

How an Unprecedented Private-Public Partnership Subverted the 2020 Election

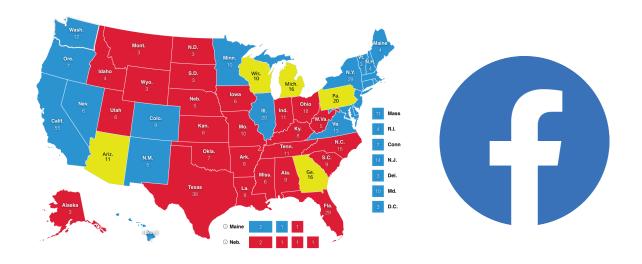
By Phill Kline, Director, The Amistad Project of the Thomas More Society



Private Information of Citizens Traded by Government for Private Monies

The 2020 presidential election witnessed an unprecedented, coordinated public-private partnership to improperly influence the election results on behalf of one particular candidate and party.

Funded by hundreds of millions of dollars from Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg and other interests, activist organizations created a two-tiered election system that treated voters differently depending on whether they lived in Democrat or Republican strongholds.



Private monies dictated that city and county election officials manage the election in ways contrary to both federal law and state election plans endorsed and developed by state legislatures with authority granted by the United States Constitution¹

Moreover, executive officials in swing states facilitated, through unique and novel contracts, the sharing of private and sensitive information about citizens within those states with private interests, some of whom actively promote leftist candidates and agendas.²

This data sharing allowed direct access to data of unique political value to leftist causes, and created new vulnerabilities for digital manipulation of state electronic poll books and counting systems and machines.

This public-private partnership in these swing states effectively placed the government's thumb on the scale to help these private interests achieve their objectives and to benefit the candidates of one political party.

Public-Private Partnership Operates Shadow Government Undermining Election Integrity

The Amistad Project began monitoring these activities beginning in the spring of 2019, initially focusing on the digital vulnerabilities of state election systems.

Amistad became aware that states and local election officials failed to maintain the legal right to access the computer logs from the machines counting ballots. The first step to engage any computer forensic examination is to gain access to machine logs, yet scores of election officials failed to maintain the right to even review such information, much less establish a method for bipartisan review.

In effect, America purchased a complex ballot box (computer) into which its votes would be deposited, but didn't have the right to open the box and review the count. A secret ballot helps secure free and fair elections — a secret ballot box fundamentally undermines them.

As COVID escalated in March of 2020, The Amistad Project also began witnessing troubling efforts to undermine the integrity of the 2020 election by assaulting laws designed to protect the integrity of the absentee ballot.

The use of absentee ballots is uniquely vulnerable to fraud, as detailed in a special bipartisan congressional report authored by former President Jimmy Carter and former Secretary of State James Baker.³

In-person voting occurs with trained election officials present. These officials deter voter intimidation and coercion and are trained to educate, not mislead, the voter when completing the ballot. Moreover, in-person voting allows for voter identification. When the ballot leaves government controls, new challenges are present. There are few identity checks and no assurance the ballot was completed without intimidation, coercion, inducement, or by a person other than the voter.

Accordingly, states have basic, common-sense laws protecting the integrity of the absentee, advance, or mailed ballot.

The Assault was Coordinated and Planned

Beginning in the spring of 2020, left-leaning organizations filed a massive number of lawsuits to challenge these integrity laws. Lawsuits sought to set aside witness requirements, identification requirements, deadlines, delivery requirements, ballot deadlines, signature requirements, application requirements, and even argued that the Constitution required all returned ballot envelopes be postage prepaid due to COVID.⁴

Swing state governors also started issuing emergency executive orders shutting down in-person voting while pouring new state resources into encouraging persons to vote in advance.⁵

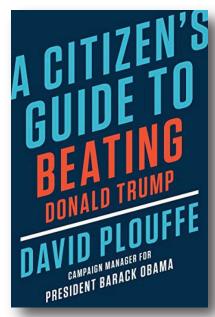
Polling data revealed this coordinated assault on in-person voting generally favored Democrat Party voters who preferred to vote in advance, while placing Republicans, who preferred to vote in person, at a disadvantage.⁶

These actions represent the beginning of the formation of a two-tier election system favoring one demographic while disadvantaging another demographic.

Also, in March 2020, David Plouffe, former campaign manager for President Barack Obama, published his book entitled A Citizen's Guide to Defeating Donald Trump. At the time, Plouffe was working for the charitable initiative of Mark Zuckerberg and his wife Priscilla Chan.

