

## **Democracy in Danger**

### **S3E6 Some Fine States Pt2 – Virginia**

**Will Hitchcock** [00:00:03] From the University of Virginia's Deliberative Media Lab. This is Democracy in Danger. I'm Will Hitchcock. Earlier this month, a much-anticipated effort to redraw congressional and state voting districts in Virginia, relying on a new bipartisan commission, came to a grinding halt.

**Redistricting representatives** [00:00:20] Today, we offered to have one Republican map and one democratic map because we are running out of time. And it was voted against on party line.

**Redistricting representatives** [00:00:30] We can't now start talking about let's hold out the hand of friendship and Kumbaya.

**Will Hitchcock** [00:00:37] Each side showed up with its maps and its consultants, and they just couldn't get anywhere.

**Redistricting representatives** [00:00:42] For God's sake and peace sake and for the Commonwealth of Virginia. Let's start moving this thing down the road. We cannot keep playing these games.

**Redistricting representatives** [00:00:50] I think they've been too many allegations of bad faith here.

**Redistricting representatives** [00:00:56] Every single discussion that we've had in every single meeting has been a partisan discussion.

**Redistricting representatives** [00:01:01] It may feel that you'll never break the tie, but I bet you will. Every single discussion.

**Will Hitchcock** [00:01:07] Three of eight Democrats walked out. One of them said, I never want to be involved in this again.

**Redistricting representatives** [00:01:13] And if I had any recommendations for the next go round, for the next, the 2030 census that would not have elected officials on a commission. If I can't believe that the people that I'm supposed to work with are true and sincere. Regrettably, I am done.

**Will Hitchcock** [00:01:34] Inevitably, the Republicans cried foul.

**Redistricting representatives** [00:01:37] Some of us who are accused of being partisan simply do not want the process to be slanted.

**Will Hitchcock** [00:01:47] But it looks like they might get what they want: a resolution imposed by the conservative leaning State Supreme Court. Meanwhile, Virginia's candidates for governor are locked in a tight race in what is, along with New Jersey, the first statewide referendum of the post-Trump era. The Democrat here in the Old Dominion is an establishment figure and the front runner in a state that has been leaning blue lately.

**Terry McAuliffe** [00:02:13] Last weekend, we knocked down one hundred and two thousand doors. Historic.

**Will Hitchcock** [00:02:16] But he can't seem to excite people very much. And the GOP candidate is a millionaire who has embraced Donald Trump's single issue election fraud.

**Glenn Younkin** [00:02:25] We will reestablish the integrity of our election process.

**Will Hitchcock** [00:02:29] Now, this contest in Virginia, like elections in many other states, may be decided by turnout in rural vs. urban areas. The Red Farm country versus ever bluer cities. All this makes the Commonwealth of Virginia a pretty interesting place right now and worth thinking about in the context of the larger problems with American democracy. So we've invited two guests today with deep experience in Virginia politics. Brian Cannon joins us from WCVF in Richmond, and we have David Toscano with us here in Charlottesville. Brian was the director of the Redistricting Reform Organization won Virginia 2021. He now works with the nonprofit Institute for Political Innovation. And David served in the Virginia House of Delegates for 14 years, the latter half as minority leader for the Democratic caucus. He recently authored a new book *Fighting Political Gridlock: How States Shape Our Nation and Our Lives*. David Brian, welcome to democracy in danger.

**David Toscano** [00:03:29] Thanks for having us.

**Brian Cannon** [00:03:30] Yeah, thanks for having us.

**Will Hitchcock** [00:03:32] David, let me start with you. You write in your new book that states can be laboratories for democracy. Well, that's an idea, I think inspired by Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis from a 1932 opinion states. State governments are closer to the voters. The theory goes right, so they should be able to experiment and act boldly on issues that voters care about health care, climate change, infrastructure and so on. But we're seeing states follow very divergent paths. So in Texas, there's radical anti-abortion legislation. You know, in Florida is defunding public school districts that require mask wearing. And then you've got states in New England, say, and Virginia, we could include in this, which are pressing progressive agendas like banning the death penalty and mandating vaccines and legalizing marijuana. So my question is, is this wide range in policy among the states? Good for the country as a whole?

