

# Rigged: How Zuckerberg and the Left Bought an Election

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**THE VOTER INTEGRITY PROJECT**

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## Background

Contrary to popular belief, Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook (now Meta) did not form the nonprofit group Center for Tech and Civic Life (CTCL). Tiana Epps-Johnson, Donny Bridges, and Whitney May – all left-wing activists who worked for the Democratic Party – founded it in 2012 and received tax-exempt status in 2015. Nevertheless, Zuckerberg made significant donations to the CTCL in 2020 and these affected the outcome of the General Election across the country.

Mark Zuckerberg and his wife Priscilla Chan donated well over \$350 million to CTCL in the months leading up to the 2020 General Election. These funds made their way to 2,448 election offices throughout the United States in the form of grants to help these offices hire more staff, purchase ballot drop boxes, buy mail-in ballot processing machinery, and other measures they deemed necessary to properly handle the election amid the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular the CTCL targeted Michigan, Wisconsin, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, Illinois and Texas.<sup>1</sup> When CTCL asked its recipients how they would spend their grants before the election, almost 2,000 indicated they would use the funds to upgrade their mail-in ballot processing capabilities while 1,500 indicated they would use the money for election equipment.<sup>2</sup> Notably, none mentioned cleaning up state or county voter rolls or enhancing election security.

## Analysis

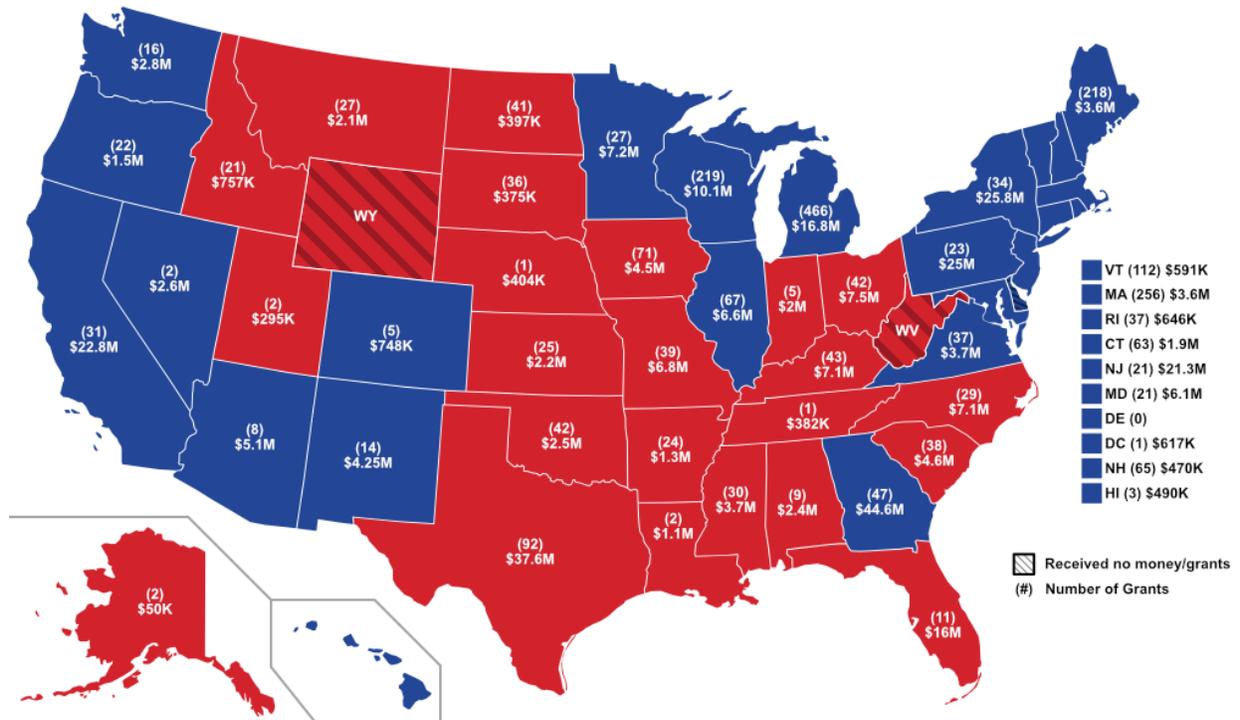
The following map reveals the number of grants awarded to each state and nominee who got the electoral votes (with Trump states being red and Biden states being blue):<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20201121080557/https://www.techandcivicliflife.org/grant-awards/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.techandcivicliflife.org/grant-update-november/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1E7P3owIO6UlpMY1GaeE8nJVw2x6Ee-iI9d37hEEr5ZA/edit#gid=1993755695>



Out of 2,448 CTCL grants, states Biden won received 1,815 (74.14%) while Trump states received 633 (25.86%). In other words, for every grant that went to a state Trump won, 2.87 grants went to states that gave Biden a win. A similar ratio of 2.75 to 1 appears in the average of grants given; on average Trump-winning states got 27.52 grants vs. 75.63 grants in Biden states.

