland Security Director Tim Roemer and Arizona Division of Emergency Management Director Allen Clark in the missive. “That trespass is harming federal lands and resources and impeding Reclamation’s ability to perform its mission.”

She asked officials to not place any additional shipping containers on federal lands or lands within the boundaries of Indian reservations, and said federal officials want to “discuss a way forward” and request Arizona’s cooperation with removing the containers.

ECONOMY

Fed Pays Banks, Funds \$15 Billion in 4 Weeks for Not Investing Cash



Federal Reserve Board Chairman Jerome Powell at the Treasury Department in Washington on Oct. 3.

THE FEDERAL RESERVE has distributed more than \$15 billion over the past four weeks to banks and money market funds simply for not investing their cash or that of their investors. The payouts have increased dramatically this year as the Fed has been raising interest rates in an attempt to curb inflation.

Inflation has been running hot for months, oscillating around 40-year highs of over 8 percent, since the economy was inundated with trillions in extra government spending during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Fed says interest rates need to go up in order to curb demand for goods and services and thus lower the incentive for producers to raise prices.



UK Prime Minister Liz Truss delivers her resignation speech outside 10 Downing Street in London on Oct. 20.

UK

Liz Truss Resigns as UK Prime Minister After Just 6 Weeks in Post

LIZ TRUSS, WHO BECAME UK PRIME MINISTER just six weeks ago, has resigned after a significant number of Conservative members of Parliament (MPs) lost confidence in her leadership.

She is set to become the shortest-serving British prime minister in history after failing to stem an open revolt from her own MPs demanding her departure.

Speaking in Downing Street, Truss said she had told King Charles III that she is resigning as leader of the Conservative Party.

“Given the situation, I cannot deliver the mandate on which I was elected by the Conservative Party,” she said.

Truss said she will stay on as prime minister until a successor is chosen.

SOUTH KOREA

Co-CEO of Kakao Resigns After Service Outage



The Kakao messaging app and the Kakao T taxi booking app, displayed on a smartphone on March 13, 2018.

A TOP EXECUTIVE of Kakao Corp., a popular South Korean messaging app, has stepped down following a widespread service outage on the ubiquitous platform that millions of South Koreans use regularly for wiring money, chatting with friends, hailing taxis, and logging onto other major websites.

“As a CEO of Kakao, I feel miserable and strongly responsible for the incident. So I am stepping down from the post,” Kakao co-CEO Namkoong Whon said at a press conference, according to Yonhap News Agency.

UNITED NATIONS

19 US States to Investigate Banks for ESG-Style Commitment to UN Alliance

THE WAR BETWEEN U.S. states and banks over environmental, social, and governance investing and similar practices has reached the doorstep of the United Nations. Nineteen state attorneys general have launched investigations of major financial institutions’ commitment to the U.N.-convened Net-Zero Banking Alliance.

The alliance’s website states that its members control roughly 40 percent of the world’s banking assets and are “committed to aligning their lending and investment portfolios with net-zero emissions by 2050.”



The U.N. headquarters in New York on Sept. 21, 2021.

RUSSIA-UKRAINE

Iran Threatened With Sanctions

RUSSIA’S ALLEGED USE of Iranian-made drones in recent attacks on Ukrainian infrastructure has drawn condemnation from Kyiv and its allies, along with threats of Western retaliation and sanctions.

Ukrainian officials said the Russian strikes featured the use of Iranian-built “suicide drones,” which carry small warheads that detonate upon reaching their targets.

Kyiv has invited U.N. experts to inspect what it says are downed Iranian drones, while several EU foreign ministers have called for sanctions on Tehran over its alleged transfer of drones to Moscow.

THIS PAGE FROM TOP: ROB FINNEV/GETTY IMAGES; EDUARDO MUNOZ ALVAREZ/POOL/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES; THOMAS WHITE/REUTERS



Perspectives

Trucks stand prepared to haul shipping containers at the Port of Los Angeles, the nation’s busiest container port, in San Pedro, Calif., on Sept. 18, 2018.

PHOTO BY MARIO TAMA/GETTY IMAGES



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Supply Chained

Ongoing crisis in manufacturing supply chains is hurting consumers

MIDDLE EAST OIL restrictions are about to slam a once energy-independent United States, U.S. President Joe Biden is pardoning potheads, and a TV interview has exposed the Pennsylvania U.S. Senate candidate who was in the lead as visibly speech-impaired due to his stroke earlier this year.

So all that talk we heard months ago about the supply chain has been rendered passé.

Or has it? Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, a very likely candidate for the Republican nomination for president in 2024, lamented last week during a roundtable discussion in his hurricane-ravaged state that “we’re in a challenging economic environment in terms of supply chain.” Then he noted, referring to President Donald Trump’s economic policies, that he did “think that if this had happened three years ago, you’re looking at probably a little bit different in terms of how some of this stuff would have worked.”

It didn’t take DeSantis long before alluded to inflation.

“I don’t know how much more it costs to repair a roof than it did three years ago,” he said. “But it’s a lot more.”

A year ago, DeSantis was calling Biden “the Grinch that stole Christmas due to the ongoing supply chain crisis robbing our loved ones of gifts under the tree.”

Christmastime is once again around the corner, and the supply chain crisis is still ongoing, with food items, baby formula, and electronics likely to experience shortages as the shopping season gets busy.

Rail workers are rejecting the Biden administration’s proposal offering higher pay and more sick leave and may soon strike, while unions in other industries may follow suit, all suspecting that there’s more mon-

ey available from this big-spending presidency. Major trucking equipment shortages will apparently last until at least 2024.

Earlier this year, a small and midsize business retail supply chain survey of 305 logistics and inventory professionals conducted by Software Advice found half of the respondents to have raised retail prices to offset higher supply chain costs, with 35 percent planning further raising of prices if their costs continue to increase. Some 35 percent reported paying more than 20 percent more for shipping this year than in the first half of 2021. But 22 percent decided against paying shipping premiums, which would ease supply chain tie-ups.

Surveys show that the businesses themselves identify rising prices as a key cause of supply chain difficulties.

The perennial problem of the advantages that larger firms enjoy cropped up in the answers, with an overwhelming 91 percent of smaller retailers reporting being at a disadvantage in procuring inventory, and half saying the disadvantage comes from not having the larger firms’ prioritized vendor status; 45 percent traced the disadvantage to their inability to switch vendors. About the same proportion reported at least one vendor dropping them because they were too small, while another 23 percent expected to be dropped in the near future.

An analysis of traditional manufacturing supply chains published last month by Deloitte and Manufacturers Alliance found rising shipping costs to be the top operational concern, having risen by 77 percent from Biden taking

office to August, because of “increased fuel costs, labor costs, and logistics challenges.”

“Underlying all these concerns is labor, where costs continue to rise,” the analysis reads. “Indeed, total compensation cost per hour worked rose by 6.2 percent to \$42 in the manufacturing industry” in the first quarter of this year.

On top of that is the challenge of “continued shortage of critical parts” leading to “the inability to fulfill ongoing contracts. ... Also high on the list were the challenges associated with implementing contingency plans such as switching suppliers.”

Such firms will find that they have to diversify their range of suppliers, but part of that diversification must be to have a supply base that goes beyond China—for both economic and national security reasons. That means turning to countries elsewhere in Asia, such as Japan and Malaysia, as well as within our own hemisphere, but it also means relying on manufacturing right here at home, with domestic supply chains obviously being much less complicated.

We see from these surveys that the businesses themselves identify rising prices as a key cause of supply chain difficulties, so it would help if we didn’t have a government engaged in inflationary climate fanaticism waging war on fossil fuels. Biden shut down the Keystone Pipeline immediately upon taking office, scrapped drilling leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska, and prohibited drilling on federal lands.

Oil, natural gas, and coal still make up about 80 percent of this country’s energy industry. If the manufacturing supply chain is already in crisis today and causing consumer pain, imagine letting those in government who instantly want the economy to run on sunshine and windmills have their way.

Anders Corr



TikTok Expanding to Everything

TikTok could destroy all US social media and e-commerce

TIKTOK IS ON A rampage, expanding into music, online purchases, search engines, fulfillment centers, and warehouses to rival not only Instagram, Facebook, and Google, but eventually Spotify, Apple Music, and Amazon. TikTok, and the Chinese regime that controls it, would like to be America’s “everything app,” an idea that Elon Musk is thinking about, too.

Bad ideas come in pairs, and just as TikTok and Musk seek to control your phone and purchases, they also promote the increasing control of Beijing over Taiwan. The regime has a powerful influence over Musk and TikTok because they both have close business ties to China.

On Oct. 7, the Financial Times published an interview with Musk in which he advocates turning Taiwan into a “special administrative zone” of China, like Hong Kong. Taiwan’s government wasn’t pleased and responded that freedom is “not for sale.”

TikTok is owned by ByteDance, headquartered in Beijing. If Musk owned Twitter, that place of moderate free speech could converge with and eventually be eclipsed by TikTok through the same kind of pressure from Beijing that likely led to Musk’s kowtow on Taiwan.

We can’t trust a China-linked billionaire to own our freedom of speech. Neither can we trust what TikTok’s algorithms feed us daily. The evidence shows that on controversial topics, it serves its users misinformation, geared to Beijing’s interests, at the top of their feeds.

We can expect new TikTok content and sales algorithms to serve sanitized media and products, with no “Free East Turkistan” music or “End the Genocide” T-shirts easily accessible. Spotify and Amazon could become a thing of the past, replaced

by an algorithm that gives us Chinese Communist Party slogans and Xi Jinping “wisdom” every third song.

Adding insult to injury, TikTok was reportedly found to capture the majority of donations to some charitable causes funded on its platform. One investigation found that TikTok pocketed as much as 70 percent of donations to “desperate, begging Syrian refugees.” Imagine if GoFundMe disappeared, to be replaced by a TikTok donation button that siphons off 70 percent of all good intentions?

Spotify and Amazon could become a thing of the past, replaced by an algorithm that gives us Chinese Communist Party slogans.