Plouffe correctly identifies that the 2020 general election will come down to a "block by block street fight" to turn out the vote in the urban core, a key stronghold of Democrat Party votes. Plouffe specifically highlighted high turnouts in Milwaukee, Detroit, and Philadelphia as the key to a Democrat victory.⁷

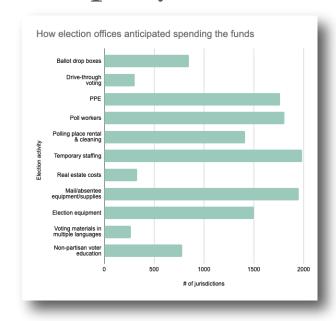
Soon after, we witnessed the rumblings of a previously sleepy 501(c)(3) organization called the Center for Tech and Civic Life (CTCL), whose previous annual revenues never exceeded \$1.2 million.⁸



America: A Facebook Company

CTCL began sending agents into states to recruit certain Democrat strongholds to take grants from the organization — and to recruit other Democrat strongholds to do the same. These grants provided funds for election staff and resources in return for administering the election in a manner dictated by CTCL.

For example, CTCL inked a \$100,000 grant to the Mayor of Racine, WI in May of 2020 directing the Mayor to recruit four other cities (Green Bay, Kenosha, Madison, and Milwaukee) to develop a joint grant request of



CTCL.⁹ This effort results in these cities submitting a "Wisconsin Safe Election Plan" on June 15, 2020 to CTCL and, in turn, receiving \$6.3 million to implement the plan.¹⁰ This privatization of elections undermined the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), which requires state election plans to be submitted to federal officials and approved, and requires respect for equal protection by making all resources available equally to all voters.¹¹

The provision of Zuckerberg-CTCL funds allowed these Democrat strongholds to spend roughly \$47 per voter, compared to \$4 to \$7 per voter in traditionally Republican areas of the state.12

The chart below represents early CTCL grants to swing states. Early money is of much greater value than money late in an election cycle because it can be purposed consistent with a plan. CTCL funded and dictated election planning in Democratic Party strongholds through the summer of 2020 and only later, in response to criticism, began moving smaller amounts of monies to Republican areas.

| STATE | # CTCL GRANTS | TOTAL CTCL GRANT AMOUNT |
|--------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| Michigan | 8 | \$6,106,599 |
| Wisconsin | 6 | \$7,324,567 |
| Pennsylvania | 5 | \$13,237,557 |
| Georgia | 2 | \$11,600,000 |

Zuckerberg's indirect manner of dictating county and city election policy presented difficulty in learning the full scope of his activities. Government action is subject to laws ensuring transparency such as open records acts and the requirement for public meetings and audits. Such is not the case with private entities.

Neither Mr. Zuckerberg nor CTCL are subject to such requirements, nor should they be. Government should not be able to require such private information from private organizations. But allowing a private organization to effectively manage a government function gifted a cloak of secrecy over government action allowing these local officials with CTCL and a compliant and/or overworked or lazy media to control the narrative.

CTCL grants were reported as providing a safe election environment when, in reality, the focus was on increasing turnout in Democratic strongholds through inducements and eliminating integrity measures on absentee ballots.

In documents received by The Amistad Project pursuant to court order, CTCL demands Philadelphia increase the number of polling places from 190 in the primary election to 800 in the general election.

The August 21, 2020 CTCL-Philadelphia grant agreement states "[t]he City and the Commissioners shall work to secure 800 or more in-person polling places on Election Day [and] to (sic) extent the goals...are not met, the City shall communicate to grantor the number of polling places, rationale for opening fewer than 800 polling places, the approximate and average and maximum distance between a registered voter's residence and their assigned polling place, a description of all courses of action or plans undertaken to open 800 or more polling places, and why each such course of action was not successful."

Philadelphia failing to meet any of CTCL's demands was not an option as the grant agreement, as all CTCL grants, contained a "claw-back" provision. "CTCL may discontinue, withhold part of, or request the return all or part of any unspent grant funds if it determines, that any of the above conditions have not been met."

This dramatic increase in "in-person" polling locations in Democrat strongholds such as Philadelphia, Detroit and Milwaukee, as outlined in Plouffe's book occurred at the same time blue state Governors were shutting down in-person voting in other areas of the state. For example, in Michigan, Governor Whitmer issued Executive Order 2020-27 pertaining to the Michigan primary in which she reduced the number of "in-person" polling places required by each jurisdiction to one, stating "[t]o mitigate the spread of COVID-19, to protect public health…it is crucial that all Michiganders take steps to limit in-person contact. To that end, it is reasonable and necessary to temporarily suspend rules and procedures relating to the May 5, 2020 elections…."