The Capital Research Center (CRC) published extensive reports analyzing CTCL’s COVID-19 elections grants in Virginia, North Carolina, Michigan, Wisconsin, Nevada, Arizona, Texas, Pennsylvania, and Georgia. While CTCL did not violate any election laws by funding county elections offices, many of its grants targeted key Democrat-leaning counties and cities in battleground states. Although CTCL sent grants to counties that Republican incumbent Donald Trump won in these states, the most significant grants went to Biden counties such as Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and the greater Atlanta metropolitan area.<sup>4</sup>

One of the primary items that CTCL funded was ballot drop boxes, purportedly due to safety issues concerning the COVID-19 pandemic.

CRC published an analysis of CTCL’s funding in December 2021. Without exception, Democrat counties were awarded larger grants and received their funds earlier.<sup>5</sup>

CTCL grants to Pennsylvania counties that Trump won averaged \$0.57 per capita and \$3.11 per capita in counties Biden won. CTCL grants to counties in Texas that Trump won averaged \$0.55 per capita and \$3.22 per capita in counties Biden won (of the \$33.5 million in discovered grants). CTCL grants to counties in North Carolina that Trump won averaged \$0.73 per capita and \$1.46

<sup>4</sup> <https://capitalresearch.org/article/mark-zuckerberg-meddled-in-battleground-state-elections-heres-how/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://broadandliberty.com/2021/06/07/blue-southeast-pa-counties-had-head-start-on-election-grants/>

per capita in counties Biden won (of the \$5.4 million in discovered grants). CTCL grants to counties in Georgia that Trump won averaged \$4.28 per capita and \$5.06 per capita in counties Biden won (of the \$27.8 million in discovered grants). CTCL grants to counties in Arizona that Trump won averaged \$1.29 per capita and \$5.83 per capita in counties Biden won (of the \$27.8 million in discovered grants).<sup>6</sup>

The ten largest recipients of CTCL grants in Michigan - 9 Biden counties and 1 Trump - have the candidate who won them and the grant amounts where they went to below:<sup>7</sup>

- Detroit (Biden): \$3,512,000
- Flint (Biden): \$475,625
- Lansing (Biden): \$443,742
- Muskegon (Biden): \$433,580
- Ann Arbor (Biden): \$417,000
- Pontiac (Biden): \$405,564
- Saginaw (Biden): \$402,878
- Grand Rapids (Biden): \$280,000
- Kalamazoo (Biden): \$218,869
- Eastpointe (Trump): \$204,000

The six largest recipients of CTCL grants in Wisconsin - 3 Biden counties and 3 Trump - have the candidate who won them and the grant amounts where they went to below:<sup>8</sup>

- Milwaukee (Milwaukee County; Biden): \$2,154,500
- Madison (Dane County; Biden): \$1,271,788
- Green Bay (Brown County; Trump): \$1,093,400
- Racine (Racine County; Trump): \$942,100
- Kenosha (Kenosha County; Trump): \$862,779
- Janesville (Rock County; Biden): \$183,292

The ten largest CTCL grants in Texas - 8 Biden counties and 2 Trump - have the candidate who won them and the grant amounts where they went to below:<sup>9</sup>

- Dallas (Biden): \$15,130,433
- Harris (Biden): \$9,600,000
- Webb (Biden): \$2,820,960
- Bexar (Biden): \$1,900,000
- Cameron (Biden): \$1,853,729
- Travis (Biden): \$1,144,709
- Hays (Biden): \$289,075
- Williamson (Biden): \$263,644
- Ellis (Trump): \$86,424
- Parker (Trump): \$54,072

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/center-for-tech-and-civic-life/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://capitalresearch.org/app/uploads/CTCL-Grants-2020-MI-WI.xlsx>

<sup>8</sup> <https://capitalresearch.org/app/uploads/CTCL-Grants-2020-MI-WI.xlsx>

