

Subject: RE: Public Records Request (WI-REP-21-0924)
Date: Tuesday, August 10, 2021 at 4:57:28 PM Eastern Daylight Time
From: Redell, Carol
To: Olivia Bravo
CC: Rep.Sanfelippo, Blazel, Ted
Attachments: ASM15 Sanfelippo - 7.15.2021 - AO 0924.zip

EXTERNAL SENDER

Olivia Bravo
American Oversight
olivia.bravo@americanoversight.org

Dear Ms. Bravo:

Open records requests are processed through the Assembly Chief Clerk's office for billing purposes only. You submitted an open records request to Representative Sanfelippo. The records are being provided in electronic format and, thus, there is no charge for any location or reproduction costs. Accordingly, all records that are responsive to your request are attached to this email.

Carol Redell
Office of the Assembly Chief Clerk
17 West Main Street, Suite 401
Madison, Wisconsin 53703
608.266.1501
carol.redell@legis.wi.gov

From: AO Records <records@americanoversight.org>
Sent: Thursday, July 15, 2021 12:06 PM
To: Rep.Sanfelippo <Rep.Sanfelippo@legis.wisconsin.gov>
Subject: Public Records Request (WI-REP-21-0924)

Dear Public Records Custodian:

Please find attached a request for records under Wisconsin's public records law.

Sincerely,

--

Olivia Bravo
Paralegal
American Oversight
records@americanoversight.org
www.americanoversight.org | @weareoversight

PRR: WI-REP-21-0924

COMMON SENSE WISCONSIN ELECTION UNIFORMITY INITIATIVE

“Elections belong to the people.”

~~ Abraham Lincoln



Election fairness and uniformity is an absolute and fundamental right. As such, it deserves a place in the Wisconsin Constitution.

Common Sense Wisconsin is calling on the Legislature and all 72 of Wisconsin counties to give our citizens an opportunity to vote on securing election uniformity a place in our Constitution. If uniformity is worthy of constitutional protection for taxation and form or government, then certainly protecting the vote – arguably the most fundamental of all rights – is also worthy.

By proposing a constitutional amendment, the Legislature will take away the ability of the Governor to veto the measure and will put the matter directly into the hands of Wisconsin voters. It will also protect Wisconsin against current efforts in Congress to take voting rights away from the states and federalize elections.

One thing all Wisconsinites can agree on is that elections must be conducted in a fair and equitable manner, that all voters are treated equally, and that all votes are counted equally. For this to be reality, four fundamental principles are essential:

1. Election laws must be uniform throughout the state. Voters must be treated the same and votes must be counted uniformly, whether they are in Superior or South Milwaukee, Madison or Minocqua;
2. Election laws must be reliable and predictable. Last minute changes and altering of the rules breeds confusion among voters and distrust in the system;
3. The administration of elections must be carried out in a transparent manner that does not favor any political party over another. Elections are not held for Democrats or Republicans – they are held for we, the people;
4. The funding and administration of elections cannot be turned over to private organizations.

It is undisputed that these principles were compromised in 2020.

- It is undisputed that absentee ballots were processed differently from jurisdiction to jurisdiction and those differences were significant. For example, the precisely same absentee ballot would have been counted in some jurisdictions while being rejected in others. Common Sense says that is not fair or equitable to all Wisconsin voters.
- It is undisputed that the opportunity to vote early (“in person absentee”) differed massively based upon where a voter lived in the state. Common Sense says that all voters should have as fair and equitable access to voting.
- It is undisputed that more than 6 million dollars of out-of-state corporate money was funneled into a handful of big Wisconsin cities for public election operations. Worse yet, out of state operatives from these shadowy groups went into these cities and helped run the elections (and actually handled ballots). Whether it is a left leaning or a right leaning group, outside organizations should never be given power to administer elections.
- It is undisputed that the basic election rules for the 2020 election were in a constant state of flux and chaos. Some officials, including the Governor of Wisconsin, used COVID as an excuse to ignore state law or change the rules to favor one political party over the others.

- The mayor of Milwaukee shut down all but 5 voting stations in his city in a brazen attempt to aide his own campaign.
- Governor Evers tried to shut down in-person voting altogether. Less than 24 hours before the polls opened, Evers unilaterally tried to disallow in-person voting in a naked attempt to suppress the vote. Just days before Evers declared he had no such power.
- It is undisputed that last-minute attempts to change the rules via the courts contribute to the confusion. Common Sense says that voters will have far more trust in elections when the basic rules are set well in advance and politicians, bureaucrats, and courts are prohibited from making last minute changes (which invariably are sought to bring last-minute advantage to one side or the other).

These facts are not disputed, and clearly demonstrate Wisconsin needs to take action to be sure that every voter and every ballot is treated fairly and uniformly. It is also becoming apparent that the current Governor will obstruct attempts to enact common sense reform via the statutory process.

Wisconsin citizens' right of uniformity is already constitutionally protected for taxation (Article VIII, Section 1), for town government (Article IV, Section 23), and for the enactment of general laws (Article IV, Section 32).

Common Sense Wisconsin is calling for the following:

1. The current Legislature should immediately draft and introduce the **Elections Equity and Uniformity Amendment**, hold hearings, and proceed to first passage. The amendment should include provisions to ensure the four fundamental principles previously outlined are met.
2. Regardless of the action or inaction in Madison, every Wisconsin county should place on its November 2022 ballot an advisory referendum asking if the Elections Equity and Uniformity Amendment should be placed on a statewide ballot. To ensure uniformity across the state, we propose the following language for counties:

Question: Should the Wisconsin Legislature prepare and place on the statewide ballot a Constitutional Amendment requiring that election administration, access to ballots, and counting of ballots be as nearly uniform as practicable?

3. The subsequent Legislature should proceed to final passage immediately upon convening and place the measure on a statewide ballot for approval by the people of Wisconsin.



Common Sense Wisconsin is an advocacy group of Wisconsin citizens committed to advancing conservative solutions that can solve real world problems and help build a better and stronger Wisconsin for everyone. We are committed to bringing practical thinking and actionable solutions to issues that far too many only talk about.

Common Sense will be releasing a series of such initiatives and proposals centered around education, jobs and economic development that properly identifies government's role and responsibilities, and then meets those responsibilities in an efficient and effective way.

For more information: CommonSenseWisconsin.org

From: Milan Jovanovich <milan.jov15@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, July 5, 2021, 10:27 PM

To: "Sen.Kooyenga" <Sen.Kooyenga@legis.wisconsin.gov>; Joe Sanfelippo <Joe.Sanfelippo@legis.wisconsin.gov>

Subject: Election Audit

Happy Independence Day to you and your families.

Can anyone shed any light as to where Wisconsin is on performing an audit for the last election?