COVID Fear and the Litigation Strategy of the Left and Zuckerboxes Open the Door to Fraud

Accordingly, as blue state executive officials warned of in-person voting and the left launched a massive litigation strategy to remove ballot integrity provisions relating to absentee ballots including arguing that the presence of COVID requires the government to pay for return postage of all ballots.

In Stringer v. North Carolina, filed by the Right to Vote Foundation and the National Redistricting Foundation, 23-year-old Harvard graduate Sarah Fellman demanded that the state pay the postage on her absentee ballot as she "is admittedly confused about how much postage her ballot requires, given that absentee ballot envelopes are large and might weigh more than one ounce." In the Complaint, Ms. Fellman explained "[i]n the past, she had had to ask friends for postage or try to fit a trip to her local post office into her busy schedule" and that in light of COVID-19 she "expects that the Postage Requirement will become even more burdensome than it has been for her in the past."19

The Fellman suit also sought to suspend absentee ballot receipt deadlines, witness requirements, signature comparisons, and rejections of absentee ballots based on such comparisons unless curing is provided. "Taken together," the suit reads, "these restrictions on mail ballots are at best unduly burdensome and post significant risks to voters' health and safety, and, at worst, impossible to comply with during a global pandemic..."

Yet, all such protections on the integrity of the absentee ballot previously received bipartisan support and were viewed as common sense requirements due to the potential fraud present when a ballot leaves the hands of election officials and is cast outside of an in-person polling place.

In 2005, former President Jimmy Carter and Republican James Baker authored a report from the bipartisan Commission on Federal Election Reform concluding, "[t]o improve ballot integrity...[and] to deter or prosecute systemic efforts to deceive or intimidate voters [s]tates...need to do more to prevent registration and absentee ballot fraud. Fraud occurs in several ways. Absentee ballots remain the largest source of potential voter fraud."

The report specifically warned that mail voting is "likely to increase the risks of fraud...where safeguards for ballot integrity are weaker" and that such "absentee balloting...has been one of the major sources of fraud." The report also warns that allowing voting far in advance of Election Day results in voters not having comparable information about the candidates or the issues at the time they vote. This, of course, diminishes the potential for an informed electorate and informed vote.

These concerns are logical. Once the ballot leaves the hands of government officials and is cast away from the polling place, there is not anyone present to ensure the voter is not misled, intimidated, or coerced to vote a specific way, or to ensure it was the voter who actually completed the ballot. It is for this reason that states enacted common sense integrity measures.

Yet the left's litigation strategy sought to weaken all such provisions. Much of this occurred through "friendly" litigation. In Virginia, the League of Women Voters sued the Commonwealth seeking a court order removing the witness requirement for the absentee ballot. Paragraph 1 of the Complaint in League of Women Voters, et. al. v. Virginia State Board of Elections, quotes Virginia Attorney General Mark Herring stating that such witness requirements are dangerous during a pandemic. It is Herring's office that is tasked with defending the state law requiring absentee ballot witnesses and Herring almost immediately announced he would settle the suit by granting the League what it sought, the removal of the witness requirement.

"We are thrilled that today's agreement means voters will not bear the burden of finding a witness for their absentee ballots during a global pandemic...so that Virginia voters do not have to choose between their health and their vote," harped Deb Wake, president of the League of Women Voters of Virginia.

A similar lawsuit resulted in Georgia's Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger agreeing to settle with the Democratic Party of Georgia to alter Georgia's signature comparison requirement. Raffensperger entered the agreement without legislative approval.

Funding the Willful Violation of State Election Integrity Laws

Moreover, this recruiting of targeted jurisdictions for specific government action and funding runs contrary to legislative election plans and invites the government to play favorites in the election process.