<sup>9</sup> <https://capitalresearch.org/app/uploads/CTCL-Grants-TX.xlsx>

The ten largest CTCL grants in North Carolina - 5 Biden counties, 4 Trump, and 1 neutral entity - have the candidate who won them and the grant amounts where they went to below:<sup>10</sup>

- Durham (Biden): \$1,466,840
- Wake (Biden): \$1 million
- North Carolina Department of State: \$1 million
- Guilford (Biden): \$366,000
- Orange (Biden): \$292,255
- Buncombe (Biden): \$135,881
- Johnston (Trump): \$112,054
- Alamance (Trump): \$101,061
- Iredell (Trump): \$96,648
- Catawba (Trump): \$91,068

The top ten recipients of CTCL funding in Georgia - 9 Biden counties and 1 Trump - have the winner and grant amount below:<sup>11</sup>

- Fulton (Biden): \$6 million
- Cobb (Biden): \$5.6 million
- Gwinnett (Biden): \$4.1 million
- DeKalb (Biden): \$4 million
- Clayton (Biden): \$3,060,197
- Douglas (Biden): \$1,662,490
- Cherokee (Trump): \$611,293
- Macon-Bibb (Biden): \$557,000
- Henry (Biden): \$487,793
- Muscogee (Biden): \$412,245

All known recipients of CTCL funding in Arizona - 3 Biden counties and 2 Trump - have the winner and grant amount below:<sup>12</sup>

- Maricopa (Biden): \$2,995,921
- Pinal (Trump): \$806,042
- Coconino (Biden): \$614,692
- Apache (Biden): \$593,203
- La Paz (Trump): \$17,531

In Nevada the only 2 counties to receive CTCL funding were Clark (which includes Las Vegas) and Washoe (which includes Reno). These were the only two that Biden won in 2020. These accounted for 649,980 votes, or 92.4% of all his votes statewide.<sup>13</sup>

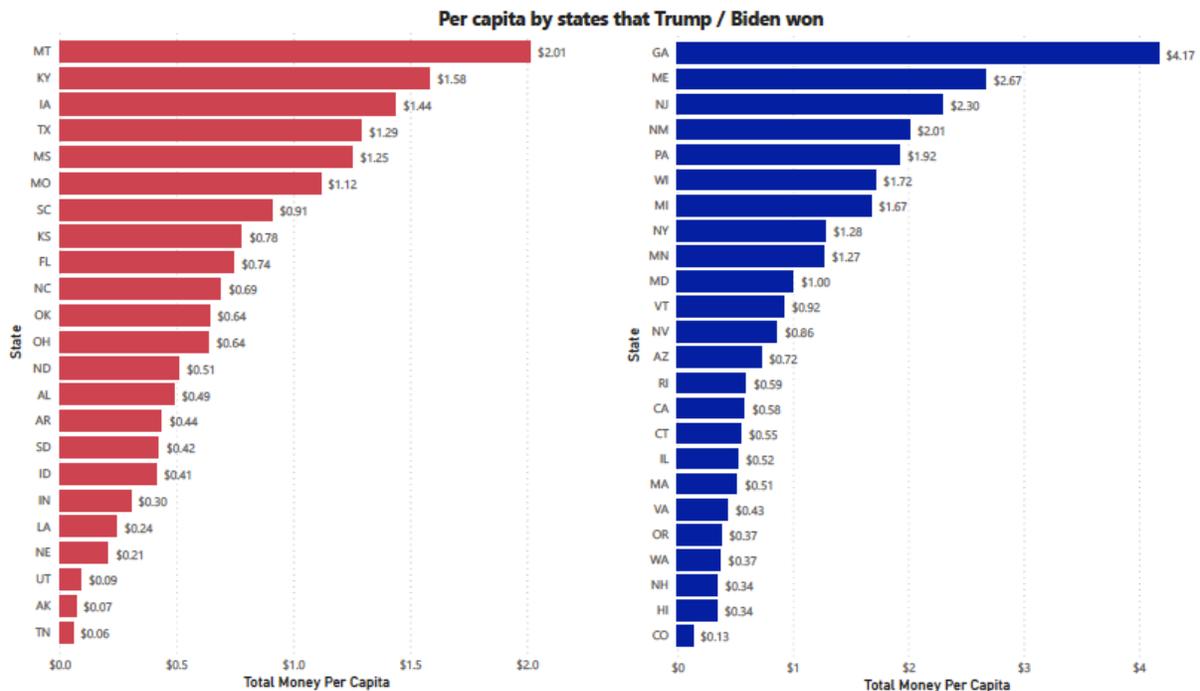
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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.influencewatch.org/app/uploads/2021/06/CTCL-2020-Grants-NC-v2-all-counties.xlsx>