Thank you,

Milan Jovanovich
milan.jov15@gmail.com
(414) 378-8277

From: joey h <joeminocqua@msn.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 24, 2021, 11:08 AM
To: "Rep.Sanfelippo@legis.wisconsin.gov" <Rep.Sanfelippo@legis.wisconsin.gov>;
"joe.sanfelippo@legis.wisconsin.gov" <joe.sanfelippo@legis.wisconsin.gov>
Subject: elections integrity proposal
Attachments: BACKGROUNDER CSW Election Uniformity Initiative.pdf

I just spoke with the Representative on the phone and told him I would share this with him at his office email.

Thanks. I hope you all are doing well.

Joe



ROBIN J. VOS

SPEAKER OF THE WISCONSIN STATE ASSEMBLY



ENCOURAGING A RETURN TO WORK



WISCONSIN ASSEMBLY
GOP

Workforce Recovery Bill Passes Legislature

The [bill](#) I co-authored to help address the current worker shortage in Wisconsin passed the Legislature. It will encourage unemployed individuals to return-to-work to make sure the state's economy continues to grow. It ends Wisconsin's participation in federal unemployment compensation enhancement programs which actually dis-incentivize people from returning to work.

The shortage of workers has reached a crisis point for many employers in our state. Numerous businesses are raising wages and offering sign-on bonuses but are still unable to find enough people to meet demand. They are competing with the government for workers.

The federal benefit supplement provides an additional \$300 per week on top of state benefits and extends the length of eligibility beyond the normal 26 weeks. The enhancements aren't set to expire until September 2021.

The bill also ensures that individuals who file for Unemployment Insurance are actively searching for a job to be eligible to collect benefits. The governor waived that requirement last year through an emergency rule.

Twenty five other states have moved to end the additional federal payments and at least 36 have reinstated requirements that those receiving benefits have to look for work. Businesses can't wait until September for workers to come off the sidelines. They need help now.

According to an [SR Poll Results](#) report, 71 percent of voters favor ending the enhanced federal unemployment payments. This includes 67 percent of independents and 59 percent of Democrats. If the legislation is signed by Governor Evers, the Wisconsin unemployment compensation program will return to pre-pandemic operations and provide an ongoing safety net for those who truly need it.





Borrowing Less - Investing More

	Governor	Republicans
State Highway Program	\$67 million	Over \$130 Million ✓
Local Road Improvement Program	\$75 Million	\$100 Million ✓
New Bonding	Over \$500 Million!	Less Than \$225 Million ✓

Source: Executive Budget Proposal & LFB Publications

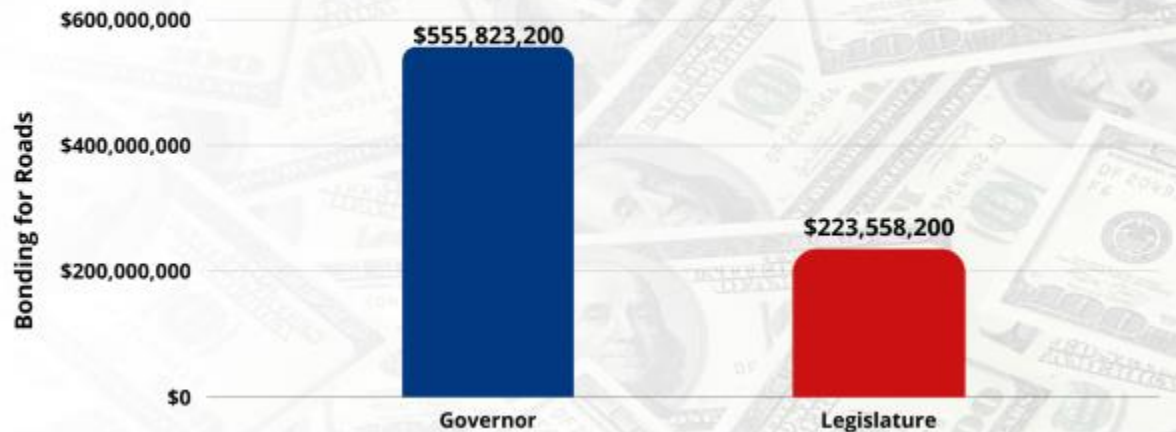
Infrastructure - Borrowing Less, Investing More

This week, the Joint Finance Committee advanced measures that will invest more into vital infrastructure while borrowing significantly less money than what the governor proposed for the state budget. In fact, we are looking to have the lowest amount of new bonding for transportation in over 20 years.

We are also making investments in two major pieces of critical emergency response and public safety infrastructure in need of updating and rebuilding. The Wisconsin Interoperable System for Communications (WISCOM) is a statewide trunked radio network which enables first responders from different jurisdictions to communicate with each other during daily operations, natural disasters, and large-scale events.

Also, Next Generation 911 allows for better communication with the individual calling 911 including accurate location detection, texting, video messaging, telematics capabilities, and enhanced communication for deaf and hard of hearing individuals.

Gov. Evers Proposed TWICE as much Borrowing for Wisconsin's Roads



Source: Executive Budget Proposal & LFB Publications



Looking Ahead to America's 250th Anniversary

I had the honor to author [Assembly Bill 388](#), which creates a commission for the upcoming celebration of the United States Semiquincentennial. Our founding fathers established the United States with the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776. Our country will be celebrating its 250th anniversary in 2026.

To commemorate this significant milestone, Congress passed legislation in 2016 creating the U.S. Semiquincentennial. Since then, more than a quarter of states have introduced or passed legislation or an executive order establishing a 250th anniversary organization.

The establishment of this commission will provide the opportunity for citizens across Wisconsin to be part of a national celebration of our country's founding. We need to remember the historic events that have occurred and honor the brave men and women who have stood up for the core values of our country that have allowed us the liberty and freedoms we enjoy today.

The bill creates a commission with a member makeup that is similar to the 100th Anniversary State Capitol Commemorative Commission. The commission would be responsible for

planning, preparing and implementing programs and events that highlight the founding of the United States and recognize Wisconsin's role and impact in the nation's past, present and future.

Each state has the unique opportunity to invite its citizens, communities and state and local governments to join in celebrating the founding of our great country and the contributions their state has made to move our country forward.