The "Wisconsin Safe Election Plan" was not authored by the state and considered state election integrity laws as obstacles and nuisances to be ignored or circumvented. CTCL retained the right, in the grant document, to, in its sole discretion, order all funds returned if the grantee cities did not conduct the election consistent with CTCL dictates. Effectively, CTCL managed the election in these five cities. And this plan violated state law in, at least, the following ways:

- 1. The plan circumvented voter identification requirements for absentee ballots by attempting to classify voters as "indefinitely confined" due to COVID and later, after Wisconsin Supreme Court criticism, by ordering election clerks to not question such claims.
- 2. The plan initiated the use of drop boxes for ballot collection, significantly breaching the chain of custody of the ballot and failing to maintain proper logs and reviews to ensure all properly cast ballots were counted and all improperly cast ballots were not counted.
- 3. Initiated the consolidation of counting centers, justifying the flow of hundreds of thousands of ballots to one location and the marginalization of Republican poll watchers such that bipartisan participation in the management, handling, and counting of the ballots was compromised.

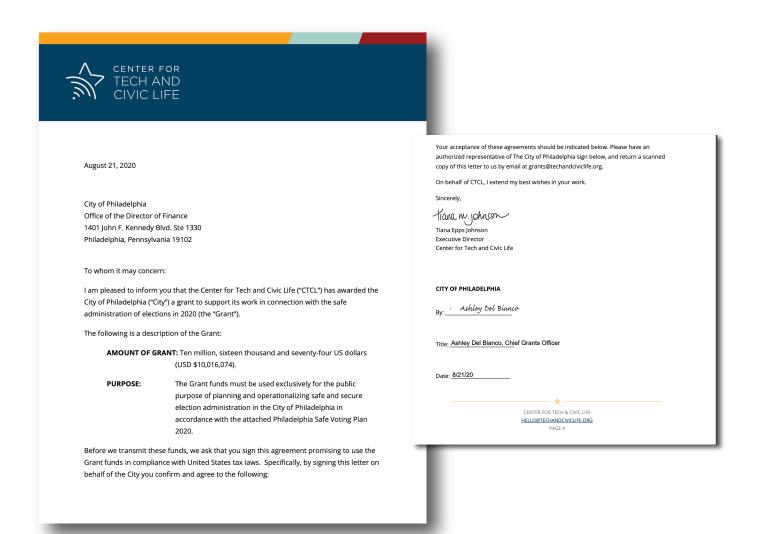
These are but examples of radical changes in election processes that opened the door for significant fraud.

The disparate impact of Zuckerberg funding is also present in the analysis of CTCL funding in Pennsylvania. Documents obtained through court order revealed communication between the City of Philadelphia and CTCL emphasizing that CTCL paid election judges in Philadelphia and other election officials. CTCL mandated Philadelphia to increase its polling locations and to use drop boxes and eventually mobile pick-up units. Moreover, Zuckerberg monies allowed Philadelphia to "cure" absentee ballots in a manner not provided for in Republican areas of the state.

In Democrat Delaware County, Pennsylvania, one drop box was placed every four square miles and for every 4,000 voters. In the 59 counties carried by Trump in 2016, there was one drop box for every 1,100 square miles and every 72,000 voters. Government encouraging a targeted demographic to turn out the vote is the opposite side of the same coin as government targeting a demographic to suppress the vote.

This two-tiered election system allowed voters in Democrat strongholds to stroll down the street to vote while voters in Republican strongholds had to go on the equivalent of a "Where's Waldo?" hunt in order to find a ballot box.

These irregularities existed wherever Zuckerberg's money was granted to local election officials. In effect, Mark Zuckerberg was invited into the counting room, and the American people were kicked out.



The Hack from Within

Additionally, Amistad became alarmed at the new vulnerabilities created in our election system with "data sharing agreements" that gave left-leaning third-party organizations front door access to electronic poll books.

Rock the Vote and other organizations inked agreements with blue state election officials to enter new registrations into state poll books. Such agreements are unprecedented and unwise.

The threat of unofficial voter registration drives was acknowledged in the Carter-Baker 2005 report which called for "legislation to minimize fraud in voter registration, particularly to prevent abuse by third-party organizations [by] direct[ing] offices to check the identify of individuals registered through third-party registration drives and to track voter registration forms.

These concerns were articulated at a time when such third-party voter registration drives required private interests to complete voter registration applications on paper and turn the applications into the local election clerk.

In the 2020 election all of this changed in a manner opening the door to a front-end hack of our election poll books. Previously, voter registrations were entered solely by election clerks, who have three important checks on their authority. These checks are: 1) they must be transparent subject to FOIA and open records laws; 2) they are geographically limited rendering audits manageable; and 3) they are politically accountable. No such checks apply to Rock the Vote.

Allowing such access creates new digital vulnerabilities, easily allowing nefarious actors to access poll books and alter entries.