**David Toscano** [00:04:35] Well, you know, it's both a strength and a weakness. There are occasions where the laboratory of Democracy works very well and sets up the federal government to do something that they might not otherwise have done. The classic recent case is Massachusetts and health care reform in 2006, when Mitt Romney, a Republican, was governor of Massachusetts. They decided they were going to have a system where everybody had access to insurance and the state was going to subsidize those who could not afford to pay. It was called an individual mandate, and it became the basis of the Massachusetts system that was in 2006. And along comes Barack Obama and the Congress and embraces this innovation that occurred in Massachusetts. And now we have the ACA and Obamacare, and that's worked very well for the country despite the political ramifications and the political disagreements about how it should work. So that's an example of an innovation that occurred in the state that was essentially accepted by the federal government and put into practice. But at the same time, there are lots of weaknesses in here. You know, you have different states who the right next door to each other are doing totally different things. For example, in Florida and Texas, where they have taken the lead opposing any kind of federal mandate for vaccinations or mask wearing, the people go from state to state. People from Florida go back to New York. People from Texas head to California and back. And when you have a national challenge such as this,

you should have a national response. And the states you would like to think in a federal system would embrace a national response because it helps all their constituents. But that is not always the case.

**Will Hitchcock** [00:06:24] Yeah, I mean, if you took the case of Texas and their recent anti-abortion legislation, you could make the case that Texas Legislature and Governor are basically trying to short circuit the system by creating a very radical set of laws on anti-abortion, opposing abortion access, essentially in the hopes that it might get challenged in the courts, reach the Supreme Court and then become national policy. So Texas is actually trying, in my view, to work the system in a way that a, you know, a nationwide referendum would not be able to deliver the same results because broadly conceived some kind of access to abortion is relatively popular in the country as a whole. So is that how the system is supposed to work?

**David Toscano** [00:07:06] Well, that's how the system does work, and people on the right recognize that a long time ago. They recognized that after Obama won the national election in 2008, that they were not going to be able to have any control of this country unless they seized control of the state legislatures and then used them for their purposes of in the redistricting process. To make sure you had districts where Republicans could be elected and they've been very successful at that. The same time, the Conservatives and a lot of these states have tried to set up a direct challenge to Roe v. Wade so that the U.S. Supreme Court would overturn that decision and leave all the abortion decisions with the states. So you've got the Texas case, but that's not the one I'm most worried about. I'm most worried about Mississippi and Mississippi, as well as a number of other states in the south, have passed some very draconian laws that are now going to be tested in the Supreme Court that might overturn Roe v. Wade. And then we've got a system where it's going to be a state by state decision as to what reproductive rights women have in that state.

**Will Hitchcock** [00:08:18] Well, Brian, let's have a closer look at the Laboratory of Democracy theory right here in Virginia. So on November 3rd, 2020, voters in Virginia approved an amendment to the state constitution, creating a, you know, redistricting commission. And the idea was that a carefully balanced bipartisan commission would redraw our federal and state voting districts. The measure was pretty popular. It won broad support from the public. And Brian, you were a leading advocate of that proposal. Well, so far, the bipartisan commission has failed. It's failed pretty spectacularly. You know, members of the commission have said that quote. There's a fundamental lack of trust on the commission, so it does appear headed to the state Supreme Court. I've just got to ask you, why has the bipartisan redistricting process that you have championed failed in Virginia?

**Brian Cannon** [00:09:07] Will, I think you make a good point there. I don't think the process has failed yet. You know, we ran a campaign in the entity we formed to run. The campaign was called Fair Maps Virginia, and I think we're going to get fair maps here in Virginia, and it'll be the first time. We're either going to get fair maps because this commission gets its act together and produces them. They're working on congressional maps now. Or if the commission can't work the old way, as it would have gone back to the Legislature and the Legislature would do it. And we never get fair maps from a Legislature. The new way is now it goes to the Virginia State Supreme Court and in your introduction, you mentioned that they're a conservative court and I would take a little issue with that, Will. Virginia Supreme Court is not elected popularly so there are plenty of state supreme courts that are full of partisan hacks. Virginia is not one of them. The Supreme Court has