Yet many in the United States and its allies don’t see the threat of major social media companies controlled by Beijing. Last year, the Biden administration rescinded then-President Donald Trump’s ban on TikTok.

The head of Britain’s spy service, Jeremy Fleming at GCHQ, told an audience on Oct. 11 that he saw no problem with children using TikTok and encouraged them to do so. His only caveat was concern about the use of any data on teens’ devices. That would presumably include Western social media companies that use data as well.

Spymasters shouldn’t be more naive than their bosses in the White House or 10 Downing Street.

Fleming appears to have painted all social media with the same lenient brush. But his boss, the British prime minister, was smarter in calling for an unequivocal “crackdown” on companies such as TikTok.

A private company in a market democracy using teen data and

purchases is far less dangerous than a company ultimately controlled by a totalitarian and genocidal dictatorship that seeks global hegemony, including through the step of using social media as everything apps adopted en masse by guileless teenagers in the West.

If Beijing doesn’t allow Google and Twitter in China, we definitely shouldn’t allow TikTok in the United States. Lack of reciprocity is one of many reasons to ban the app.

The latest evidence of TikTok’s expansion is moving to trademark “TikTok Music” in the United States, apparently to compete with Spotify and Apple Music. TikTok is also on LinkedIn seeking to hire supply chain specialists for Amazon-style “fulfillment centers” and warehouses for product delivery.

Like Amazon, TikTok could eventually get into the physical delivery business to customer front doors, to compete with UPS, FedEx, and the venerable U.S. Postal Service itself.

Just imagine if current trends continue, and our Postal Service is displaced by a cheaper alternative from China. How far will unmitigated free traders push their self-destructive ideology before they realize not to rely on the enemy for strategic goods such as communications and basic delivery services?

Sadly, the Biden administration and some allies are asleep at the switch. They should be leading the way in removing all of China’s apps from U.S. devices, as India is in the process of doing. The kind of intellectual property and personal data theft that TikTok enables must end.

Instead of a tough defense of America’s social media and e-commerce, what we hear from Washington on the issue of the gradual takeover of America’s digital everything is close to crickets.



Inflation Persists

False hopes of easing price pressures shattered in September

INFLATION NEWS IN JULY and August had offered a few willing souls so inclined to hope that price pressures would dissipate quickly. Consumer price inflation was indeed remarkably slow. Measures over the prior 12 months came off the frightening highs of more than 9 percent recorded last June.

However, the hope of a quick, easy relief was always false. As readers of this column know, any considered reading of the inflation figures warned of powerful inflationary pressures under the surface. September’s consumer price index (CPI) release has confirmed that warning and should extinguish any false hopes on the inflation front. It’s now clear, even to the most hopeful, that inflation will not go away any time soon.

The White House, for obvious reasons, was one of the most active purveyors of inflation hopes. In a widely quoted interview earlier this month, President Joe Biden emphasized how little ground inflation had gained in August, saying it had advanced only “an inch.” Technically, he was correct (though inflation is never measured in feet and inches.) In July, the overall CPI measure, called the “headline” figure, showed no advance; in August, it showed a gain of only 0.1 percent.

But as explained in earlier columns, the summer relief was due entirely to almost certainly short-lived downward adjustments in energy prices after their earlier and shocking upward spike. The retail price of gasoline, for example, fell 7.7 percent in July alone and then 10.6 percent in August. For the two months, these moves shaved 0.7 percentage points off the overall monthly inflation measure.

Otherwise, the rest of the CPI

continued to soar. Food prices rose at close to a 12 percent annual rate during that time, and the price of housing rose at a 7.4 percent annual rate. The so-called core inflation rate—all items except food and energy—rose at a 5.5 percent annual rate, moderate by some standards but still a burden on consumers trying to maintain standards of living.

The summer relief was due entirely to almost certainly short-lived downward adjustments in energy prices after their earlier and shocking upward spike.

The same pattern repeated in September, but because the relief in energy prices was much more muted than in July or August, the more general inflationary problem showed through more clearly. According to the Labor Department, the cost of all energy products fell in September alone by some 4.9 percent, and the retail cost of gasoline fell by 2.1 percent. As in July and August, these declines moderated the so-called headline rate of consumer price inflation but were no longer enough to disguise underlying trends.

September’s overall rise in the CPI came in at about 0.4 percent or close to a 5 percent annual rate. Food prices continued their relentless and steep climb, rising 0.8 percent in September alone, a 10 percent annual rate. The price of shelter rose 0.7 percent for the month alone, an almost 9 percent annual rate. More telling—and more troubling—is that the core inflation rate rose 0.6 percent for the month, almost a 7.5

percent annual rate, and a marked acceleration from the 6.6 percent average during the prior 12 months.

More worrisome still is the likely path of energy prices in coming months. Just in the past few weeks, crude oil prices have risen some 16 percent. Futures prices on unleaded gasoline have risen some 17.5 percent during this time. And these figures don’t yet show the full price pressure implicit in Saudi Arabia’s recent decision to cut back production along with Russia and the rest of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

Price increases at the wellhead and the refinery may wait a month or two before they get to the retail gas pump, but matters clearly say that the kind of energy price relief of the past two or three months isn’t likely to persist and may well reverse. Even if energy doesn’t add to inflationary pressure, though it now seems likely to do so, the still powerful moves elsewhere should carry the headline figure up at a disquieting pace.

Though not especially likely, other components of the CPI may offer relief in the coming months. Even a modest easing in the pressure on food prices could have a considerable impact since food constitutes some 13.6 percent of the average household budget. But even if, by some unlikely chance, some individual component offers a good month’s reading, nothing on the horizon offers any reasonable hope that general inflationary pressures will dissipate anytime soon.

Whether slightly higher or slightly lower than in the recent past, unacceptable inflation is here to stay for a good while, and with it, continued pressure on the Federal Reserve to carry on with its planned interest rate increases and other anti-inflationary measures.



Is ESG the Next CRT?

Republicans could turn ESG investing into a winning political issue

ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, and corporate governance (ESG) has been one of the most popular investment trends in recent years.

While it encourages businesses to be more environmentally and socially responsible, it’s frequently criticized for advancing a “woke” agenda.

Republican governors such as Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis and Texas Gov. Greg Abbott are among many who speak out against ESG. The disapproval has led multiple state treasurers to withdraw state funds from asset managers such as BlackRock, which have pioneered the ESG movement.

As the November midterm elections approach, numerous Republican lawmakers are also becoming more vocal in their opposition to ESG investing. For example, Rep. Jim Banks (R-Ind.) has labeled ESG as a scam.

“ESG is the left’s attempt to abuse our nation’s finances for their own political ends,” Banks told The Epoch Times. “They are prioritizing wokeness over dividends, and millions of American retirees are paying the price.”

Last year, the idea of implementing critical race theory (CRT) curriculum in classrooms across the country sparked a similarly heated debate. Many believe that Republican Glenn Youngkin’s victory in the Virginia governor’s race in 2021 was largely due to his efforts to fight CRT and racial education in schools.

So can ESG help Republicans in the upcoming election in the same way that CRT did?

Amy Walter, publisher and editor-in-chief of the Cook Political Report, says that hot-button issues such as ESG could sway swing voters.

Speaking at the annual membership meeting of the Institute of International Finance (IIF) on Oct. 10, Walter said some voters feel that “when Democrats get in charge,” they tend to impose “their worldview” or “these restrictions” that



As the November midterm elections approach, numerous Republican lawmakers are becoming more vocal in their opposition to ESG investing.

are out of touch with reality.

“I don’t know that [ESG] is really permeating quite yet into ... our average voter conversation,” she said, noting, however, that issues such as CRT and ESG “do motivate a certain type of voter—a type of voter who already feels like the Democratic Party is out of touch and has lost its way.”

That’s where Democrats get into trouble, particularly with swing voters, according to Walter.

“It’s when those voters think that Democrats are spending way too much time on their own sort of partisan agenda and not enough time on bread-and-butter issues,” she said.

While ESG investing is a trend that grabs headlines, numerous surveys have revealed that many retail investors know little about it. Only 24 percent of 1,228 investors polled correctly defined ESG investment, according to one survey in April. And about one in four thought the abbreviation

stood for “earnings, stock, growth.”

The big three asset managers—BlackRock, Vanguard, and State Street, which hold nearly 20 percent of the outstanding shares of the companies in the S&P 500 Index—have made substantial climate pledges during the past few years.

In response to accusations, BlackRock, the world’s largest asset management firm, recently launched a webpage to defend its investment strategy and approach to climate risk.

Larry Fink, CEO of BlackRock, also responded to the criticisms during the IIF annual meeting on Oct. 12.

“The facts are not important with some subgroups in this country,” Fink told attendees. “I’m now being attacked equally by the left and the right, so I’m doing something right.”

Matthew Peterson, cofounder of New Founding, which fights against “woke” corporations and investment funds, believes that people are awakening to the “radical” aspects of ESG.

“There’s more awareness than there has been in the past,” Peterson told The Epoch Times.

“It’s really insidious when you think about the way that they’re doing this. Because they’re hijacking the consumers’ savings and investments and using them to push their political project, reward their friends, and punish their enemies. And it’s hidden, it’s camouflaged by these boring words.”

Cook Political Report expects Republicans to take the House majority in November, grabbing 10 to 20 seats. There’ll be roughly 40 seats “that will determine control of the United States Congress out of 435,” Walter said.

Americans are most concerned about inflation, the economy and jobs, and immigration, according to the recent Harvard CAPS-Harris poll. However, the poll found that the events on Jan. 6, 2021; women’s rights; the environment; and climate change preoccupied Democrats the most.

DANIEL LACALLE is chief economist at hedge fund Tressis and author of “Freedom or Equality,” “Escape from the Central Bank Trap,” and “Life in the Financial Markets.”

Daniel Lacalle



Fed Pivot Isn't Investment Thesis

Many market participants want the Fed to pivot and stop boosting rates

A GROUP OF ECONOMISTS voiced their concerns in a recent Bloomberg article that the Federal Reserve's inflation fight may create an unnecessarily deep downturn. However, the Fed doesn't create a downturn due to rate increases; it creates the foundations for a crisis by unnecessarily lowering rates into negative territory and aggressively increasing its balance sheet.