Sufficient data is available from private vendors to create identifies to populate poll books. Vendors sell the changes of address, legal name changes, divorce, marriage, death, and other databases which combined allow for the creation of fictitious voters. As an example, a colleague of mine checked the Michigan voter registration records after concerns arose about voter fraud in Michigan to see if she was registered in her birth state. She now lives in Virginia. To her astonishment, she found she was registered under her birth name – a name under which she never registered in any state as she legally changed her first name upon reaching the age of majority, later married and had not lived in Michigan for decades.

The Amistad Project's concerns were amplified by the nature of a contract offered by Michigan's health director to a subsidiary of NGP VAN, a Democrat fundraiser and data services company.

Michigan granted the COVID tracing contract to EveryAction VAN, a subsidiary of NGP VAN which Governor Whitmer, AG Dana Nessel and Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson as a fundraising consultant for their campaigns.

The contract allowed this leftist organization to demand sensitive information from Michigan citizens at the threat of arrest. Citizens could be ordered to turn over medical records, travel information, the names of associates and friends, and other information with a significant privacy interest and of significant monetary value to a political fundraiser.

Emails later obtained through FOIA requests demonstrate Ed Duggan, a Whitmer advisor and the Michigan Director for the Biden campaign, helped arrange the contract. Duggan suggested that health department officials not directly contract with NGP VAN because of possible political fallout. When this information became public, Whitmer claimed she was unaware of the agreement and faced with public pressure, she rescinded the contract.

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Consolidated County Centers Combine with Dropboxes to Open the Door to Hundreds of Thousands of Fraudulent Ballots

CTCL and swing state urban election officials justified consolidating counting centers due to COVID. Previously, ballots on Election Day were generally managed in smaller locations with easy bipartisan access.

It is doubtful consolidation of the counting centers, drawing crowds of poll watchers and workers, is at all helpful in preventing the spread of COVID. But the centers did allow for two things to happen: 1) the delivery of hundreds of thousands of ballots to one location; and 2) preventing members of one political party from observing the receipt, handling, management, curing, casting, and counting of ballots.

Transparency in elections is a hallmark of a fair election. Transparency is achieved through inclusion. The United States Agency for International Development explains that "[t]he most fundamental principle defining credible elections is that they must reflect the free expression of the will of the people. To achieve this, elections should be transparent, inclusive, and accountable...."

The agency implements strategies which involve the presence of independent observers, audits, and inclusion of all political factions in witnessing election management. Transparency is so significant that the Carter-Baker report devoted a section to "Election Observation" and recommended election observers should be allowed to "visit any polling station in any state and to view all parts of the election process, including the testing of voting equipment, the processing of absentee ballots, and the vote count."

Yet, this did not happen in 2020. Rather, Democrat officials in the cities identified as critical to defeating President Trump used the consolidation of the counting facilities to exclude Republican poll watchers from the ability to observe the election process while claiming technical compliance with the law.

In Wayne County, Michigan (Detroit), centralized counting was hosted in the TCF Center which had 134 tables of election inspectors in one giant room. State law requires an official from both major political parties be present in the "place" of the counting. This is necessary because the election inspectors complete and cast ballots third parties who are not present.

Such action for third parties occurs if ballots are damaged or for some reason are not able to be read by the optical scanners that tabulate the votes. In such circumstances, inspectors take pristine ballots and fill out the blank ballots consistent with the voter's intent on the damaged or faulty ballot. Having representatives of both parties present ensures the completion of the replacement ballot is accomplished with fidelity to the voter's intent.

At TCF, Republican poll watchers were kept at great distances away from the inspector tables such that they were unable to verify the proper treatment of the ballots. Democrat officials, however, argued their treatment of Republican poll watchers was consistent with state law as a Republican was in the "place" of the counting. Similar arguments were made in all Democrat strongholds with CTCL funding and consolidated counting centers.

Moreover, the egregious breach in ballot chain of custody created by the presence of drop boxes and consolidated counting centers and the exclusion of the representatives of one political party opened the door to the sudden infusion of hundreds of thousands of ballots in these various centers in the early morning hours of November 4.

On October 21, USPS subcontractor and whistleblower Jesse Morgan picked up between 140,000-280,000 completed absentee ballots at a postal facility in Bethpage, New York and was directed to deliver these ballots into Pennsylvania. After experiencing several anomalies on postal procedure, Morgan was ordered to drive his trailer containing the ballots to Lancaster, Pennsylvania and unhook and leave the trailer. When Jesse returned the next day, his trailer and the ballots had disappeared.