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From: Gail M <gmonti1@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Saturday, May 29, 2021, 9:55 PM
Cc: "Sen.Kooyenga" <sen.kooyenga@legis.wisconsin.gov>; "Rep.Sanfelippo" <rep.sanfelippo@legis.wisconsin.gov>
Subject: Overseeing Elections

A Bill was not needed to execute your constitutional duty of overseeing all elections and setting the times, places, and manner of elections. Your authority is found in the US constitution Article 1, Section 4, Clause 1: The Times, Places and Manner of holding Elections for Senators and Representatives, shall be prescribed in each State by the Legislature thereof. I am strongly urging the Senate to issue subpoenas for all ballots, voting machines, system files, etc used in the November election in Wisconsin for an independent forensic audit. Wisconsin, like most states, uses the Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure to outline the duties of state legislatures. It reads, "A legislative body or a committee, when acting within the scope of its authority to conduct an investigation, may summon and examine witnesses, require the production of and examine books, records and papers." (Page 292, Sec. 802, Summons, Subpoenas and Warrants, 1). This section also states, "When a subpoena duces tecum has been issued under statutory authority showing that the purpose of the examination was within the scope of the inquiry authorize, the court cannot cancel the subpoena nor enjoin the issuance of any further subpoena" (Page 292, Sec. 802, Summons, Subpoenas and Warrants, 6). The Senate has legal authority to conduct their own legislative investigation via subpoenas of all ballots, tabulators, routers, passwords, machines, records, etc. All cases where counties, cities, towns challenged the Senate's authority have ended in judges denying their challenges. This proved true in Arizona; with Judge Timothy Thomason's ruling: "The Court finds that that Subpoenas are legal and enforceable. There is no question that the Senators have the power to issue legislative subpoenas. The Subpoenas comply with the statutory requirements for legislative subpoenas. The Senate also has broad constitutional power to oversee elections. The Arizona legislature clearly has the power to investigate and examine election reform matters. Accordingly, the Senators have the power to subpoena material as part of an inquiry into election reform measures. As such, the Subpoenas have a proper legislative purpose. The Subpoenas also do not violate separation of powers principles. Production of the subpoenaed materials would not violate confidentiality laws." With the numerous incidents that occurred in Wisconsin during the November 2020 general election, it is crucial the Legislature audits the whole state to ensure this was not a statewide issue that potentially affected all races. Only legal votes should be counted. Thank you for your consideration.

Gail Montgomery Jeske, 3002 S 96th St., West Allis, WI 53227

From: jamesmdraws@aol.com
Sent: Sunday, June 13, 2021, 9:43 AM
To: "Rep.Vos@legis.wisconsin.gov" <Rep.Vos@legis.wisconsin.gov>
Subject: Re: Investing in Wisconsin's Infrastructure

I suspect "EVERYTHING" the Republican majority legislature puts forward will be vetoed by Evers' not because they are in any way not good or not valid but ONLY because they are not part of his demonic democRAT agenda to destroy America one state at a time. Show us a list of the bills passed by the legislature and the bills Evers has vetoed PLEASE. I know what the list will look like. That is why the Wisconsin voters need to see for themselves what Evers has accomplished with his agenda controlled by the DNC directly from D.C. We cannot wait any longer to start impeachment or recall procedures against this person and his administration.

And maybe calling for a forensic audit of the 2016 election will prove that it too was fraudulent primarily due to the late night/early morning ballot dumps in Milwaukee, Dane, Brown and Racine counties. I will never believe that Scott Walker was defeated fairly using the democRAT and MSM talking point that it was "disgruntled suburban women" that made the difference. I know enough about area politics to know that is pure B.S. Go back and check, especially in Milwaukee and Dane counties. Enough of this nonsense. **The 2020 election was not the first election blatantly stolen by the democRAT communist party.**

-----Original Message-----
From: Rep. Vos <Rep.Vos@legis.wisconsin.gov>
To: Jamesmdraws <jamesmdraws@aol.com>
Sent: Sat, Jun 12, 2021 1:26 am
Subject: Investing in Wisconsin's Infrastructure



ROBIN J. VOS
SPEAKER OF THE WISCONSIN STATE ASSEMBLY



Workforce Recovery Bill Passes Legislature

The [bill](#) I co-authored to help address the current worker shortage in Wisconsin passed the Legislature. It will encourage unemployed individuals to return-to-work to make sure the state's economy continues to grow. It ends Wisconsin's participation in federal unemployment compensation enhancement programs which actually dis-incentivize people from returning to work.

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compensation program will return to pre-pandemic operations and provide an ongoing safety net for those who truly need it.



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<i>New Bonding</i>	Over \$500 Million!	Less Than \$225 Million ✓

Source: Executive Budget Proposal & LFB Publications

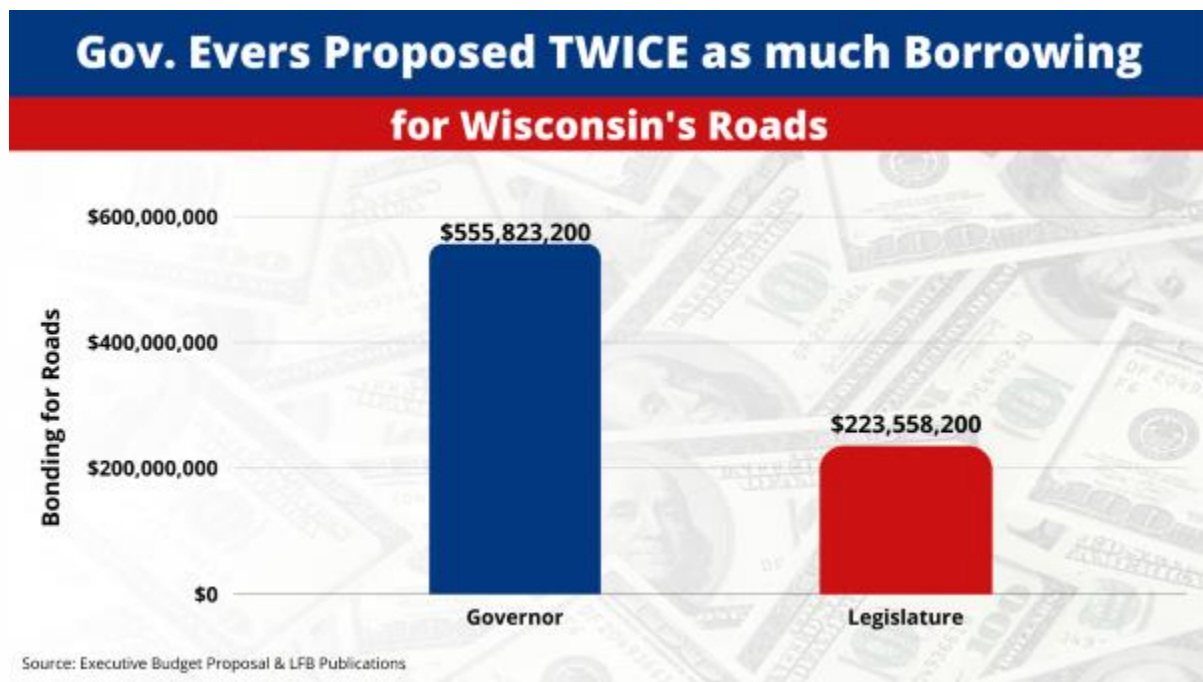
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the state budget. In fact, we are looking to have the lowest amount of new bonding for transportation in over 20 years.

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United States with the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776. Our country will be celebrating its 250th anniversary in 2026.

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From: Marie <mrajkovacz@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 6, 2021, 12:09 AM
To: Rep.Sanfelippo@legis.wisconsin.gov
Subject: Resource information to Assist...