It's the malinvestment and excessive risk-taking fueled by cheap money that leads to a recession.

Those same economists probably saw no risk in negative rates and massive money printing. It's profoundly concerning to see that experts who remained quiet as the world accumulated \$17 trillion in negative-yielding bonds, and central banks' balance sheets soared to more than \$20 trillion now complain that rate hikes may create a debt crisis. The debt crisis, as with all market imbalances, was created when central banks led investors to believe that a negative-yielding bond was a good investment because the price would rise and compensate for the loss of yield. A good old bubble.

Multiple expansion has been an easy investment thesis. Earnings downgrades? No problem. Macro weakness? Who cares. Valuations soared simply because the quantity of money was rising faster than nominal gross domestic product. Printing money made investing in the most aggressive stocks and the riskiest bonds the most lucrative alternative. And that, my friends, is massive asset inflation.

The Keynesian crowd repeated that this time would be different and consistently larger quantitative easing programs wouldn't create inflation because it didn't happen in the past. And it happened.



Stagflation: That's the risk ahead, and a Fed pivot would do nothing to bring markets higher in that scenario.

Inflation was already evident in assets all over the investment spectrum, but no one seemed to care. It was also evident in non-replicable goods and services. The U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization food price index had already reached all-time highs in 2019 without any “supply chain disruption” excuse or being able to blame it on the Ukraine war. House prices, insurance, health care, education—the bubble of cheap money was clear everywhere.

Now, many market participants want the Fed to pivot and stop boosting rates. Why? Because many want back the easy lucrative carry trade, in which they borrow cheaply in U.S. dollar and invest it in another currency with a higher interest rate. The fact that investors see a Fed pivot as the main reason to buy tells you what an immensely perverse incentive monetary policy is and how poor the macro and earnings outlooks are.

Few of us seem to realize a Fed pivot is a bad idea and, in any case, it won't be enough to drive markets to a bull run again, because inflationary pressures are stickier than what consensus would want. I find it almost an exercise in wishful thinking to read so many predictions of a rapid return to 2 percent inflation.

Stagflation: That's the risk ahead, and a Fed pivot would do nothing to bring markets higher in that scenario. Stagflation periods have proven to be very poor for stocks and bonds, even worse when governments are unwilling to cut deficit spending, because the crowding out of the private sector works against a rapid recovery.

Current inflation expectations suggest the Fed will pivot in the first quarter of 2023. That's an awfully long time in the investment world if you want to bet on a V-shaped market recovery.

To cut inflation drastically, three things need to happen, and only one isn't enough: 1. hike rates; 2. reduce the balance sheet of central banks meaningfully; 3. stop deficit spending. This is unlikely to happen anytime soon.

Investors who see the Fed as too hawkish look at money supply growth and how it's falling, but they don't look at broad money accumulation and the insanity of the size of central banks' balance sheets that have barely moved in local currency. By looking at money supply growth as a variable of tightness in monetary policy, they may make the mistake of believing that the tightening cycle is over too soon.

Central banks don't print growth. Governments don't boost productivity. However, both perpetuate inflation and have an incentive to increase debt. Adding these facts to our investment analysis may not guarantee high returns, but it will prevent enormous losses.

BRENDAN MODERWID/REUTERS

FANYU is an expert in finance and economics and has contributed analyses on China's economy since 2015.

Fan Yu

Inflation Is King

The financial markets today seem solely driven by inflation expectations

INFLATION IS NOW THE single most important indicator for the financial markets.

Fundamentals? They're meaningless. Earnings? Important but not indicative of the future. Momentum? Well, that also depends on inflation.

The financial markets now seem to be singularly driven by the anticipated trajectory of inflation. In other words, readings of inflation would provide an indication of whether the U.S. Federal Reserve has done enough to combat inflation by raising interest rates. So it's a prediction of how much and how long the Fed would continue boosting benchmark interest rates.

Investment strategists who typically have interesting things to say have suddenly thrown out their playbooks and now look toward the Fed (and the other central banks). If investors believe that inflation is peaking and the Fed can slow down or reverse its interest rate hikes in the near future, they would turn bullish on stocks. If investors believe inflation still has a way to go, they would sell and stay away from the market.

In other words, one's views on the market have become rather binary and dependent on one's views on inflation expectations.

The latest CPI report released on Oct. 13 was another reminder that elevated inflation is nowhere near cooling off. September prices rose 8.2 percent year-over-year and 0.4 percent month-over-month, with both readings above analyst expectations. That has caused analysts at Bank of America to declare in a note that inflation could remain high for years to come, as historically, once it breaches 5 percent, it typically takes 10 years for inflation to go back down to the 2 percent range (what the Fed is targeting) for developed economies.

David Einhorn, the founder of hedge fund Greenlight Capital, sees this prob-



Roubini's thesis is that an economic hard landing is inevitable and given the amount of debt in the financial system coupled with high interest rates, growth will be low for the foreseeable future.

lem as self-made.

“When was the last time we put a cement factory in this country, and when was the last time we created an oil refinery?” he wondered during an Oct. 11 interview with Bloomberg TV. For the past two decades, our country (and its investor base) has been obsessed with building technology companies with borrowed money.

A key question is whether the Fed is on the right path to fix the problem. Einhorn believes the Fed may be barking up the wrong tree.

“Half of the inflation problem is caused by fiscal measures. And there's no discussion at all about making fiscal measures to either increase supply, which actually would be a nice thing to do because as you increase supply you increase wealth,” he added.

“Instead what we're trying to do is to decrease demand, which means lower everybody's standard of living to try to fight the inflation.”

At its core, inflation is caused by a supply-demand imbalance. Simply put, when demand exceeds supply prices tend to go up. And to cure the imbalance, either supply needs to be increased or demand needs to be reduced.

Whether you believe current inflation is caused by poor policy (loose credit, underinvestment in certain sectors) or poor luck (COVID-related supply chain issues, the Russia-Ukraine war), it's ultimately inflation driven by too little supply, argues economist Nouriel Roubini, professor emeritus of economics at New York University and chairman of Roubini Macro Associates.

“This matters because supply-driven inflation is stagflationary and thus increases the risk of a hard landing (increased unemployment and potentially a recession) when monetary policy is tightened,” he wrote in a Time magazine op-ed.

Roubini's thesis is that an economic hard landing is inevitable and, given the amount of debt in the financial system coupled with high-interest rates, growth will be low for the foreseeable future. “Today, we face supply shocks in a context of much higher debt levels, implying that we are heading for a combination of 1970s-style stagflation and 2008-style debt crises—that is, a stagflationary debt crisis.”

To battle inflation by demand destruction—forcing unemployment and cratering household wealth—could set the country up for low growth for years to come.

Roubini is aptly nicknamed “Dr. Doom” as he's been sounding the alarm on inflation for years even when deflation was the mainstream worry. But today, his thesis has come much closer to reality.

“The natural gas has to flow. We’ve got to get these fertilizer plants going again.”

Michael Yon, war correspondent

THOUGHT LEADERS

Setting the Table for Famine

The energy crisis, food shortages, and America’s ongoing illegal immigration disaster

PHOTO BY DAREN FLIKINS

“**T**hese famines that are building are biblical,” Michael Yon says. “I don’t use that word lightly. At this rate, the Bible is going to need a new chapter. It’s really that serious.”

In a recent episode of EpochTV’s “American Thought Leaders,” host Jan Jekielek speaks with Yon, a former Green Beret, writer, photographer, and long-time war correspondent. In his career, Yon has visited more than 80 countries to report firsthand on world events. He’s currently investigating the Netherlands and its farming crisis. Here, he discusses that country, the fossil fuel catastrophe, upcoming food shortages, and the unprecedented wave of illegal immigrants into the United States.

JAN JEKIELEK: Your focus has been on global security and understanding what’s happening in the world, because there does seem to be a significant shift, especially with the pandemic. Now, food security is becoming a serious issue. You’re in the Netherlands right now, so what are you seeing?

MICHAEL YON: The Netherlands is about to go into winter. Their energy prices are going through the roof, and most of the people don’t see the famine coming. The farmers are being destroyed, and the Netherlands is being brought to heel by the globalists. Some are resisting.

MR. JEKIELEK: You’re



Farmers drive their tractors in a protest of the Dutch government’s nitrogen policy, near Bornerbroek, Netherlands, on July 28.

saying the Dutch government has a globalist bent.

MR. YON: I wouldn’t say they just have a globalist bent. They are globalist. The farmers own about 62 percent of the land in the Netherlands, and this is the second-largest food exporter in the world, despite having fewer than 18 million people. The farmers are extraordinary. The government is forcing farms to close with the excuse that nitrogen is causing pollution.

When you take the most efficient farmers in the world, arguably, and you put them out of business because they’re polluting, who’s going to do the farming? The Indians? The Chinese? I don’t know. But the bottom line is, we’re going into a severe energy crisis which will lead to a food crisis as well.

People are going to freeze to death this winter. It’s very clear. And next year, we’re going to start to see profound food shortages, and this will drive more mass immigration. I was down in Darién Gap a few months ago, that jungle

gap between Colombia and Panama, and they’re coming up in massive numbers: Africans, Asians, Pakistanis, and even mainland Chinese—people from more than 140 countries.

And our own government is increasing the migration flow. As the economies collapse and the food pressures increase, you’ll see Africa and Asia and maybe parts of Europe dumping out into South America and then going through the Darién Gap.

This is a big deal. We’re being completely invaded on the U.S. southern border. Everybody in Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico knows this. Here in the Netherlands, it’s very similar. It’s just on a different number scale because it’s a smaller country.

MR. JEKIELEK: Are you saying the Netherlands government basically agrees ideologically with the World Economic Forum?

MR. YON: Absolutely. The World Economic Forum has nurtured this country. Of course, Brussels, its headquarters, is right next door.

Things are really governed here by bureaucrats, and we don’t even know who they are.