upheld the prison gerrymandering prohibition. The Supreme Court has taken down the Lee statue in Richmond. The Supreme Court has upheld Governor Northam's COVID restrictions last year, as well as the eviction moratorium several times. I mean, there's just not a lot of track record that our state Supreme Court's full hacks. And so if it's a question of whether a commission gives it a shot, can't work out and gives it back to the Legislature or gives it to our state Supreme Court. I'll go the court route every time possible because the courts never gerrymander. There's not an example in this country of a of a court using a special master in gerrymandering while legislatures always gerrymander. There's never an example of the Legislature not doing that. So I think we get fair maps either way. But I am disappointed that the process on the bipartisan commission has has turned out the way it has thus far. Even if there's a lot of good things to pull from it and a good record lead for the court and the special masters to use going forward.

**Will Hitchcock** [00:10:57] Quick, quick follow up. Is there a state in the country that you look to as a model in this? I mean, were you inspired by some state where you feel that the long history of gerrymandering has been moderated or pushed back against? Or is this kind of like a blank slate? No one's ever really tried this.

**Brian Cannon** [00:11:15] So there's a lot of states we've learned from, I would say. You know, most of the states that have done redistricting reform, almost all of them have been states where you didn't have to go through the Legislature to get reform. So California, Michigan, Arizona, Florida, they were able to put a good idea on the ballot and get citizens to vote for it. Since in Virginia, like half the states in the union, we had to go through the Legislature. It was really hard to get legislators off this commission, so we had to settle for a hybrid commission that had never been tried before. But what we got in the structure was really important cause there was a supermajority vote requirement. It ends partisan gerrymandering. There's just no way this commission passes a Republican gerrymander or a Democratic gerrymander. So that's a huge step, a win for, you know, eliminating partisan gerrymandering that way. The other thing we got was transparency throughout the whole process. I mean, democracy's messy drawing district lines is messy and we've seen a lot of that mess, but at least it's been transparent. And then the third part, and I think this is a bit underrated at the moment, but the Virginia Constitution did not require protections for black and brown communities in redistricting. And now it does. There is state constitution requirements that kind of mirror the Federal Voting Rights Act, but are independent of that, which I think is good given how the the federal courts have treated the Voting Rights Act in the past decade or so. I think Virginia needs that added protection.

**Will Hitchcock** [00:12:34] David, I want to know if you agree with that rather optimistic assessment of the redistricting process. It's essentially ugly about the ugliness is transparent and one way or the other, we're going to we're going to wind up with some, some fair maps. But gerrymandering, you know, is strikes voters as unfair as undemocratic. It's old. It's happened before, but that doesn't make it right. And I want to get your comment on what Brian said, but also reflect a little bit on your own experience in the Legislature. You know, what are the effects on the work of legislators at the state level? Does it make it impossible for state government to work or is it just, you know, kind of the price of admission?

**David Toscano** [00:13:16] There are so much to talk about surrounding redistricting and gerrymandering. The first point I'd like to make and to pick up on what Brian said states really matter in terms of how this unfolds for their constituents. So you have a place like California that has the ability for a group of citizens to put something on the ballot for a direct vote by the people. And if that vote is successful, it becomes part of the Constitution,

therefore bypassing the Legislature altogether. It's called initiative petition and you have it in mostly in the West, but you see that activity working in various states where the public doesn't feel the Legislature is responsive to their desires. With the system in Virginia this had to be passed by the Legislature. And so right away you saw a dynamic where the legislators are worried about what's going to happen to them in this process. I think that's one of the reasons why we got the structure that we got in this case. So yeah, it made my life much more difficult because it sets up a dynamic which tends to create districts that are safe for one party or the other. Therefore, having it more strongly, partisan views be reflected in the candidates who are elected. And so when they get to Richmond, it's harder for them to cooperate in order to get things done. And you've seen this in Congress and you're seeing it more in state legislative houses around the country.