Marie Rajkovacz
2490S. Graylog Lane
New Berlin, WI 53151
mrajkovacz@gmail.com
262-225-1133
July 6, 2021

The Honorable Representative Joe Sanfelippo
Room 314 North
State Capitol
PO Box 8953
Madison, WI 53708

RE: Resource Information to Assist in Forthcoming Wisconsin Forensic Audit the 2020 Vote

Dear Representative Sanfelippo,

Your work done on the Elections Committee is very much appreciated. Due to a forthcoming forensic audit in Wisconsin, I provide resource information that may assist to identify issues and legal challenges.

Matthew Deperno at depernelaw.com in Antrim County, MI provided on his website a tab named All Expert (i.e. Cytech CyFir, CyberNinjas, etc) Reports (i.e. SQL database swaps, ballot anomalies, security deficiencies, to name just a few) <https://www.depernelaw.com/all-expert-reports.html>. These issues are in common with Wisconsin. Deperno also made very strong points about the need to 1) inspect absentee ballots, 2) view the signatures, 3) how the ballots were folded, and 4) the type of paper that was used for these ballots.

Please listen to this YouTube link

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6C8ITt7VK5A>, LizHarrisStrikesBack, before it is taken down. Liz Harris, was in charge of door-to-door canvassers in Maricopa County to make affidavits of voters against the registration roll. On that link were BobbyPiton.com and Edward Solomon to explain the mathematics behind the algorithm to turn the votes in the 2020 election. Piton stated that Edward Solomon's work showed, "... nobody's vote mattered... Edward proved it... the vote in a lot of other places and worldwide that we were cheated... they made it that nobody's vote counted... they predetermined the winners..." Solomon explained that Biden's mail-in vote was a continuous function of election day percentage and aggregate percentage. They back solved the proportion of mail-ins to election day votes from it. Solomon proved through graphs and mathematics in this article <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-9qbBtTqiGIAurJjEbtVt6lBUi9MKTqPR-xb3FpHx-A/edit> The following link is a Spreadsheet

example to enter in all precinct data and obtain a Plane Equation https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1R78hoPiP_sleD3L7QtvuE5R-3kf2Xob20bMXQeChke8/edit#gid=173566074. The graph show that votes are “flat.” Solomon further showed what a fair election graph looks like. A standard deviation has a normal line shape. Maricopa County election showed the standard mean of deviation didn’t exist. I suggest that someone create a spreadsheet like Solomon’s on Wisconsin in preparation of legal challenges.

I strongly support the work done by the persons mentioned in this letter. IF the ex Justice Michael Gableman overseeing the three retired officers investigation does not touch upon the many issues in the All Expert Reports on DepernoLaw.com, then the contract between Majority Assembly Speaker Robin Voss and them does not go deep enough. Wisconsin election integrity could improve after a forensic audit with followup action.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of these important issues. Thank you for your continued leadership and service to Wisconsin.

Respectfully,

Marie Rajkovacz

From: Kyle Koenen <Kyle@will-law.org>
Sent: Wednesday, June 9, 2021, 9:17 AM
To: Kyle Koenen <Kyle@will-law.org>
Subject: WILL Analysis: "Big 5" Cities Received Nearly 86% of CTCL Grants in WI
Attachments: WillLawFINGER ON THE SCALE.6.pdf

Good Morning,

This morning WILL released a new report this morning called [Finger on the Scale: Examining Private Funding of Elections in Wisconsin](#). Our report takes a comprehensive look at grants administered by the Center for Technology and Civic Life (CTCL), a non-profit with ties to Mark Zuckerberg. With the Senate set to take action today on Assembly Bill 173, which would prohibit communities from accepting private funding for election administration, we thought this report would provide useful information.

To complete our analysis, WILL conducted more than 250 records requests to find the following:

- * Which Communities Received Grant Funding from CTCL
- * How Much They Received
- * How They Spent the Grant Funding

Here are our main findings:

Spending Increased Turnout for Joe Biden. Areas of the state that received grants saw statistically significant increases in turnout for Democrats. Increases in turnout were not seen for Donald Trump.

Wisconsin Municipalities Received Over \$10 million from CTCL. WILL received records from 196 communities that received a total \$10.3 million in funding from CTCL. These grants ranged from a high of \$3.4 million for the City of Milwaukee to \$2,212 for the Town of Mountain in Oconto County

Large Cities got the Lion's Share of Funding. The largest five cities in the state (Milwaukee, Madison, Green Bay, Kenosha, and Racine) received nearly 86% of all CTCL grant funds in Wisconsin.

Large Cities Spent Tens of Thousands on Voter Education. While most small towns used CTCL resources for voting equipment and COVID-related equipment, Milwaukee, Green Bay, and Madison spent close to or above \$100,000 on ostensibly "non-partisan" voter education efforts.

In addition to the attached report, we also have made our [database of findings publicly available](#). This will allow you to see how much grant funding each community received and what it was spent on.

Lastly, we invite you to a webinar next Thursday at 11 AM, where will share our findings from this report and answer any questions you or others may have. Please feel free the share this opportunity. [You can register for the webinar HERE.](#)

Thank you and please feel free to reach out with any questions.

Regards,

Kyle Koenen

Policy Director

Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty Inc.

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Milwaukee, WI 53202

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FINGER ON THE SCALE:

Examining Private Funding of Elections in Wisconsin



Will Flanders, PhD, Cori Petersen, & Kyle Koenen



Will Flanders, PhD

Research Director



Cori Petersen

Research Associate



Kyle Koenen

Policy Director

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2020 election was one of the most politically divided, polarizing events in recent American history. There are many factors that play into that, but one phenomenon that did not help cure the problem of polarization was the massive amounts of money pouring into swing states from organizations claiming to be “non-partisan.” The Center for Technology and Civic Life (CTCL) was one of those organizations, and grants they distributed prior to the 2020 Election caused a great deal of controversy, in both Wisconsin and the country at large.

In an effort to understand the impact of these grants in Wisconsin, WILL completed open records requests to every one of the more than 200 municipalities in the state that received grants. This report represents a comprehensive analysis of where the money was spent, and whether the distribution of funds from CTCL was equitable. The key takeaways from this report are that:

Wisconsin Municipalities Received Over \$10 million from CTCL. WILL received records from 196 communities that received a total \$10.3 million in funding from CTCL. These grants ranged from a high of \$3.4 million for the City of Milwaukee to \$2,212 for the Town of Mountain in Oconto County.

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Spending Increased Turnout for Joe Biden. Areas of the state that received grants saw statistically significant increases in turnout for Democrats. Increases in turnout were not seen for Donald Trump.

Wisconsin Needs Reform. This report highlights the inequitable distribution of private resources that came into the state during the 2020 election. Reforms that are designed to ensure that any grant money is distributed in a per capita manner across the state will go a long way in increasing faith that our elections are being conducted in an open and honest manner.

WHAT IS CTCL?