It’s clear that the World Economic Forum has a massive influence in Canada, the United States, Japan, you name it. There are 27 countries in the European Union, and if Germany collapses, the European Union is certainly going to fall apart. And the situation is dire. I was recently in Germany and went to their equivalent of the Home Depot, OBI, and went to the wood section, where I was told “Ah, we can’t get any wood, and we don’t know when we’re going to get more.”

But most Germans don’t have fireplaces. They live in cities in apartment buildings often heated by natural gas. It’s a very serious situation.

MR. JEKIELEK: There’s this huge focus right now on the Russia-Ukraine War, and you’re arguably the most embedded war correspondent in U.S. history, but you aren’t there. Why not?

MR. YON: That’s a minor battlefield compared to the food and migration issues.

These famines that are building are biblical. I don’t use that word lightly. At this rate, the Bible is going to need a new chapter. It’s really that serious.

MR. JEKIELEK: You’re essentially arguing that none of this really had to happen, that this is all basically created by humans.

MR. YON: Knock out the gas and the energy, and

agriculture's going to go. This is clearly contrived, and this isn't a conspiracy theory. The World Economic Forum is open about it. They say it in clear words.

MR. JEKIELEK: What are they saying in clear words?

MR. YON: The Great Reset, reducing population on earth. The World Economic Forum doesn't even hide that that's what it's doing.

MR. JEKIELEK: You've spoken with a number of Dutch farmers. What are they saying?

MR. YON: Farmers are wed to the land. They are a backbone of culture. Farmers and religion entwined are a backbone of culture. If you're trying to brainwash people and break them and divorce them from the land, you have to break the farmers' backs. They're trying that right now.

If they take out the farmers, the globalists are putting themselves into a position where they can control food production and distribution. Bill and Melinda Gates, by the way, have put \$600 million into something called Picnic, a food distribution network here in the Netherlands.

The farmers are becoming more angry, and the general population is becoming so angry that the farmers are being knocked out of the saddle and the food production and land are being taken away.

MR. JEKIELEK: In what scenario can these farmers actually win and continue what they're doing?

MR. YON: As a war correspondent, I would say overthrow the government because that's the only way that I see of doing it. I don't see otherwise how they're going to win with this government. Sri Lanka went down this same route, and the rest is history. We saw the mob swimming in the president's swimming pool and sleeping in his bed.

MR. JEKIELEK: Everything you're describing makes me think of pandemic policy, which I think resulted in the biggest wealth transfer from the poor and middle classes to the elites in the history of the world. It had an unbelievable effect. Everything you're describing is in the context of a couple of years of extremely restrictive, economically destructive policy that the world is still reeling from. One solution, I think, is simply to restart energy production in all these places where it's possible, but it isn't being done. Would you say that?

MR. YON: Absolutely. The natural gas has to flow. We've got to get these fertilizer plants going again. But we've already lost a huge amount of production. There's been a flash, and we're about to hear the boom. The crop reports in the United States should be out in a couple of weeks, and that may have a dramatic effect on food prices when people realize how short we are on food.

MR. JEKIELEK: Following the worst of the pandemic, at some point, it dawned on me that we're really never

going back to what was before, that the situation has irrevocably changed.

Along with this recovery being attempted from the pandemic, food shortages basically mean a really difficult time that's almost unavoidable. Is that what you're saying?

MR. YON: Yes, I would say unavoidable.

MR. JEKIELEK: It seems like we've crossed the Rubicon here. Is it possible to ever go back to how things looked pre-pandemic?

MR. YON: No. We're going into a totally different state and there's no turning back. Look at Sri Lanka; they're resisting now, a little too late. Especially when you go into famine, there's only a certain amount of time that you have while your energy is still high and you're not malnourished, in which you can actually resist. At some point, you're just too weak, and they've beaten you.

MR. JEKIELEK: What do you think is the best-case scenario right now for society at large?



Protesters hold a banner during a rally to support farmers, fishermen, and truckers, on Dam Square in Amsterdam on July 23.

MR. YON: First, detach ourselves from globalism and the World Economic Forum and their influence, and that includes the United Nations and World Health Organization. Greatly reduce the size of the U.S. government and the bureaucracy. Become nationalist in our outlook.

Japanese need to be Japanese. Poles need to be Polish, or they'll just be giving up their sovereignty. That's why Europe is collapsing. They've surrendered their sovereignty to the people in Brussels, and it's the people in Brussels who are leading us into a global catastrophe.

Individuals can prepare, too. Read five books on famine. Any five random books. OK, I'll suggest one. Read "Red Famine: Stalin's War on Ukraine" [by Anne Applebaum]. Then you'll better understand what you need to do to prepare, because you can get through it if you know the challenges you're going to face. It's all written down. The people who wrote these books wrote them so we would read them. ■

This interview has been edited for clarity and brevity.

RAMON VAN FLUWEN/ANP/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

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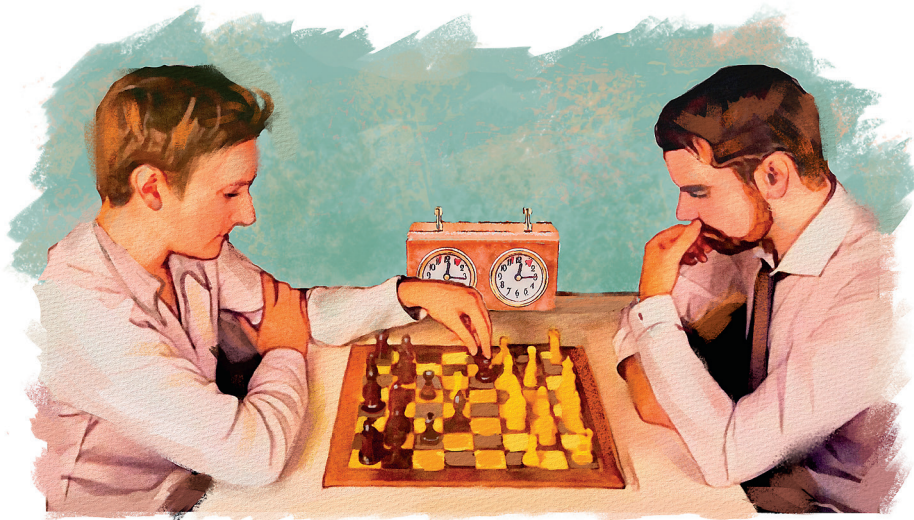
SCAN TO WATCH NOW

AN EPOCH TIMES DOCUMENTARY

Give Your Brain a Workout

Create a mental fitness routine to keep your brain healthy

By Jeff Minick



HEAR THE WORD “exercise,” and any number of scenarios may pop to mind. Some people may whisper to themselves—count me among them—“I need to join a gym.” Others may recollect the evenings they spend jogging around the neighborhood. A select few may reflect on their arduous CrossFit training.

But even fewer, if any, will think of doing crossword puzzles, playing chess, learning a new language, or playing the guitar.

Yet, these are just some of the tools investigators have found invaluable for the health of that three-pound packet of gray matter encased in your skull, otherwise known as the brain.

More and more, researchers have discovered that cognition can be strengthened by creating a sort of gymnasium for the mind. “Oh, come on, use your brain,” people sometimes say in exasperation, and scientists would wholeheartedly agree.

Not only does putting the noggin through some hoops help ward off Alzheimer’s disease and dementia in many people, but these mental push-ups and jumping jacks actually boost an array of faculties such as memory, intelligence, and creativity.

Here are a few tips and suggestions for putting your brain through the paces.

First up, physical activity itself exercises the brain. In Grace McGre-

Cognition can be strengthened by creating a sort of gymnasium for the mind.

gor’s article “How Exercise Affects the Brain,” we learn that physical exercise feeds the brain by aiding circulation and increasing blood flow, which delivers necessary nutrients. It reduces the effect of stress hormones. Surprisingly, a physical workout can also strengthen our memory functions by aiding a process called synaptogenesis, the links mediating learning and memory.

Then, there are the exercises focused directly on the brain itself. Medical News Today, for instance, offers “22 Brain Exercises to Improve Memory, Cognition, and Creativity.” Here, chess, checkers, sudoku, and board games of all kinds are touted as excellent calisthenics for the mind. Visiting with friends, especially if the conversation is stimulating, is another brain builder. The authors add to this list learning a foreign language, learning to play a musical instrument, dancing, meditating, and practicing tai chi. Getting enough sleep also helps to boost memory and regulate metabolism.

Perhaps most interesting item on this list is No. 2: “visualizing more.” Here the article offers as an example a trip to the grocery store, where, before setting off, the shopper takes a few

moments to imagine picking out certain items. “The key,” the article reads, “is to imagine the scenes vividly and in as much detail as possible.” Applied to all sorts of situations, these visualization techniques apparently stretch the imagination and powers of thought.

Of course, we can also avoid habits that are as harmful to our brain as to the rest of our body. Cigarettes? Bad for the brain. Alcohol consumed in excess? Bad for the brain, as anyone who’s suffered a hangover already knows. A poor diet? Check. Too much television? Another check, for two reasons. First, you could allocate some of that sofa time to taking a walk, cleaning the basement, or talking to a friend. Second, watching too much tube is like gobbling down fast food with your eyeballs. You’re putting junk into your head.

“The mind is just like a muscle,” says motivational speaker, author, and consultant Idowu Koyenikan. “The more you exercise it, the stronger it gets and the more it can expand.”

And here’s the best news: Our choices for that exercise are wide open. A game of chess, a half-hour fiddling with a sudoku puzzle, some time spent in meditation—now, there’s a workout program anyone could love.

Jeff Minick lives and writes in Front Royal, Va. He is the author of two novels, “Amanda Bell” and “Dust on Their Wings,” and two works of nonfiction, “Learning as I Go” and “Movies Make the Man.”



Unwind



Our 49th state is a marvel from ground level, but taking to the air in a bush plane gives you a view that’s beyond breathtaking.