Mr. Morgan's account has been corroborated by a dock worker at the Bethpage facility who stated that after filing a complaint that "multiple times" ballots were being shipped from the facility, she was ordered to simply do her job and "get the ballots" to her location.

The dock worker complained because the Bethpage postal facility in question is not able to process or receive such mail. Moreover, there is no logical reason for completed ballots in bulk to be shipped across state lines.

In the early morning hours of November 4, poll watcher Greg Stenstrom was watching from a distance when he observed tens of thousands of ballots entering the counting facility stacked vertically in bulk mail trays, packaged in the same manner as Mr. Morgan described the ballots were packaged in Bethpage.

Mr. Morgan, Mr. Stenstrom, and the Bethpage dock worker join numerous others who have highlighted questionable conduct at postal facilities in New York, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and Michigan.

These late-night and early morning ballot dumps in the Plouffe-identified and CT-CL-funded consolidated counting centers, many after work stoppages, created several statistical anomalies.

Later, data analysis by Rep. Frank Ryan (R-PA) and a team of data analysts revealed that the Pennsylvania election data shows 202,377 more ballots were counted than voters who voted in the 2020 election, a number remarkably similar to the number of ballots on Jesse Morgan's trailer.

Conclusion

Managing elections is a core government function that cannot be trusted to private interests. We must not privatize our elections. Such privatization threatens democracy, silences the voice of the electorate, and undermines election integrity. These concerns should transcend party affiliation and this threat requires a bipartisan response.

Yet the left's shadow government of private interests managing the election in the urban core controlled the following election systems:

- Poll book software and encryption services (Center for Election Innovation and Research (received \$50 million from CTCL)
- Electronic voter registration
- Funding election judges, poll workers and facilities
- Purchase of tabulation machines and equipment
- Purchase, provision, and location of ballot dropboxes
- Funding of consolidated counting centers
- Ballot design, barcode technology, and distribution.

These private interests were funded by and managed by persons with demonstrated hostility to President Trump. The combined efforts, justified by COVID and utilizing blue state official executive orders, friendly and hostile litigation, willful and intentional defiance of state law by local elected officials, and dominantly funded by Mark Zuckerberg opened the door for nefarious players to commit election fraud.

The evidence is overwhelming and available publicly from numerous sources, including www.got-freedom.org/evidence.

The irregularities and radical alteration of election procedures is undeniable. The similarity of these alterations in the urban core of the swing states, all receiving CTCL-Zuckerberg funding, provides strong evidence of coordination and planning. Yet, some of the most compelling evidence remains the defiant statements and conduct of election officials who refuse audits, have ordered destruction of information, and defied legislative subpoenas.

Such defiance underscores the weakness of our election laws, which do not provide for a meaningful review of election official conduct nor the results. In most instances, state election laws place an undue burden on candidates, restrict third-party and independent involvement, and do not apply scientific principles to election recounts or audits. In fact, such election contests and reviews merely validate any fraud, rather than reveal the presence of fraud.

These legal loopholes joined with open defiance of law to create serious doubts the 2020 election reflects the will of the electorate.

Phill Kline, Director of the Amistad Project of the Thomas More Society

Footnotes

- ¹ The Legitimacy and Effect of Private Funding in Federal and State Electoral Processes, pp. 7-10
- ² The Legitimacy and Effect of Private Funding in Federal and State Electoral Processes, p. 6
- ³ Building Confidence in U.S. Elections, 2005
- ⁴ Timeline of Electoral Policy Activities, Issues, and Litigation, pp. 4-19
- ⁵ Timeline of Electoral Policy Activities, Issues, and Litigation, pp. 3-19
- ⁶ Declaration of John McLaughlin: https://got-freedom.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/5-3-Appx3.pdf Plouffe, David, A Citizen's Guide to Defeating Donald Trump [New York: Viking, 2020], p. 81 https://ballotpedia.org/Center_for_Tech_and_Civic_Life_(CTCL)
- 9 Racine CTCL grant approval letter https://got-freedom.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/5-3-Appx3.pdf
- ¹⁰ The Legitimacy and Effect of Private Funding in Federal and State Electoral Processes, Appendix B: https://got-freedom.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/The-Legiti-
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- ¹⁸ https://www.bridgemi.com/michigan-government/whitmer-team-gave-green-light-contact-tracing-firm-dem-ties

