

## The Next Election

November 2, 2020

“If Tuesday’s vote sparks unrest,” a weekend *Washington Post* feature informed, “customers at Fortitude Ranch will be secure behind walls patrolled by armed guards.”

*The Post* highlighted a pricey survivalist “get away” in West Virginia and hyped for the rest of us “that violence could erupt, especially if the vote count drags on for days without a clear winner.”

Just as an aside, doesn’t it seem like we are getting less information about what happened yesterday and a lot more “news” about what is *going to* happen tomorrow?

Anyway, I think we can trust each other. We’ve got to. Not on TV, but in real life.

Part of that trust is believing that one election loss won’t alter all previous societal norms [cough: court-packing]. Yes, elections have consequences, but in a free country, losing an election should not be a scary event. Look at me, I have only voted for one winning candidate in my entire life!!!\*

Whatever happens tomorrow . . . or days or weeks later . . . don’t worry. You have rights and there shall be another election before too long. Right?

*Rights?*

“Eternal vigilance” being the rule about defending basic things like rights, the next election will always be the most important.

Ballot measures in Arkansas, Florida and North Dakota are about the next election.

Sadly, dangerously, they seek to make it much harder and more expensive for citizens to petition issues onto the state ballot and gain an up or down decision from the voters. That’s why Citizens in Charge is fighting to defeat all three.

Proponents shriek that wealthy out-of-state interests must be stopped from changing the state constitution, but not a single word in any of the three amendments even touches on out-of-state funding. Instead, each makes the process more cumbersome and expensive, undercutting grassroots groups while having little effect on moneyed interests.

In North Dakota, voters passed a reform measure in 2018 creating a state ethics commission. The ballot issue was funded by an out-of-state group, and thoroughly despised by state legislators . . . who referred Measure 2 to the ballot.

Measure 2 allows the legislature to veto a vote of the people for a constitutional amendment and require the vote to be held a second time. Beyond the ugly optics of politicians vetoing the people, it will make passing an initiative amendment much more costly — again empowering



wealthier interests at the expense of the less well-heeled.

In Florida, a constitutional amendment already requires a 60-percent supermajority vote. Amendment 4 would require the measure win a second time by that supermajority. In the nation’s third largest state, the expense of a second campaign weighs in favor of long-term established political interests and against grassroots reform.

In Arkansas, Issue 2 seeks to further weaken the already weakened term limits and Issue 3 endeavors to wreck the petition process to block a future term limits initiative. Previously, I’ve explained the duo of amendments as the “Lifetime Politicians Ruin Christmas Amendments.” Today, a “Trojan” Horse travels Arkansas telling the tale.

Which is critical because Arkansas legislators refused to clue-in voters. The ballot titles that legislators placed on both measures tell voters precisely zero about the actual constitutional changes being voted upon.

That our own representatives are attempting to knock out an important democratic check on themselves is not “the small stuff.”

We had better sweat it.

And you can help Citizens in Charge fight back. It’s too late to do more toward tomorrow’s votes in Arkansas, Florida and North Dakota. With earned (free) media work and a shoestring budget of Facebook ads, we got our message out in all three states and have a shot to defeat each one.

Help us fight the *new* bills we know are coming as legislative sessions begin in January. Support our work with activists in Arkansas and North Dakota fighting Issue 3 and Measure 2, respectively, as they go on offense to demand change — perhaps by initiative.

Good luck to America tomorrow, but the campaign to prevent critical grassroots democratic checks from being hobbled and chopped and blocked continues. Because there is another election in 2022.

This is Common Sense. I’m Paul Jacob.

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\* *And I still regret it. Who was it? Well, ours are secret ballots, but I will fully disclose the sordid details in the first three minutes of my podcast this weekend.*