



Another Month of Chaos for the Arizona Senate Audit in Maricopa County

JULY 30, 2021 – RALPH NEAS, THE CENTURY FOUNDATION, AND KEEP OUR REPUBLIC

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On July 1, The Century Foundation and Keep Our Republic issued a [chronology](#) of the Arizona Senate so-called audit of Maricopa County’s presidential election results. The month of July has only provided further evidence of the dysfunction, bias, and misinformation that continue to characterize this initiative. For example:

- Ken Bennett, the Senate liaison to the audit, was [barred](#) from further access to audit premises as punishment for [disclosing information](#) about the third ballot recount to an outside group of election experts. Bennett subsequently [announced he would step down from his liaison position](#), but retains a lower-profile role at the time of this writing.
- In a [hearing](#) held by four Arizona Republican lawmakers, Cyber Ninjas CEO Doug Logan made several “bombshell” claims about the election, which were promptly debunked by [county officials](#) and [fact checkers](#). Nevertheless, Logan’s claims set off a [nationwide wave of disinformation](#).
 - Logan [contended](#) that Maricopa County counted some 74,000 more mail-in ballots than were sent to voters. After an [investigation](#) proved this to be untrue, Logan [conceded](#) that he failed to distinguish between two types of legitimate ballots.
 - Logan also questioned why over 11,000 people were added to the county’s voter rolls after the election, [failing to recognize](#) that voters who cast provisional ballots and are found to be eligible are subsequently added to the rolls.
- Maricopa County Superior Court Judge Michael Kemp [rejected](#) the Arizona Senate argument that Cyber Ninjas’ records are not covered by the state’s public records disclosure law. In doing so, he [stated](#) that it “is difficult to conceive of a case with a more compelling public interest demanding public disclosure and public scrutiny.”
- Twitter [suspended](#) the official Twitter account maintained by the audit, along with other related accounts (including accounts involved in fundraising for the audit), due to violation of Twitter rules regarding “platform manipulation and spam.”

This report can be found online at: <https://tcf.org/content/commentary/another-month-chaos-arizona-senate-audit-maricopa-county/>

- The Associated Press [reported](#) that Arizona election officials have referred only 182 cases of possible ballot fraud out of the 3.4 million votes cast, with only four of these leading to charges. Trump lost in Arizona by [10,457 votes](#).
- News reports revealed efforts shortly after election day by [then-President Trump](#), his attorney [Rudolph Giuliani](#), and Arizona Republican Party Chair [Kelli Ward](#) to influence Maricopa County officials in a manner that could [potentially be in violation](#) of Arizona law. These phone calls, voicemails, and texts include a November 7 request by Ward to the then-chair of the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors, a fellow Republican: “We need you to stop the counting.”
- Though the Senate has so far failed to produce any evidence of wrongdoing, the scope of its investigation seems to be expanding. Senate President Karen Fann [requested](#) communication records from Secretary of State Katie Hobbs for unspecified purposes, and [further subpoenas were issued](#) demanding that Maricopa County (as well as its election equipment contractor, Dominion Voting Systems) turn over, among other items, network routers and detailed voter registration records. Hobbs [described](#) such efforts as a “nebulous fishing expedition.”
- Financial records released by Cyber Ninjas reveal that [\\$5.7 million](#), the vast majority of the audit’s funding, has been provided by “#StoptheSteal” groups that peddle conspiracy theories about the 2020 election, reflecting the inherent intent underlying the Arizona Senate’s efforts.

In short, another typical month of dysfunction and bias for the audit and its enablers.

Authors

Ralph Neas is currently special counsel on voting rights for The Century Foundation; former executive director of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, the “Lobbying Arm of the Civil Rights Movement”; president and CEO of People For the American Way; chief legislative assistant to Republican senators Edward W. Brooke and David Durenberger; taught at the University of Chicago Law School, Georgetown University Law Center, and Harvard University’s Institute of Politics; graduate of the University of Notre Dame and the University of Chicago Law School.

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Keep Our Republic is a non-partisan civic action organization dedicated to protecting a republic of laws and strengthening the checks and balances of our democratic system.