<sup>11</sup> <https://capitalresearch.org/article/update-data-set-for-ctcl-grants-to-georgia-counties/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://capitalresearch.org/article/what-is-mark-zuckerbergs-election-money-doing-in-georgia/>

<sup>13</sup> <https://capitalresearch.org/article/how-ctcl-helped-biden-in-arizona-and-nevada/>



## Why It Matters

Private organizations are not bound by the same restrictions as public employees and institutions. Suppose a company targeted certain counties or states through a nonprofit purporting to promote equity and assistance in election. This allows them to circumvent traditional political fundraising laws and get their candidate to win with little to no detection using plausible deniability.

## Recent Rulings Reflect Our Findings

After a complaint filed by the Wisconsin Institute for Law and Liberty (WILL), a Wisconsin judge, Waukesha County Circuit Court Judge Michael Bohren, issued a summary judgment that ballot harvesting and drop boxes were illegal under state law.<sup>14 15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> <https://will-law.org/waukesha-judge-rules-absentee-ballot-drop-boxes-ballot-harvesting-illegal-under-state-law/>

<sup>15</sup> <https://will-law.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Tiegan-v-WEC-Complaint-FINAL60.pdf>

Earlier, the Wisconsin Supreme Court ruled that COVID-19 did not qualify under the legal definition of "indefinitely confined" status, thus rendering such claims illegal.<sup>16</sup> As described in our Wisconsin Report, LAA analyzed a large sample of Wisconsin voters who had illegally claimed indefinitely confined voter status and identified 157,000 illegal votes, nearly eight times the margin of victory.<sup>17</sup> Wisconsin never should have certified its election results.

In addition to our work, at least two rulings now confirm that illegally cast ballots exceeded the margin of victory, whether from false "indefinitely confined" votes or drop box votes. These avenues would not have been possible without outside influence and private funding from entities such as the CTCL.

## Recent Legislation

States are beginning to pass legislation that addresses the issue of private election funding. For example, Arizona passed H.B. 2569, which made taking donations from individuals or private entities illegal.<sup>18</sup> Likewise, similar acts signed into law include: Arkansas with H 1866 (Act 961),<sup>19</sup> Florida with S.B. 90,<sup>20</sup> Georgia with S.B. 202,<sup>21</sup> Idaho with S.B. 1168,<sup>22</sup> Kansas with H.B. 2183<sup>23</sup> and H.B. 2332,<sup>24</sup> North Dakota with H.B. 1256,<sup>25</sup> Ohio with H.B. 110,<sup>26</sup> and Tennessee with H.B.0966-S.B.1534.<sup>27</sup>

After reviewing FL S.B. 90, we graded it a D overall. However, in terms of LAA's Election Integrity Goal 6, Equitable Distribution of Private Funds, the bill earned an A+. To date, FL S.B. 90 is the only bill that has received an A+ in any area.<sup>28</sup> While the bill bans private funds, it adheres to the principle of equal distribution in that election dollars are disbursed to all counties per capita across the state, therefore remaining both equal and free from outside influence.

Pennsylvania came close with H.B. 1300, which provided for the Secretary of State to receive private funding and distribute it equally across the counties of Pennsylvania under the oversight of the Election Law Advisory Board. The bill passed both houses but, unfortunately, Governor

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<sup>16</sup> <https://www.wicourts.gov/sc/opinion/DisplayDocument.pdf?content=pdf&seqNo=315283>

<sup>17</sup> <https://lookaheadamerica.org/wisconsinreport/>

<sup>18</sup> <https://legiscan.com/AZ/text/HB2569/2021>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.arkleg.state.ar.us/Acts/FTPDocument?path=%2FACTS%2F2021R%2FPublic%2F&file=961.pdf&ddBienniumSession=2021%2F2021R>

<sup>20</sup> <https://flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2021/90/BillText/er/PDF>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.legis.ga.gov/api/legislation/document/20212022/201498>

<sup>22</sup> <https://legislature.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/sessioninfo/2021/legislation/S1168.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> [http://www.kslegislature.org/li/b2021\\_22/measures/documents/hb2183\\_enrolled.pdf](http://www.kslegislature.org/li/b2021_22/measures/documents/hb2183_enrolled.pdf)