PHOTO COURTESY OF RUST’S FLYING SERVICE

An Aerial View of Alaska 78

THIS CONCOCTION OF whisky, bitters, and vermouth is as integral to New York as Lady Liberty, the Manhattan skyline, and honking taxis. **81**

CLEAN WATER MAY NOT BE the most exciting drink, but getting plenty of it is as necessary as oxygen for overall good health. **82**

YOU CAN WRITE THE SAME thing with a disposable pen, but using any of the writing tools in this collection makes it an adventure. **85**

INSIDE

An Alpine Masterpiece

Located high above the scenic Austrian town of Seefeld, this estate is ideal for entertaining family and friends

By Phil Butler



The property enjoys a very pleasant overlook of the quaint mountain village of Seefeld.

THIS MAGNIFICENT MOUNTAIN retreat located in the village of Seefeld, in Australia's western Tirol state, would be an ideal primary residence or vacation home for those with large families or who enjoy entertaining.

The 13-bedroom, 13-bath property, which will be sold at auction, provides owners and guests a breathtaking 360-degree view of an Alpine wonderland. An impressive 20,440 square feet in size, the chalet is located on 2.1 acres of verdant nature overlooking one of Europe's most famous ski areas. The property offers an array of luxury accommodations, including a penthouse with a lovely view of the Alps.

The home was designed with entertaining guests in mind, with a plethora of meeting and casual spaces, dining areas, a huge chef's kitchen, and extensive wellness/fitness facilities. There's also a glorious main dining room with a panoramic view and a luxurious marble bar at the center of the chalet.

Additional notable features include a Finnish sauna, a steam bath, a workout studio, a relaxation room, a massage room, and an awe-inspiring infinity-edge pool looking out over the Alps. The chalet is an architectural

masterwork with three private balconies, five private terraces, an elevator, six fireplaces, two guest apartments, and five staff quarters. Other improvements include a wine cellar with a tasting room, a heated ski equipment room, and a three-car garage.

The beautiful state of Tirol sits in the heart of the Alps. The villages and towns surrounding this property celebrate their unique culture and history. Seefeld, a five-star mountain village where the 1964 and 1976 Olympic Winter Games took place, is home to one of Europe's most prestigious cross-country courses.

Nearby year-round resorts offer numerous alpine outdoor experiences, including peak climbing, cycling, camping, hiking, and much more. This part of Austria is blessed with magnificent forests, turquoise mountain lakes, miles of lush green meadows, and picture-postcard villages dotting the landscape. Just 25 minutes from Innsbruck, the property is surrounded by upscale restaurants, bars, shopping, golf courses, and a casino.

Bidding begins on Oct. 27 at noon EDT. ■

Phil Butler is a publisher, editor, author, and analyst who is a widely cited expert on subjects ranging from digital and social media to travel technology.



SEEFELD ALPS CHALET
SEEFELD, TIROL,
AUSTRIA
13.5 MILLION EUROS
(\$13.1 MILLION)

- 13 BEDROOMS
- 13 BATHROOMS
- 1,899 SQUARE METERS (20,440 SQUARE FEET)
- 8,137 SQUARE METERS (2.1 ACRES)

KEY FEATURES

- 360 PANORAMIC VIEWS
- INFINITY POOL
- WELLNESS FACILITIES

AGENT

SOTHEBY'S CONCIERGE AUCTIONS
CHRISTINA CHALK
PROJECT MANAGER
+44 7903.944463



(Above) Owners and guests can enjoy the home's Finnish sauna, complimented by a steam bath.

(Top Right) The interior spaces feature huge windows that allow you to enjoy the views of the beautiful surroundings

(Right) This bedroom overlooks the village of Seefeld, host to the 1964 and 1976 Olympic Winter Games.



COURTESY OF THE PROPERTY OWNERS. SOTHEBY'S CONCIERGE AUCTIONS

Anchorage by Air

Plane tours are one of the best ways to see Alaska's stunning wilderness

By Tim Johnson



Rust's Flying Service, a family-owned business, is the largest seaplane operator in Anchorage.

ANCHORAGE IS A CITY OF PILOTS, and I was riding with one of the best. In America's last frontier, a state that you could fit Texas into twice and still have plenty of room left over, things aren't often close at hand. So in Anchorage, the easiest solution is often this: Just fly.

Alaska has the largest per capita number of pilots in the United States, and a nearby little lake alone is home to 1,100 planes. Brian Carlin's regular gig is flying a medivac helicopter. But lately, he's also been flying visitors around in a float plane, and Carlin was ready to show me everything that's so remarkably close to the glassy skyline downtown.

Anchorage is a curious and fascinating place. In the city's center, you could squint your eyes and believe that you were in a medium-sized Midwest city with streets lined with shops and a multi-story downtown mall. But there's perhaps no urban center that provides such easy access to super wild places. And riding with Carlin on a little Cessna 206, I was about to swoop high above it.

Pilots have been navigating Alaska's tricky terrain and tempestuous weather for more than a century. Some became legends, including Joe Crosson, a bush pilot who was the first to land a plane on the glaciers of Denali, North America's highest mountain. Another, named Carl Ben Eielson, was the first person to airmail envelopes and packages in Alaska in the 1920s.

With these daredevils in the back of my mind, I walked out on a dock jutting into Lake Hood, lined with the distinctive red planes employed by Rust's Flying Service, the largest seaplane operator there, a family-owned business that started up in 1963. I squeezed into the rear seat of the very small plane and donned my headphones to chat with the pilot and my fellow passengers.

Taxiing out, Carlin said that this is the world's busiest seaplane base, with almost 200 flights every day. It felt like a busy hub airport, but with the docks where float planes are tied replacing the concourses and jetways and the runways being filled with water rather than paved in asphalt.

Taking off in a float plane is a strange experience in all the best ways. One moment you're floating, bobbing across the waves as though you're in a boat. The next, you're zooming, skimming along the surface, feeling that first sensation of lift as you're just about to leave the watery runway. And then, finally, the plane is airborne, the whirring propeller in front somehow powering you up and away from the lake, pond, river, or sea in which you started. ✈️

300,000 people live in Anchorage. So do an estimated 1,500 moose.



Alaska's largest city, Anchorage is home to 41 percent of the state's population.

In summer, you can fish for king and silver salmon, right in the heart of the city, at Ship Creek.

A family of Dall sheep clamber on the rocky slopes above Turnagain Arm.



FROM L: RUST'S FLYING SERVICE; THE EPOCH TIMES; ROY NESE/VISIT ANCHORAGE



(Above) An aerial view of downtown Anchorage with Ship Creek in the foreground.
(Right) Viewing a glacier in Prince William Sound from a day cruise boat.

Moments later, we were high over the city, the towers of downtown off to our left and snow-capped mountains and green valleys straight ahead. As we continued out toward the suburbs, we buzzed over a series of luxurious log cabins, then climbed the rises. Seconds after that, we entered a big, green valley and spotted the white forms of Dall sheep, just hanging out right near a mountaintop.

And then we were in a land of glaciers, the sun flashing off the Knik Glacier below, huge snow-capped mountains behind it. Running 25 miles long and five miles across, the glacier had small pools of shockingly blue water pooling on top and rivers rolling off its toe.

“See those crevasses down there?” Carlin pointed to ripples that looked tiny from above. “Those are big enough to swallow this whole plane.”

We zoomed across other glaciers, then made



Pilot Brian Carlin standing on his float plane.



a turn away from this land of snow and ice.

“We’ll make our way toward 20 Mile Creek, and, you’ll see, the whole ecosystem changes,” Carlin said.

Moments later, we landed on Carmen Lake with its surrounding lush, green slopes. The pilot angled us to a small beach, and we climbed out, hopping onto the plane’s pontoon and then the shore. It’s a world away from both Anchorage and the glaciers, calm and quiet—an oasis in the mountains.

After a few photos, it was time to squeeze back into the 206 and take off again. We flew along the edges of Turnagain Arm, named by William Bligh, sailing master for Captain James Cook, because it had no outlet, and they were forced to “turn again.”

Just ahead, Lake Hood and Anchorage awaited. But for the moment, I was happy to relish being high above it all, with views of beauty in every direction, close to the city but still in the heart of the last frontier. ■

Tim Johnson is based in Toronto. He has visited 140 countries across all seven continents.

If You Go

Fly:

Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport connects Alaska with the Lower 48.

Getting Around:

While the city does have a serviceable public transit system, it is a huge place. To truly explore Anchorage and its surroundings, you should have a car. Or, take a plane tour with a company like Rust’s Flying Service.

Stay:

Located in the heart of the city, the Hotel Captain Cook is Anchorage’s landmark property.

Take Note:

Some amazing wildlife can be spotted right in the middle of the city.



THIS PAGE FROM TOP: KEN GRAHAM PHOTOGRAPHY/VISIT ANCHORAGE; NICOLE GELIS/VISIT ANCHORAGE; TIM JOHNSON

ANATOMY OF A CLASSIC COCKTAIL: THE MANHATTAN

Simple yet elegant, the whiskey drink is an enduring taste of Old New York—just don’t believe the tall tale that comes with it

Kevin Revolinski

WHILE IT’S CERTAIN this cocktail came from New York’s most famous borough—as opposed to the Brooklyn, Queens, Bronx, or Staten Island cocktails—there are varying specifics.

Creation credit often goes to Dr. Iain Marshall, who, in 1874, allegedly mixed one up on behalf of presidential candidate Samuel J. Tilden at a party at the Manhattan Club in New York hosted by Winston Churchill’s mother. However, this would have been difficult considering that she was in England at the time, far along in a pregnancy, and so would have had to attend by Zoom—or rather, transatlantic mail, I suppose.

An earlier story comes from a later source. The 1923 edition of “Valentine’s Manual of Old New York” includes a chapter by William F. Mulhall, who asserts that a man named Black in an establishment on Broadway invented this “most famous mixed drink in the world in its time” in the 1860s.

“At the Hoffmann in the old days a gentleman would come in and sit down to a table with his party and the waiter would come over and order his particular formula for the party,” Mulhall writes. “Bartenders had to learn them by memory, too, so that the order could be served quickly.”