The Center for Tech and Civic Life is a foundation that, as of 2020, receives most of its funding from Mark Zuckerberg and his wife, Priscilla Chan. The organization uses data to increase voter turnout and improve election administration. According to their website¹, the nonprofit was founded in 2012 to **“connect Americans with the information they need to become and remain civically engaged; and, ensure that our elections are more professional, inclusive and secure.”**

However, many have questioned² whether the organization is, in fact, nonpartisan. Prior to launching CTCL, the organization's three founders³ were a civic technologist, an election official, and a civic data expert. According to Influence Watch, the three founders were co-workers at the New Organizing Institute (NOI) until 2015, when that organization dissolved. A Washington Post reporter once referred⁴ to NOI as the **“the Democratic Party’s Hogwarts for digital wizardry.”** With CTCL’s mission so similar to that of NOI, it certainly served as a training ground. There are two arms of CTCL, the civic data arm—which involves collecting and dispersing information on candidates and elections—and the other portion of the project that consists of training election officials. CTCL has infrastructure in place to collect data from almost every local voting location throughout the country.

In the summer of 2020 CTCL awarded \$15 million in grants. Then in September, CTCL received \$250 million from Zuckerberg and Chan; and in October, another \$100 million more. According to CTCL, the second round of funding was to ensure that every eligible community that applied for a grant could receive one.⁵ Zuckerberg and Chan cited⁶ **“inadequate public funds and a global pandemic”** as their reasons for **“doubling down on [their] commitment to ensuring that every qualified jurisdiction has the resources it needs to allow every eligible citizen to vote safely and have their vote counted.”** But whatever the reason, this is an astounding amount of money. In fact, \$350 million is quite close to the \$425 million that the federal government designated⁷ to states in FY2020 budget for election security.

Prior to Chan and Zuckerberg’s donation, CTCL had received money from other center-left organizations in much smaller amounts. For instance, in April 2020 the Skoll Foundation gave them a \$1.5 million grant. And in the funding years from 2015-2017 CTCL received more than \$1.3 million from the John S. and James L McKnight Foundation, \$690,000 from the Democracy Fund, and \$10,000 from the Rockefellers Brothers Fund.⁸ However, it is unclear where the donations came from for the grants they distributed in the summer of 2020.

The largest municipalities to receive grants nationwide tended to be left-leaning. According to the Amistad Project,⁹ which is an initiative of the Thomas More Society, CTCL's 20 largest donations, that come to \$76.5 million, all went to cities that Hillary Clinton won in 2016—targeting states such as Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin.

In July 2020, CTCL announced¹⁰ that it had donated \$6.3 million to five cities in Wisconsin—the specific amount that the five mayors of those cities had requested from CTCL. With subsequent rounds of funding according to open records requests by WILL, this amount eventually ballooned to approximately \$8.8 million for Wisconsin's five largest cities. Then in August, CTCL launched their COVID-19 relief grant program for rural municipalities, indicating in the press release¹¹ that they would give priority to **“jurisdictions that are required to provide language assistance under section 203 of the Voting Rights Act and have a higher percentage of historically disenfranchised residents,”** and jurisdictions that changed absentee laws or voting rules in response to the pandemic.

According to the **“Wisconsin Safe Voting Plan 2020,”**¹² proposed by the five recipient cities of the \$8.8 million from CTCL, there are four main recommendations to ensure a safe and secure election. The first is to **“Encourage and Increase Absentee Voting.”** The second is to **“Dramatically Expand Strategic Voter Education & Outreach Efforts, Particularly to Historically Disenfranchised Residents.”** The third is to **“Launch Poll Worker Recruitment, Training & Safety Efforts.”** And the fourth is to **“Ensure Safe & Efficient Election Day Administration.”** In CTCL's responses¹³ to the cities awarding the grants, CTCL stipulates, among other things, that the municipalities must hold to the **“Wisconsin Safe Voting Plan”** or **“CTCL may discontinue, modify, withhold part of, or ask for the return of all or part of the grant funds.”** Amistad Project also found¹⁴ that the donations to Philadelphia had strict requirements attached, including the opening of 800 new polling locations. CTCL also paid election officials to help count the vote.

Stories about a concerning amount of control exercised by CTCL have emerged in Wisconsin as well. In Milwaukee, CTCL assisted in the ballot curing process¹⁵—where clerks attempt to get missing information on a ballot filled in, either on their own or by contacting the voter. In Green Bay, CTCL officials were given keys and access to absentee ballots. The process was so frustrating that assistants to the clerk were threatening to leave.¹⁶

While much attention has been paid to the largest recipients of CTCL grants in Wisconsin, to date no one has painted the entire picture of the impact of the grants on the state. This study represents a comprehensive look at each of these grants, and answers the question of whether or not they could have affected the outcome of the presidential election.

WHERE DID THE MONEY GO?

For this analysis WILL sent record requests to 257 different communities. To determine where our requests should be directed, we utilized a list of grant recipients by CTCL,¹⁷ who inferred that 216 communities in Wisconsin received a grant. Because this list did not specify the county where each town or municipality was located, we sent duplicate requests to towns of the same name around the state, which accounts for the higher number of requests. Many clerks were not receptive to our requests. Some took months to respond. One clerk even told us that he “usually ignores open records requests.” Through a number of follow ups and the threat of lawsuits, we were able to acquire the records from all but six municipalities.¹⁸ A number of listed communities also stated that they inquired about the grant, but ultimately decided not to follow through with it. What follows is a breakdown of what we learned.

