

Election integrity watchdog lodges formal complaint against Kenosha

Local leaders allege city was part of private scheme to unlawfully alter election rules

KENOSHA, WISCONSIN, UNITED STATES, May 3, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Amistad Project, the leading election integrity watchdog, filed a complaint today with the Wisconsin Election Commission (WEC) against the City of Kenosha on behalf of five residents, including a former Alderman and several long-time poll workers with decades of experience helping to run the city's elections.

Documents obtained under the Wisconsin Open Records Act confirm that Kenosha received \$10,000 from the left-leaning Center for Tech and Civic Life (CTCL) as an enticement to join four other Wisconsin cities – Racine, Madison, Milwaukee, and Green Bay – in requesting substantial election funding from CTCL. The so-called “Wisconsin 5” ultimately received about \$6.3 million, of which \$657,000 went to Kenosha, without approval from either the legislature or the WEC.

“In order to qualify for the funding, Kenosha and the other cities had to accept a long list of conditions, with CTCL reserving the right to recoup the money if those conditions were not followed,” said Amistad Project attorney Erick Kaardal. “This created a two-tiered election system, with one set of rules for the ‘Wisconsin 5’ and another set of rules for the rest of the state.”

Although the funding was ostensibly intended to help the cities safely conduct their elections in the midst of the COVID pandemic, many of the conditions had nothing to do with public health, such as employing “voter navigators” to help voters “complete their ballots” and targeting African American and Hispanic residents for special outreach and assistance. In addition, the CTCL grants required the cities to “encourage and increase absentee voting by mail” – a direct violation of Wisconsin law, which explicitly seeks to prevent “overzealous solicitation of absent electors who may prefer not to participate in an election.”

“Government targeting a favored demographic to turn out the vote for a particular candidate is the opposite side of the same coin as government targeting a demographic to suppress the vote to favor a candidate,” explained Phill Kline, Director of The Amistad Project of The Thomas More Society. “CTCL’s and Zuckerberg’s grant demands opened the door for the involvement of private activists from partisan groups to run the election rather than objective government election officials,” Kline said. “The result was a shocking lack of transparency and partisanship that undermined public faith in the election process.”

To help restore public confidence, The Amistad Project is calling on the WEC to disallow unauthorized private funding in future elections, and demanding that the "Wisconsin 5" and their private partners disclose all communications they had regarding the 2020 elections.

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Jillian Anderson
ProActive
media@proactivecommunications.com

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