That’s worth noting. Some recipes call for a bit of orange Curaçao or even absinthe. It seems certain that the base spirit originally was rye whiskey, but that, too, gets substitutions. Rye brings a nice spiciness to the drink, while bourbons lend a perception of caramel, vanilla, or other flavors.

Rye whiskey, the classic base, brings a nice spiciness to the drink.



The world of vermouths offers a wide range of flavor profiles—try mixing sweet and dry for balance.



Finish with a fancy cherry or orange peel garnish.



CLASSIC MANHATTAN

- 2 ounces rye whiskey
- 1 ounce sweet vermouth
- 2 dashes bitters
- Brandied cherry and/or orange peel for garnish

Pour the ingredients into an ice-filled mixing glass and stir until chilled. Strain this into a coupe or martini glass and garnish with a fancy cherry and/or an orange peel.



Four ingredients, properly combined, make a bold but smooth drink.

Other recipes call for Canadian blended whiskey, but these likely have their origins in the Prohibition era, when this would have been an easier ingredient to find. So choose your booze according to taste—but if you use Scotch, you’re drinking a Rob Roy.

Then there’s the world of vermouths. Martini & Rossi’s is a broadly loved and easily obtained sweet vermouth, but—compared to whiskeys—the aromatically herbed red wine offers even wider flavor profiles. While the complexity

of higher-end Carpano Antica Formula is attractive, one can’t go wrong with the very affordable Italian Cinzano or the 29 herb and spice blend Noilly Prat from France. Some brands bring a bit of extra bitterness or standout herbaceous qualities, so be sure not to mix something that overpowers your whiskey. Mix equal parts dry and sweet vermouth, and you’ll have a perfect Manhattan. ■

Kevin Revolinski is an avid traveler, craft beer enthusiast, and home-cooking fan. He’s based in Madison, Wis.

POUR A GLASS OF WELLNESS

An exercise routine is great, but drinking the right amount of clean, fresh water is more important

BY BILL LINDSEY

Getting a steady supply of fresh, clean water is one of the most important factors for having a healthy body.

GOOD HEALTH IS THE PINNACLE of luxury, and staying hydrated is one of the most important ways to achieve it. Next to the air we breathe, the water we drink is one of the most overlooked everyday health essentials. In addition to keeping bodies hydrated, water lubricates joints, helps protect body tissue, maintains proper body temperature, and plays a major role in the elimination of wastes via perspiration and urination.

But there are several issues to consider before simply gulping down a tall glass of water. How much do we really need to drink every day? Are some waters better than others? How do we get the best water?

How Much Is Enough?

The typical advice calls for drinking eight glasses of water per day, but, in reality, there's no simple answer. Factors including a person's age, size, geographic location, level of physical activity, and many more all play a role in the minimum quantity of water needed daily. The Mayo Clinic suggests that men drink 125 ounces of water per day, while women should drink 91 ounces per day—but keep in mind that these amounts assume that 20 percent of one's daily water intake is provided by food, such as fruits and vegetables. Milk, juices, coffee, tea, and even soda can also contribute toward the daily requirement.

However, that rule might be OK for someone in an air-conditioned office, but it might not be sufficient for someone who's in an arid environment, such as

EPA standards for bottled water are less restrictive than they are for municipal water.

Arizona, or hiking at high altitudes on a sunny, summer day. As is the case with all things related to health, consulting a physician for specific advice is a must, as each person has unique parameters.

Check the Water Quality

What's in your water? It's important to realize that not all drinking water is equal. Municipalities must comply with the limits set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on permissible amounts of chemicals and germs in drinking water, but contamination can still occur from situations such as spills, damage to the water distribution system, storm water intrusion, or groundwater contamination. Municipalities will issue a drinking water advisory in these instances, but these notices can be easy to miss, making it crucial to take responsibility for ensuring one's own supply of safe drinking water.

Bottled Water

Bottled water is a popular option; the United States is the world's second-largest consumer of bottled water. But while bottled water is always more expensive than tap water, it may not necessarily be of higher quality. Surprisingly, the applicable EPA standards for bottled water are less restrictive than they are for municipal water. According to Dr. Peter Gleick, co-founder of the Pacific Institute and an authority on water quality issues, tap water is often of higher quality than bottled water. While some bottled waters come from springs, others are filled from municipal water sources—tap water—which can actually be a good thing. Overall, the convenience of bottled water somewhat mitigates the high cost.

Filtered Water

One of the most common ways to help ensure water quality is to filter it. There are five types of water filters: reverse osmosis, absorption, mechanical, se-

STAY HYDRATED, STAY HEALTHY

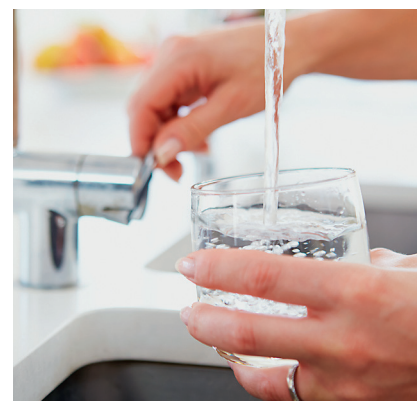
Keeping a water pitcher with an integral filter in the refrigerator is a great way to always have chilled water ready to serve.



The United States is the world's second-largest consumer of bottled water, which often comes from municipal sources.



Installing a reverse osmosis filtration system at home can ensure up to 99 percent pure water on demand.



Drinking a glass of water every time you feel thirsty is an ideal way to stay properly hydrated.

LEFT PAGE: ZENSHUI/LAURENCE MOUTON/GETTY IMAGES; THIS PAGE FROM TOP: VADIM ZH/SHUTTERSTOCK, YAKINIKU/SHUTTERSTOCK, MONKEY BUSINESS IMAGES/SHUTTERSTOCK, TEREYUK/SHUTTERSTOCK

When you know where to find them, springs provide a refreshing supply of chilled, fresh water.

questration, and ion exchange. Some of these are small enough to fit in a pocket and are easy to use, while others require complex equipment.

Reverse osmosis systems force water through a semipermeable membrane to collect inorganic contaminants, such as magnesium and calcium ions. These systems often also include mechanical sediment filters, making them capable of ensuring treated water is up to 99 percent pure. These systems are complex and expensive, often found in restaurants or on yachts, to filter water pumped in from dockside connections.

A mechanical system uses filters made of materials such as fabric mesh or ceramics to collect particles, dirt, and sediment. The filters can range from being able to capture particles from five microns in size and possibly visible to the naked eye to 0.5 microns in size to help prevent exposure to microscopic giardia and cryptosporidium parasites. These systems are often found in homes and are relatively easy to install.

Absorption filters use carbon made from wood or even coconut shells to trap chemical impurities, making them very effective at removing chlorine taste and odor. Pocket-sized LifeStraw filters use this method, making them a popular choice for those who spend time outdoors and occasionally drink from streams or



other natural sources.

Sequestration filters utilize food-grade polyphosphate to help prevent calcium and magnesium minerals that can cause corrosion and scale on surfaces that come into contact with the water.

An ion exchange filter is used to “soften” water by removing hard minerals, helping to minimize or prevent limescale. They’re well-suited for applications using a lot of hot water, such as commercial coffee makers.

Whichever filtration system you choose, it’s a smart step toward ensuring proper hydration. As a bonus, tea and coffee very possibly could taste better than ever. ■



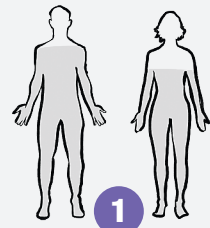
While mountain streams may look clear and fresh, use a portable water filter to treat water before drinking it.



LIFESTYLE

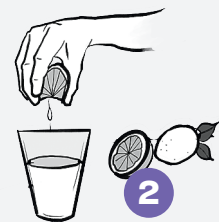
FILL IT UP

Water Is life



How Much?

The Mayo Clinic suggests drinking 125 ounces of water daily for men and 91 ounces for women, but overdoing it can actually be harmful, diluting the body’s required balance of salt and electrolytes, possibly leading to water intoxication.



Spice It Up

If water seems a bit boring, chill it or consider adding lemon juice or a flavor enhancer, and especially one with electrolytes if you are exercising.



Stay on Track

To help make drinking the daily requirement a habit, use a large container with ounce markings to track your daily water intake.

THIS PAGE FROM TOP: ASCENT X MEDIA/GETTY IMAGES; MAKASANA PHOTO/SHUTTERSTOCK

WIELD A UNIQUE PEN

Writing can be a mundane task, but these instruments are guaranteed to transform any note-taking or journaling into an epic adventure

By Bill Lindsey



Historic Precision

TIBALDI CONSTANTINIAN LIMITED EDITION STERLING SILVER FOUNTAIN PEN

\$6,600

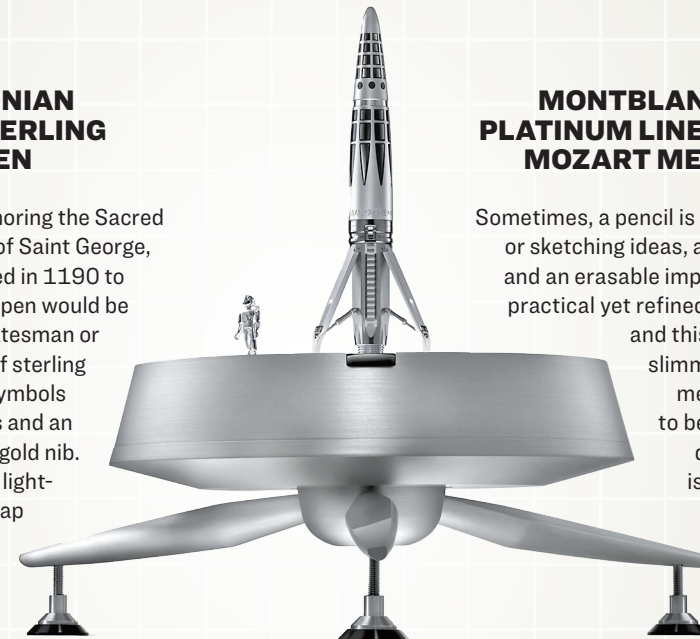
Featuring hand-engraving honoring the Sacred Military Constantinian Order of Saint George, an order of knighthood founded in 1190 to defend humanitarianism, this pen would be at home in the hand of any statesman or philanthropist. A foundation of sterling silver features hand-etched symbols of the order, with gold accents and an engraved rhodium and yellow gold nib. Burgundy resin accents and a light-blue amazonite stone on the cap complete the elegant design.