<sup>24</sup> [http://kslegislature.org/li/b2021\\_22/measures/documents/hb2332\\_enrolled.pdf](http://kslegislature.org/li/b2021_22/measures/documents/hb2332_enrolled.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.legis.nd.gov/assembly/67-2021/bill-actions/ba1256.html>

<sup>26</sup> <https://search->

[prod.lis.state.oh.us/solarapi/v1/general\\_assembly\\_134/bills/hb110/EN/07/hb110\\_07\\_EN?format=pdf](prod.lis.state.oh.us/solarapi/v1/general_assembly_134/bills/hb110/EN/07/hb110_07_EN?format=pdf)

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.capitol.tn.gov/Bills/112/Fiscal/HB0966.pdf>

<sup>28</sup> <https://lookaheadamerica.org/sb90/>

Tom Wolf vetoed it.<sup>29</sup> Despite its other flaws, LAA found one of H.B. 1300's strengths lay in its applicability to our Election Integrity Goal #6.<sup>30</sup>

## Solutions

While these recent laws and rulings will not change the past, they can help ensure election integrity issues will not recur in many states – at least not to the same degree as in the hotly contested 2020 General Election.

The problem with these rulings is that they only affect Wisconsin. Furthermore, the verdict on drop boxes appears to be moving to appeals and will likely end up before the Wisconsin Supreme Court.<sup>31</sup> At best, this only patches the dam. Neither ruling strikes at the heart of the issue, which is private organizations such as CTCL intentionally interfering with elections.

There is somewhat better news on the legislation aspect, but much work remains. Only 9 out of 50 states have tackled this issue head-on through legislation. For example, out of 6 contested states in the 2020 General Election, only Arizona and Georgia have passed laws banning outside funding. Similarly, out of 4 swing states, North Carolina, Iowa, New Hampshire and Florida, only 2 have passed legislation to block outside funding or at least equitable distribution. This leaves 4 of the 6 contested states and 6 of the 10 swing states vulnerable.

Our six integrity points do address this and other concerns, particularly election integrity objective #6: Equitable Distribution of Private Contributions to Election Operations.<sup>32</sup>

There are two paths to achieving Goal #6. The option chosen by the 9 states who passed election integrity legislation is to prohibit the use of all private funds for any election-related expenses. A template for this option might include the following language (this can be modified as needed to amend state-specific bills):

No agency or state or local official responsible for conducting elections, including, but not limited to, a supervisor of elections, may solicit, accept, use, or dispose of any donation in the form of money, grants, property, or personal services from an individual or a nongovernmental entity for the purpose of funding election-related expenses or voter education, voter outreach, or registration programs. This section does not prohibit the donation and acceptance of space to be used for a polling room or an early voting site.

The second path would be somewhat more permissible, allowing for equal distribution of funds per capita across all state counties. A template for this avenue might include the following (again, this can be modified as needed to amend state specific bills):

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<sup>29</sup> <https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/billInfo/billInfo.cfm?sYear=2021&sInd=0&body=H&type=B&bn=1300>

<sup>30</sup> [https://14oqrc3mu9t3dudv5t3o92h75-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/LAA\\_Final\\_PA1300.pdf](https://14oqrc3mu9t3dudv5t3o92h75-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/LAA_Final_PA1300.pdf)

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.jsonline.com/story/news/politics/2022/01/21/wisconsin-judge-keeps-place-ruling-bars-ballot-drop-boxes/6584338001/>

<sup>32</sup> <https://lookaheadamerica.org/integrity/>

A nongovernmental entity who wishes to donate money, grants, property or personal services for the purposes of funding election-related expenses or voter education, voter outreach, or registration programs must donate to every voting district state-wide in a formula that would give equal funds to each district per voter who was registered at the time of the most recent general election. The donating entity must file a request with the secretary of state indicating the amount and type of proposed donation or grant. The secretary of state must then allocate the expenses equally across the population of registered voters. The secretary of state shall make public a report naming the individual or nongovernmental agency, the amount, type and intended use of the funds, and the exact amount allocated to each voting district.

We have drafted templates that our State Volunteer Coordinators will use to gather state specific data and create actionable intelligence to help state senators and representatives in all 50 states draft legislation that will protect and strengthen election integrity.

## How to Help

Only when more people get involved will meaningful, impactful change occur. That's how Look Ahead America will positively impact election reform.

Support Look Ahead America by signing up to volunteer at <https://www.lookaheadamerica.org/volunteer>.

Make a tax-deductible contribution at <https://www.lookaheadamerica.org/donate>.

You can also join our Discord community server at <https://discord.gg/lookaheadamerica>.

## Acknowledgements

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