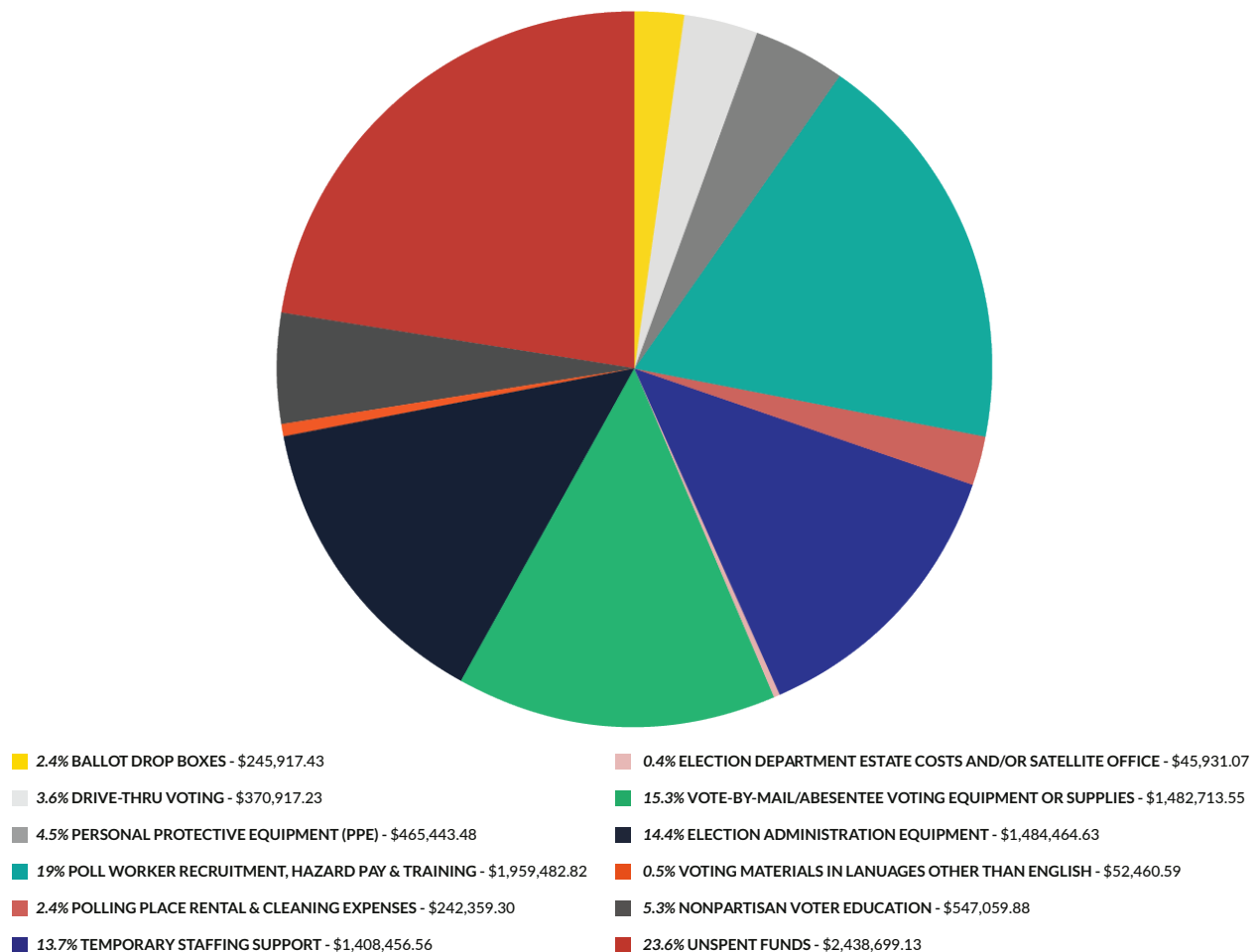
A large number of municipalities in Wisconsin received grants from CTCL. WILL received records from 196 municipalities that received grants totaling more than \$10.3 million, the vast majority of which were in the amount of \$5,000. These went to smaller municipalities around the state, after the initial round of grants that went to the five large requestors (Milwaukee, Madison, Green Bay, Racine, and Kenosha) that also received the greatest amount of media attention.



SPENDING BREAKDOWN

As a condition of receiving the grant, CTCL required communities to report how the money was spent. To ensure uniform reporting, the categories below represent the same manner in which communities reported back to CTCL. The figure below shows the percentage breakdown of spending for all municipalities in the state that received grants for which we have data. Note that a few municipalities reported spending that was above the grant amount received, presumably including both CTCL money and funds from other sources. *The amounts from non-CTCL sources are not large – roughly 3% of the total – and it is unlikely that they would materially alter the picture presented here.* Because we cannot “back out” non – CTCL money, we analyze total spending reported by the municipality. The largest percentage of funding overall was spent on paying poll workers. The next largest percentage was spent on purchasing additional supplies, postage, and equipment for absentee voting. Perhaps of most interest is the 5.2% of funding that was spent on Nonpartisan Voter Education (NVE).

FIGURE 1. CTCL GRANT SPENDING BY CATEGORY





NVE is the category that includes outreach to local residents, and could include funding events such as the “Democracy in the Park” event in Madison, where more than 17,000 voters turned in their absentee ballot at parks around the city.¹⁹ Only 16 municipalities that received CTCL grants reported spending money on NVE, and the bulk of that money was spent in left-leaning municipalities that voted 71.5% for Joe Biden relative to about 49.4% statewide. The table below lists the municipalities that spent money on NVE.

TABLE 1. SPENDING ON NVE BY CITY

Milwaukee	\$260,621.73
Green Bay	\$167,849.00
Madison	\$88,866.67
Racine	\$24,887.00
Marathon County	\$2,500.00
Sun Prairie	\$1,368.00
Mount Hope	\$200.00
Oakland	\$200.00
Elkhart Lake	\$153.79
Mountain	\$111.95
Riverview	\$111.95
Hammond	\$75.00
Plymouth	\$64.79
Rush River	\$50.00

A number of municipalities got creative with how they spent their CTCL grant money. The City of Racine spent \$222,045 on an RV to serve as a mobile voting booth. Green Bay used CTCL funds to pay artists to create a number of “I Voted” stickers and paint voting rights murals. The Town of Goodman in Marinette County spent \$4,223 to purchase a surveillance system in their town hall, and another community verbally indicated they planned to use the money to replace the doors on their town hall. A large portion of communities that received a smaller grant utilized the funding for additional staffing, postage, and the purchase of new equipment to tabulate or process absentee ballots.

Some municipalities reported to us that they had not spent any or all of the money yet, and had requested an extension from CTCL. Under the terms of their grant contract with CTCL, municipalities could request a 6-month extension to expend the remainder of the funds. Some cities had significant funding remaining after the November 2020 election. For example, the City of Racine reported having \$757,012 of CTCL funding remaining. Similarly, the City of Green Bay reported having \$734,041 of their grant funding remaining.

Despite over 200 communities receiving a grant, geographic diversity of recipients was limited. For example, 55 of the grant recipients were either partially or completely located within Marathon County. A municipal clerk in Marathon County told us that the County Clerk alerted communities of the grant as an opportunity to buy new voting machines. Multiple invoices show the county purchasing and billing communities \$3,482 for each machine. Eight counties had just one municipality that received a grant, and 31 counties had communities that did not receive any grant. Figure 2 below shows the geographic breakdown of grant recipients.