Pencil This In

MONTBLANC MEISTERSTUCK PLATINUM LINE HOMMAGE A W.A. MOZART MECHANICAL PENCIL

\$405

Sometimes, a pencil is preferred for making notes or sketching ideas, as it creates a unique result and an erasable impression. Few pencils are as practical yet refined as those from Montblanc, and this model takes the form of a slimmer example of their classic mechanical pencil, allowing it to be flourished with a bit more dexterity. The iconic design is as reliable as it is tasteful, making it ideal for all uses.



If SpaceX Made Pens

CARAN D'ACHE + MB&F ASTROGRAPH LIMITED EDITION RHODIUM-PLATED FOUNTAIN PEN

\$26,095

In a joint venture with watchmaker MB&F—Maximilian Busser & Friends, known for incredibly intricate and complex timepieces—Caran d’Ache has created a fountain pen that begs to be grasped, used, and then “landed.” A total of 99 ruthenium- and rhodium-plated components were combined in more than 500 steps to craft a pen poised to take you on spectacular writing adventures.



A Tiger in Your Hand

URSO WHITE TIGER FOUNTAIN PEN

\$3,000

Sterling silver and glossy resin are combined to craft a fountain pen that qualifies as artwork, yet uses cartridges for practicality. This hefty instrument highlights the impressive skills of the numerous artisans involved in creating it. In addition to the eye-catching tiger (a panther and leopard are also available) crouching on the barrel, poised to leap, it also features a sparkling diamond on the cap’s dome.

Venetian Style

MONTTEGRAPPA VENETIA FOUNTAIN PEN

\$460

Inspired by the distinguished yet elegant city of Venice, this fountain pen would be an ideal choice for making a guest list for an annual gala or jotting down notes during a board meeting. A new entry in Montegrappa’s Vintage Class line, it’s designed to be comfortable to hold, with a sleek, tapered resin body accented with a gold nib, clip, and barrel trim.

RECOMMENDED READING

This week, we feature a classic novel about a sailor seeking atonement and a prescription for American race relations by a highly respected doctor.

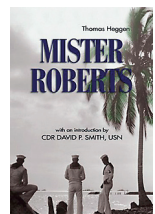
FICTION



'A GENTLEMAN'S MURDER'
By Christopher Huang

Only five years after The Great War, a murder occurs in a soldiers-only club. British veteran Lt. Eric Peterkin finds himself searching for answers among the elite and along the streets of London. This post-war mystery is sure to please lovers of detective stories.

INKSHARES, 2018, 352 PAGES



'MR. ROBERTS'
By Thomas Heggen

An Endearing Novel of WWII

Thomas Heggen takes us aboard the USS Reluctant, a supply ship in a Pacific backwater during the war, where we meet the tyrannical captain, watch the hilarious doings of the crew (especially Ensign Pulver), and come to admire the noble Lt. Roberts,

who defends the crew from the captain and wants nothing more than to serve in combat. Here's a tale of the sea that offers laughter and maybe a few tears. Originally published in 1946, this story gave birth to a hit Broadway play and a popular movie.

NAVAL INSTITUTE PRESS, 2009, 224 PAGES

HISTORY



'ESPAÑA'
By Giles Tremlett

Spain Re-examined

Spain is traditionally cast as a villain in much of English (and U.S.) literature and history. This one-volume history of Spain, from its earliest days to the present, reveals a different Spain, one that made many unappreciated contributions to Western civilization. Punctuation, created by Isidore of Seville, is just one example. While it's a sympathetic portrayal, it doesn't whitewash Spanish history. Lavishly illustrated, it unveils a history that more people should know about.

BLOOMSBURY PUBLISHING, 2022, 320 PAGES

BIOGRAPHY



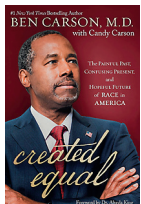
'HOUDINI'
By Adam Begley

The World's Greatest Escape Artist

Erik Weisz is one of America's most famous stage magicians. If his real name is unfamiliar, his stage name isn't: Harry Houdini. This biography traces Houdini's early years as he evolved into the world's most famous escape artist. It reveals Houdini as a man with many interests. He became the first man to fly in Australia. He made movies. He unmasked fraudulent spiritualists and sought to top past achievements. This is a fabulous book.

YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2020, 232 PAGES

SOCIETY



'CREATED EQUAL'
By Dr. Ben Carson with Candy Carson

Toward a More Perfect Union

Dr. Ben Carson, former secretary of housing and urban development, a

2016 Republican presidential candidate, and the former director of pediatric neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins is also a best-selling author. Recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, he shares keen insights on the past and offers an uplifting path forward.

CENTER STREET, 2022, 272 PAGES

CLASSICS



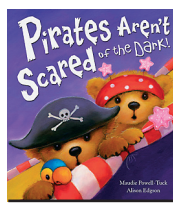
'LORD JIM'
By Joseph Conrad

Seeking Redemption

The Patna is sinking. On an impulse, the idealistic Jim, leaps into a boat carrying most of the crew, deserting the religious pilgrims the ship is carrying. But the Patna doesn't sink, and Jim, like the others, is censured and disgraced for abandoning ship. This is an unforgettable study of a young man, his story told by the narrator Marlow, who's racked by guilt and hopes to restore his honor and prove himself to be a better person. Readers must judge for themselves as to whether Jim succeeds in his quest.

WORDSWORTH EDITIONS REPRINT, 1998, 304 PAGES

FOR KIDS

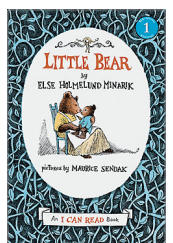


'PIRATES AREN'T SCARED OF THE DARK!'
By Maudie Powell-Tuck

Fun Story, Great Pictures

Young Jack wants to camp out in the yard in his pirate tent for the first time and wants nothing to do with his sister Lily. A sweet story about sibling love and that scary night in the tent. This book is illustrated by Alison Edgson and is for ages 2 through 6.

LITTLE TIGER PRESS, 2014, 32 PAGES



'LITTLE BEAR'
By Elsa Holmelund Minarik and Maurice Sendak

Warm and Charming

Little Bear is a bit uneasy when his father is away, but his loving mother helps him through it. The book that inspired the lovely animated series is a gentle read that illustrates the joys of childhood and the warmth of family.

HARPER TROPHY REPRINT, 2003, 63 PAGES



Ian Kane
is a U.S. Army veteran, filmmaker, and author. He enjoys the great outdoors and volunteering.

MOVIE REVIEWS

This week, we feature a couple of charming films: one about a singing crocodile and the other about a boy who discovers a magical world.

NEW RELEASE



'Lyle, Lyle, Crocodile' (2022)

This family-friendly movie introduces us to the Primm family: Mr. Primm (Scoot McNairy), Mrs. Primm (Constance Wu), and son, Josh (Winslow Fegley). When they move into a New York dwelling, Josh finds a singing crocodile in the attic, and the two become friends. However, their neighbor Mr. Grumps (Brett Gelman) wants the Primms to leave, so the family must band together.

Based on the children's book, this charming movie is good old-fashioned family fare. It has positive messages about friends and family, and it includes some fantastic tunes.

ANIMATION | ADVENTURE | COMEDY

Release Date: Oct. 7, 2022

Directors: Josh Gordon, Will Speck

Starring: Scoot McNairy, Javier Bardem, Constance Wu

Running Time: 1 hour, 46 minutes

MPAA Rating: PG

Where to Watch: Theaters

★★★★★

A ROUSING ADVENTURE EPIC



'Gunga Din' (1939)

A trio of British soldiers, Sgts. Cutter (Cary Grant), MacChesney (Victor McLaglen), and Ballantine (Douglas Fairbanks Jr.), who

are stationed in India, befriend local man Gunga Din (Sam Jaffe), who warns them of a revolt by a deadly cult.

This adventure epic isn't only expertly made—with a great

script and acting—but has timeless messages about friendship and loyalty.

ADVENTURE | COMEDY | WAR

Release Date: Feb. 17, 1939

Director: George Stevens

Starring: Cary Grant, Joan Fontaine, Victor McLaglen

Running Time: 1 hour, 57 minutes

Not Rated

Where to Watch: DirecTV, Amazon, Vudu

★★★★★

FAMILY PICK

'The NeverEnding Story' (1984)

Young boy Bastian (Barret Oliver) is a social misfit who, while hiding from a group of bullies in a bookstore one day, discovers a mysterious novel about a magical, dangerous land called Fantasia. The more he reads the book, the more he realizes that he may be linked to it.

This film has a certain something that stays with you long after you've watched it. Its simple yet uplifting storyline, its magical music, and its boy-turned-hero main



character make it both a stunning cinematic experience and a heartfelt fairytale-like classic for older kids.

ADVENTURE | DRAMA | FAMILY

Release Date: July 20, 1984

Director: Wolfgang Petersen

Starring: Noah Hathaway, Barret Oliver, Tami Stronach

Running Time: 1 hour, 42 minutes

MPAA Rating: PG

Where to Watch: HBO Max, DirecTV, Redbox

★★★★★

A RIP-ROARING, BLOCKBUSTER ADVENTURE

'Raiders of the Lost Ark' (1981)

During the 1930s, the U.S. government tasks top archeologist Indiana Jones (Harrison Ford) with locating the biblical Ark of the Covenant, a relic of supreme power, which Adolph Hitler also wants. Jones must contend with a rival archeologist and Nazi agents in his quest.

Many consider this fast-paced adventure to be the most entertaining film of the '80s and one of the greatest adventure films of all time. With perilous situations, witty ban-



ter, and phenomenal action scenes, this is escapism at its finest.