**Will Hitchcock** [00:14:54] Yeah, no kidding. Well, David, we live in Charlottesville and it's a lovely town, a wonderful city to live in. It's a very blue city. And if you drive just three or four miles in any direction, you start getting into a much more purple Virginia and eventually a much redder Virginia out in the beautiful countryside of central Virginia. What is the significance of having kind of growing urban rural divide? But it seems to me as a city dweller that the gap between these two communities, there's two ways of looking at state politics and maybe at the world has really grown. Is that just my impression or is there some truth to that?

**David Toscano** [00:15:32] Oh, there's a lot of truth to that. You know, 20 years, 25 years ago, Virginia was primarily a rural state. And if you look at the center of the population, I've got a map in my book with dots that show that center of the population moving from Cumberland County, up along 95, or it's now closer to Stafford. And that's the population growth in northern Virginia. This is not unique in the states around the country. Illinois has it. New York has it. A lot of places have these urban areas that are growing in size, and they're overwhelming in terms of the politics of a state. That's where leadership comes in because in Virginia we call ourselves a Commonwealth because we think we ought to be able to take care of everyone in the state independent of where they live. But the risk politically is that as more and more power is concentrated in an urban area, the legislators tend to respond more to that population and they have more representation in the General Assembly. Ralph Northam emerged from northern Virginia with a two hundred seventy-one thousand vote margin in the last election. You should watch that number on election night to see what happens with Terry McAuliffe, because that just overwhelms the rest of the state. But we have to have people. Who recognize these folks in rural areas have very substantial problems, and we're going to rise and fall as this as a state if based on how we help folks in those areas as well as in the urban areas.

**Will Hitchcock** [00:17:09] Brian?

**Brian Cannon** [00:17:10] I think David's nailed it here. He's absolutely right. You know, those folks have to look out for brothers. And I think that the Democrats are doing a pretty good job of that in Virginia when it comes to, you know, pushing broadband and rural development. We got a lot of money from the federal government recently and that's going to go into rural broadband. That's a game changer for folks out there. I will say, though, that in Virginia, the norm has been the other way. Traditionally, usually it's the rural areas that have dominated our politics pretty much since the inception. If I could plug a book here. Brant Tarter, he's at the Library of Virginia. He wrote a great book called *Gerrymanders: How Redistricting Is Protected, Slavery, White Supremacy and Partisan Minorities in Virginia*. It is an excellent look at that rural politics dominating the rest of Virginia. We're having the opposite today. And I think that, you know, David's right, we got

to have folks that are looking out for the good of the whole Commonwealth. And I think that's happening. And hopefully there there'll be some lessons learned from prior mistakes.

**Will Hitchcock** [00:18:04] Well, Brian, let's turn to the gubernatorial race, if we can for a moment here in Virginia. So this year, we've got a governor's race that pits the former Virginia governor of our establishment Democrat Terry McAuliffe, against a newcomer, multi-millionaire Glenn Youngkin. Well, so far, McAuliffe, as far as I can see his sort of basically run against Donald Trump and his legacy. And Youngkin, who is a fan of Donald Trump's, has sort of premised his campaign on something he's calling election integrity. So it looks like Virginia's gubernatorial election is essentially a referendum on Trump. Is that good strategy for the Virginia Republicans? To the extent that you can comment on that, but also, you know, is that good for the Commonwealth? What does that reveal about the way that state politics have become nationalized?

**Brian Cannon** [00:18:55] I think we've been on this trend about nationalizing Virginia's politics for quite a while. I mean, if you look at the surge that we experienced in 2017, a lot of which fueled the redistricting reform movement that we pushed, but also helped the Democrats take back the General Assembly. You know, that was if Trump wasn't elected. I don't think that happens. And so the last four years feel almost like an anomaly in Virginia politics. Otherwise, I think our state is fairly evenly divided. I think the polls show that McAuliffe is likely to win by two or three points, but you know, I don't think anybody's betting their mortgage on that. But that's what you're likely looking at. I think that's where kind of Virginia is as a whole. We're not as deeply blue as Biden winning by 10 points would suggest we could go back and forth. And I think that it's interesting to watch Glenn Youngkin kind of thread the needle on having to like, talk about the Big Lie, but then kind of disavowing it. And then, you know, going back, I don't know whether I would have voted to certify the election on January 6th, that kind of stuff. It's frustrating to see because I think in Virginia, net, we are a sort of blue state. And if you're Glenn Youngkin, I don't know why he's not looking at Larry Hogan or Charlie Baker, governors of Maryland or Massachusetts, successful Republican governors in blue states as to how to run and win. And Larry Hogan has been one of the biggest critics of Donald Trump. But, you know, obviously Glenn Youngkin knows the Republican base better than I do and has managed to put himself in a position to win. He's got a puncher's chance.