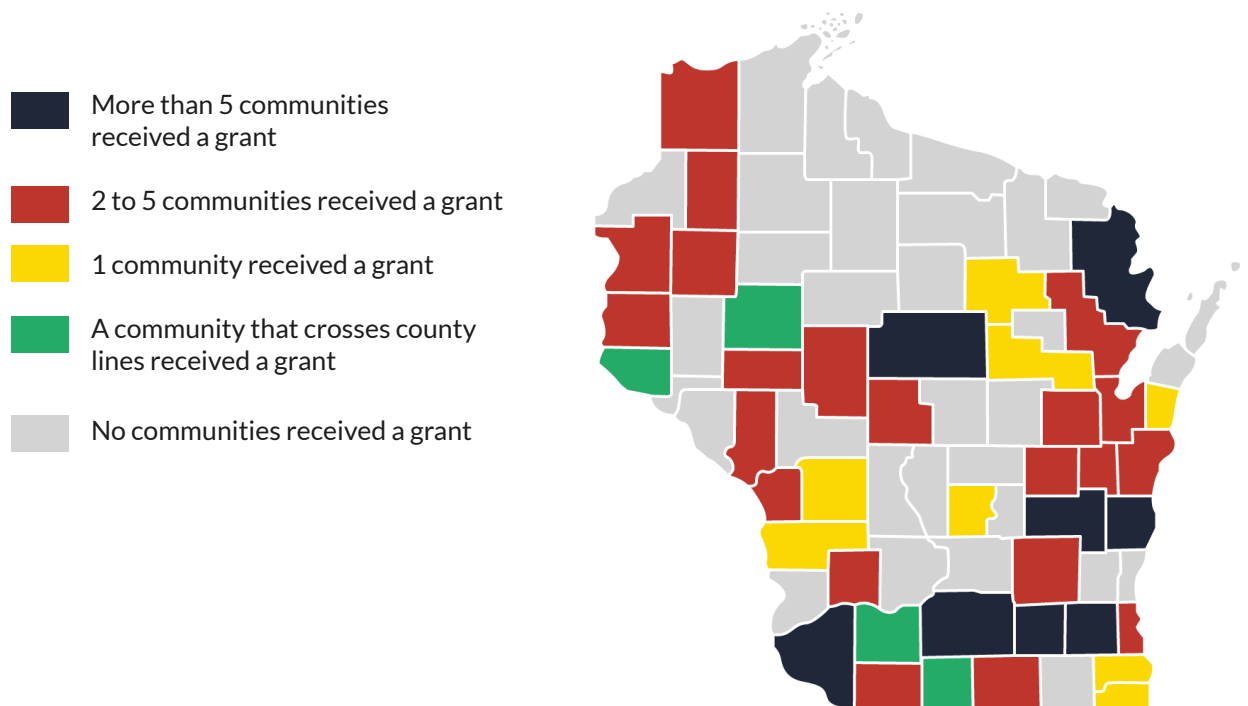
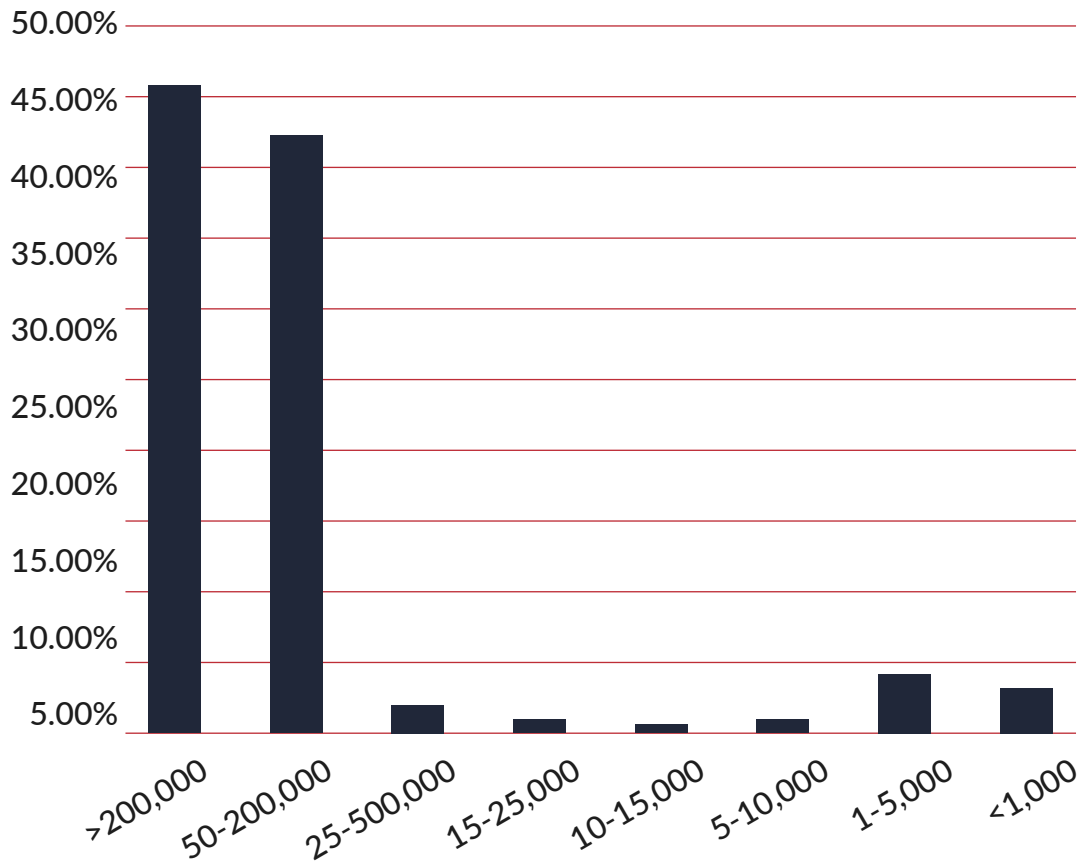


FIGURE 3. DISTRIBUTION OF CTCL SPENDING BY MUNICIPALITY SIZE



BIAS TOWARD LARGER CITIES

While there were small towns that received grants, a sizeable amount per capita in some cases, many more municipalities in Wisconsin received no funding. Figure 3 depicts the amount of money CTCL distributed to municipalities by their population. In the aggregate, Wisconsin's only two cities with populations over 200,000 (Milwaukee and Madison) got the lion's share of the spending at more than 45%. The 13 municipalities between 50,000 and 200,000 got the second most. The funds that went to these two groups account for more than 85% of the total CTCL expenditure in the state. The numbers step down in the expected fashion perhaps until we get to the smallest municipalities—areas between 1,000 and 5,000 residents. These municipalities collected about 5% of the spending compared to only about 1% in the subsequent 5,000-10,000 range. However, note that the most common municipality size in Wisconsin is under 1,000, constituting more than half out observations.

Another approach to looking at the fairness of CTCL's distribution of funds is to use a statistical analysis comparing spending per capita²⁰ with our categories of municipality size. These results are found in Table 2 below.²¹

TABLE 2. SPENDING PER 2016 VOTER BY MUNICIPALITY SIZE

VARIABLES	SPENDING PER '16 VOTER
>200,000	8.672*** (1.672)
50-199,000	9.015** (4.121)
15-24,999	-1.055 (1.162)
25-49,999	-1.236 (1.634)
10-14,999	-1.394 (1.105)
5-9,999	-1.518** (0.680)
1-4,999	-0.440 (0.302)
African American	0.0376 (0.0495)
Household Income	2.70e-05 (1.84e-05)
Constant	0.0319 (0.877)
Observations R-Squared	1,854 0.023

Standard errors in parentheses
 *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

The coefficients here represent the number of dollars given per 2016 voter to municipalities of the listed population, relative to the omitted baseline of the smallest municipalities (those under 1,000 residents). For example, cities with more than 200,000 residents received approximately \$9 more per voter on average than cities with under 1,000 residents. Overall, our findings suggest that those in the largest two groups (municipalities with more than 50,000 residents) received the most money per person. No other grouping of municipalities was statistically different from the smallest municipalities, with the exception of the group of cities between 5,000 and 9,999 residents that actually fared worse than the smallest towns.