ACTION | ADVENTURE

Release Date: June 12, 1981

Director: Steven Spielberg

Starring: Harrison Ford, Karen Allen, Paul Freeman

Running Time: 1 hour, 55 minutes

MPAA Rating: PG

Where to Watch: DirecTV, Vudu, Redbox

★★★★★



How to Be Likeable

Some people are born naturally charismatic, but most have to work at it

Being liked by those around us is a worthy and understandable goal, but like respect, it must be earned. We've compiled some suggestions that may help you be someone others genuinely enjoy spending time with.

By Bill Lindsey

1 Smile and Nod

A genuine smile is a very effective nonverbal signal that lets people know you are enjoying being in their presence. Charismatic people radiate a positive attitude by nodding as the other person speaks, smiling when the other person smiles, and mirroring the other person's body language. They also know to avoid frowning, smirking, or making other negative facial expressions.



2 Pay Attention

People like others who listen to their stories and make and maintain eye contact. It's rude and disconcerting to be looking everywhere except at the person who's talking or is part of the conversation. Ask appropriate questions to learn more about them such as "How do you know the host?" or "Did you grow up here?" Listen more than you talk; don't interrupt them or talk over them; be patient and truly listen to what they're saying—you may learn something valuable. Remember their name and use it in conversation, as this is respectful and conveys a level of comfort that's endearing.

3 Be Honest

Even when talking to people you may never see again, stretching the truth can come back to haunt you sooner or later, so be upfront and honest, just as you want others to be. Genuinely positive reactions are another way to connect; if they describe how they climbed a local mountain or spearheaded fundraising for a local pet rescue charity, let them know you think it was a great accomplishment. Don't be that person who hears such things and immediately tries to top them.

4 Be Open-Minded

As you chat with new friends or those you've known for years, find things in common to discuss such as having dogs, wearing the same brand of watch, or a mutual love of sports or music. As you listen, be open-minded; not everyone will share your point of view, but like you, they're entitled to their opinion. Rather than making it clear that you disagree, change the topic. It's usually best to avoid politics and other sensitive topics.

5 Be There

Being reliable is a quality highly valued in friends. From a 2 a.m. call for help changing a flat tire, to arriving to dinner on time, knowing that you can be counted on to show up with a smile earns a lot of likability points. Being there means not making the conversation all about you; no one likes a know-it-all narcissist. If you're pressed for time but they want to talk, be upfront about your schedule and make plans to get together at a more convenient time.

Courageous Reporting

We believe that investigating and exposing the truth is the only way that we can remain safe and free

CROSSFIRE HURRICANE

ON MAY 25, 2017, The Epoch Times published an article headlined "Despite Allegations, No Evidence of Trump–Russia Collusion Found." The article detailed that—despite a media frenzy at the time—no actual evidence had been uncovered that President Donald Trump or anyone associated with his campaign had colluded with Russia to influence the 2016 presidential election.

OUR REPORTING was proven accurate with the conclusion of the investigation by special counsel Robert Mueller.

NOT ONLY DID WE NOT BUY INTO the false narrative that Trump colluded with Russia, but we have also been a leader in reporting on the irregular and apparently politicized nature of the FBI's investigation of the Trump campaign. During the past five years, we have published dozens of articles on the topic, many of them exclusive.



ELECTION INTEGRITY

FOLLOWING THE 2020 ELECTION, The Epoch Times was at the forefront of investigating and reporting on the questions surrounding the integrity of the election. Through our fact-based and independent reporting, we were able to uncover multiple irregularities.



ORIGINS OF COVID-19

ON APRIL 15, 2020, The Epoch Times published its documentary "Tracking Down the Origin of Wuhan Coronavirus." The film, which received over 100 million views, explored the origins of the virus, including the possibility of a lab leak. It presents scientific data and interviews with top scientists and national security experts.



YEARS AFTER THE RELEASE of this groundbreaking documentary, the possibility of a lab leak is considered by government officials and experts as the most likely explanation for the virus's spread.

CHINA THREAT

SINCE ITS INCEPTION in the year 2000, The Epoch Times has been at the forefront of reporting on the infiltration of the United States by the Chinese Communist Party. Numerous times over the years, we've broken major China-related stories ahead of other news organizations. In 2003, The Epoch Times was the first media outlet to systematically and continuously report on the spread of SARS, well ahead of most other Western media. We were also the first to report on state-sponsored forced organ harvesting in China—one of the most underreported atrocities of our time—in



which prisoners of conscience are killed for their organs, which are then sold for profit on a large scale.

THE EPOCH TIMES also published the editorial series "Nine Commentaries on the Communist Party," revealing the true nature and history of the Communist Party and inspiring a movement that so far has seen more than 400 million Chinese people quit the Party and its affiliated organizations. Another of our series, "How the Specter of Communism Is Ruling Our World," systematically exposes the evil nature of communism, as well as the harm it has brought and continues to inflict on the United States and the world.

A message and a story you do not want to miss

Dear future subscriber,
If you are sick of the bias, lies, and fake outrage that's business-as-usual in the media today, I believe that you will love our weekly magazine, Epoch Insight.

My name is Kirk Wang, and I am the senior vice president of the Subscription Department at The Epoch Times—the fastest-growing independent news outlet in America.

When The Epoch Times was founded in 2000, I was the first to join the production team in Atlanta. Together, we made our first edition, in Chinese. Thus began our commitment to reporting the truth and exposing the Chinese Communist Party and its infiltration in the United States and around the world.

In today's desert of shameless media dishonesty, The Epoch Times has become an oasis for those thirsting for truthful, fact-based coverage of current events. Now, our news magazine Epoch Insight provides an even more refreshing shelter for you to explore.

Produced by our award-winning newsroom, Epoch Insight is a weekly publication that provides big-picture news coverage and in-depth analysis of today's most challenging issues.

Epoch Insight will keep you up to date on the most significant developments in the United States, world, as well as economic news, with exclusive content in the timeless format of a real American news magazine.

You can trust us to provide you with this in-depth coverage because we're committed to honoring Truth and Tradition—and treating our readers with the respect they deserve.

Let me offer you three reasons why honest reporting is absolutely central to every line you read in The Epoch Times and Epoch Insight. Later on, you can assess the truth of my claims for yourself.



Kirk Wang, SVP of Subscription

1. The Epoch Times rejects politically motivated journalism.

Our commitment to tradition is so strong that we believe YOU ought to be able to judge facts for yourself and decide what to make of them.

Many other media corporations want to tightly control what you're allowed to see or read, so that you don't arrive at the "wrong" views.

Not us. When we search for new hires, every single job description emphasizes that the candidate must practice ethical journalism: "Seek the truth and report it." This used to be standard in American newsrooms ... but lately it's been sacrificed by activists who emphasize ideology over facts.

Is it hard to find reporters who qualify? You bet. A lot of journalism schools have taught students to forsake traditional journalistic ethics for newsroom activism.

While this hiring process is laborious, it has proven successful: The Epoch Times has built a team of reporters who are dedicated to seeking and reporting the truth, regardless of whether what they find conflicts with their personal biases.

The Epoch Times takes this principle so seriously that it has never endorsed a political candidate for office. Can you imagine?

2. The Epoch Times is indebted to no one.

Let's face it: If you are beholden to a corporation or conglomerate, you aren't really free to report the facts. That's the problem we see with many news outlets today—they know where their bread is buttered, and their "factual" reporting shows it!

What's more, if your business model depends on getting a ton of "clicks," you aren't really free to report the news honestly. Every single headline is an advertisement looking to manipulate the consumer. (Remember the saying, "If a product is 'free,' there's a good chance that YOU are the product.")

But The Epoch Times is totally independent. We are funded by loyal subscribers like you and generous donors who are proud to support high-quality, trustworthy journalism.

(By becoming a subscriber today, YOU will become part of this movement to restore truth to our country.)

3. The Epoch Times has seen firsthand where ideological manipulation leads.

I have to warn you, this part of the letter gets a little heavy, and I write it with a somber heart.

You see, the founders of The Epoch Times are Chinese Americans who witnessed persecution in communist China.

We started a newspaper that would counteract the total censorship of the press inside China and the world's reporting about China, and let people see the truth, not just the official government narrative.

And for their courageous commitment to the

truth, many Epoch Times journalists paid a very heavy price.

In 2000, China's state security agents arrested the manager of the newspaper's China bureau and 10 journalists. Editor-in-chief Zhang Yuhui received a prison sentence of 10 years, while Epoch Times staff member Huang Kui received five.

Both men were interrogated, tortured, forced into slave labor, and subjected to brainwashing classes. Huang was released in 2004 and Zhang in 2010. However, several other Epoch Times staff members were never heard from again. We fear they paid the ultimate price for their commitment to telling the truth.

So, for us, it's personal. When you have colleagues tortured and killed for honest reporting, you're not going to forsake those principles just because it's convenient. We would dishonor their sacrifice if we gave you anything less than the honest truth.

I'd like to invite you to take a look at this Epoch Insight magazine and decide for yourself if it's the kind of in-depth news you've been looking for.

So please, right now, act on our special offer: only \$1 for your first four issues of Epoch Insight. Just go to **ReadEpochInsight.com**. You'll also enjoy a savings of 45 percent off our regular rate on the next 12 months of superior journalism ... plus other big extras, including complete access to the exceptional content on The Epoch Times' acclaimed website, **TheEpochTimes.com**

In Truth and Tradition,



Kirk Wang
SVP of Subscription
The Epoch Times

What Our Readers Say

“It’s a magazine that’s FOR the American people, not against.”

Vanessa Morrison, medical records clerk

“Well thought out material, thoroughly investigated, and I trust [the] sources.”

Gail F. Sauve, homemaker

“It is straightforward, rather than a lot of speculation or pontificating.”

Jan Hamilton, retired professional

“[Insight] reminds me that there are still a LOT of wonderful, good, and dedicated people in this country.”

Creed Haymond, surgeon

“Unbiased reporting. Short, impactful articles.”

Mark Naumann, photographer

“I can trust what I read and make up my own mind how I feel about the subject.”

Jim Edwards, retired

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