There was also a bias toward the top five largest cities even at the expense of others in the state. Table 3 lists the amount of CTCL grant funding for each of Wisconsin’s ten largest cities. The so-called “Big Five” cities received substantially more funding per 2016 voter than did the 6th through 10th largest cities in the state. Indeed, the “Big Five” received about 86% of all funding that CTCL sent to Wisconsin.

TABLE 3. SPENDING PER 2016 VOTER, TEN LARGEST WISCONSIN CITIES

MUNICIPALITY	CTCL FUNDING PER 2016 VOTER	TOTAL CTCL GRANT AMOUNT
Milwaukee	\$13.82	\$3,409,500
Madison	\$8.30	\$1,271,788
Green Bay	\$36.00	\$1,600,000
Kenosha	\$20.94	\$862,799
Racine	\$53.41	\$1,699,100
Appleton	\$0.51	\$18,330
Waukesha	\$1.18	\$42,100
Eau Claire	\$2.01	\$71,000
Oshkosh	\$0.00	\$0
Janesville	\$6.11	\$183,292

The bottom line from this analysis is that grant funds were not distributed in a manner to ensure that every Wisconsinite had an equal chance to benefit from them.

DID THE MONEY MATTER?

When this issue was first brought up following the election, WILL conducted a preliminary analysis in which it appeared that receiving CTCL grants did have an impact on turnout. In the analysis below, we expand on those initial findings through the addition of relevant, county-level control variables as well as an improved data set where additional municipalities have confirmed whether or not they received the grant. These variables include the percentage of residents who are African American and average income. Recognizing that third party turnout was quite high in 2016 and might affect the turnout for the major parties, we also control for the 2016 third party vote in each city.

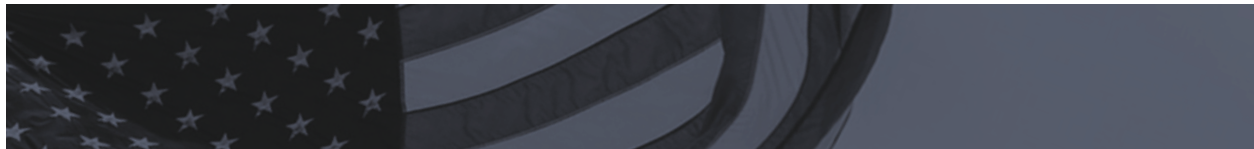
The dependent variable in this analysis is the change in turnout between 2016 and 2020 (Δ Turnout) for Democrats and Republicans. We look at turnout changes between Hillary Clinton in 2016 versus Biden in 2020, and for President Trump in both elections. The results of this analysis are found in Table 4 below.

TABLE 4. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CTCL GRANTS AND TURNOUT CHANGE, WISCONSIN 2020

VARIABLES	TURNOUT, BIDEN-CLINTON	TURNOUT, TRUMP
CTCL Grant	40.93*** (15.16)	8.359 (9.424)
Turnout 2016	-0.179*** (0.00519)	0.216*** (0.00633)
CTCL Grant Third Party Vote, 2016	2.106*** (0.0603)	-0.828*** (0.0438)
African American	15.05*** (1.770)	-0.158 (1.079)
Income	0.00137** (0.000639)	0.000814** (0.000399)
>200,000	14,014*** (508.7)	3,102*** (309.1)
15-25,000	-48.54 (89.68)	-252.8*** (55.79)
25-49,999	107.6 (84.30)	-369.7*** (54.83)
10-14,999	-369.5*** (96.08)	-252.3*** (59.49)
5-9,999	-355.6*** (95.87)	-309.3*** (59.20)
1-4,999	-473.1*** (100.6)	-327.7*** (61.80)
<1,000	-472.0*** (102.0)	-343.9*** (62.59)
Constant	388.4*** (105.1)	315.6*** (64.95)
Observations	1,869	1,869
R-Squared	0.864	0.697

Standard errors in parentheses, *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

For President Biden there was a statistically significant increase in turnout in cities that received CTCL grants. In those cities, President Biden received approximately 41 votes more on average. While the coefficient was also positive for President Trump, it did not reach traditional levels of statistical significance. This means that we cannot say that turnout for Republicans in CTCL receiving areas was any different than it would have been without the grants. Given the number of municipalities in the state that received grants, this a potential electoral impact of more than 8,000 votes in the direction of Biden.



An Opportunity for Reform

Whether CTCL grants were made in an ostensibly nonpartisan manner or not, the municipalities they went to had an outsized impact on election results in Wisconsin. For better or worse, Wisconsin's elections are run largely by clerks at the local level. For some of these clerks, this is a part-time, unpaid job. They likely lack the time and resources to seek out every grant that may be available from an out-of-state entity. This creates a fundamental unfairness in the voting system, where residents of larger municipalities with full-time elections staff are more likely to enjoy the benefits of election grants than residents of small town or rural parts of the state. Moreover, in the absence of electoral reform, there is little to stop an organization—on either side of the aisle—from assisting in election administration in an even more openly partisan manner.

Reforms to remedy the problem of unequal distribution of grant funds could go one of two ways: a ban on the practice altogether, or taking steps to ensure that any such funds are distributed equitably. In our mind, the latter proposal seems preferable. Individuals and groups may wish to donate money toward elections with good intentions, but the state should work to ensure that all Wisconsinites benefit equally from that funding. Legislation from Senator Ducey Stroebel (R-Saukville) and Representative Adam Neylon (R-Pewaukee) proposes to do just that. It is expected to pass the legislature this Spring, and we urge Governor Evers to take action.

While we have no objection to the use of resources to help people vote (with appropriate safeguards), it is important to remember that elections are a contest. When resources are expended that ease voting in some areas and not in others, their expenditure has a distorting effect on the election. CTCL contributions were not the non-partisan civic beneficence that they are claimed to be. They were close to a thinly disguised and undisclosed independent partisan expenditure, mostly partially a ground game in heavily Democratic areas. It is not surprising that they were perceived as unfair. They were unfair.

ENDNOTES

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14. See reference 2.
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- 16.** Kittle, M.D. 2021. "Special Investigation: Infiltrating the Election." Wisconsin Spotlight
- 17.** "CTCL Program Awards Over 2,500 COVID-19 Response Grants." Center for Tech and Civic Life. Oct. 29, 2020. <https://www.techandcivicliflife.org/grant-awards/>
- 18.** For the following analyses, we treat these six communities as missing data. They are all small towns that likely received small grants and are unlikely to affect the overall findings. However, this does represent a limitation on our work worth mentioning.
- 19.** "Was 'Democracy in the Park' Illegal?" Eric Litke. Politifact. March 10, 2021. <https://www.politifact.com/article/2021/mar/10/was-democracy-park-illegal/>
- 20.** In this case, we divided spending by 2016 voter turnout in the area.
- 21.** Flanders, Will. 2021. "CTCL Grants to Wisconsin Municipalities Boosted Democratic Turnout." Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty blog post. <https://will-law.org/analyis-ctcl-grants-to-wisconsin-municipalities-boosted-democrat-turnout/>



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