**Will Hitchcock** [00:20:23] Is the trend in Virginia of sort of every local election becomes a national election? Is that pretty much uniform across the country? Or do you think there are pockets of the country where national politics are not driving statewide elections? I mean, it strikes me as that really. Every election that we're going to see from now until 2024 is as at least at first set up as a Trump versus everyone else election.

**Brian Cannon** [00:20:50] Yeah, I think we're seeing that a lot. And David, you travel plenty to and know these legislators. I think we're seeing that plenty. But I also think you're seeing in in states like Alaska and Maine and other places, independent voters standing up and saying they're done with this right. And I think Andrew Yang represents some of that. But I do think this is a nationalized place. But with that nationalization and polarization comes an opening for, you know, independent voters and third party voters. To say this is enough is enough of this. We want better choices.

**Will Hitchcock** [00:21:18] You know, that leads me to a question for you, David, and it comes back to your book, which very sort of nobly calls for, you know, more citizen engagement to return to civility as a path to rescuing our somewhat hobbled democracy. I just wonder if maybe the problem is that there's a perception among the electorate that

government doesn't work. And as long as government doesn't deliver on the real problems voters care about and voters do care about economic inequality; they do care about racial inequality; they care about tax systems which, corporations don't pay their fair share; they care about the cost of housing and so on. Until we get substantive change on those issues. The political, you know, leaders can hardly ask for civility from the public because the public is frustrated and angry. So isn't it the case that the only way to get civility back into politics is actually to listen to the electorate to bring about real change? What do you think about that argument?

**David Toscano** [00:22:19] I think that's a pretty strong argument. It's not just about civility. It's also about leadership. And this brings me back to the Virginia election. That's why this election is so fraught with peril, because the Republican candidate won't stand up for the very basic truth. And that is that Virginia elections are run with integrity and they're run fairly and they're run in a nonpartisan way. And as long as you have people who are running for the highest office in the state saying that sort of thing, it's going to be very difficult for people who disagree with that perspective to be civil about it because this is just feeding the Big Lie. And this election is key for the country because if Youngkin was to prevail, then you have the Trump acolytes singing the praises of using election integrity as an issue in a gubernatorial campaign in states all across this country. And you know, it is true that we are still fighting the war with Donald Trump, and that fight is not going away for another two to four years. If folks thought they exercised their responsibility with electing Joe Biden, they are sadly mistaken because the Trump base is very strong and a lot of what they are saying is attempting to undermine the legitimacy of elections. Once you have that, you open the way to tyranny. And then if you want to talk about how uncivil people are now, you know it's going to be a picnic compared to what it could be like in four years.

**Will Hitchcock** [00:24:00] Brian, you've had amazing success in pushing through the bipartisan redistricting commission process. I mean, getting a constitutional amendment is an enormous achievement, and I'm sure that that you must feel very gratified about that. Let me just ask you if you could wave a wand and make another change to the way Virginia operates politically - Is there something you would like to see next that would, you know, make our democracy work a little bit better, maybe return to some of the civility that David's talking about?

**Brian Cannon** [00:24:28] Yeah, I think David makes a really good point about that civility. I think we are plenty divided as a people, right? See Facebook. See Twitter. But I don't think we are nearly as divided as the structures of our politics make us do the so waving a wand. I'd get rid of the eight legislators on this redistricting commission, if I could, and have an all-citizen commission. Those are working well in other states. Virginia should adopt that. I think we've got a chance to do that next. But I think the other thing worth thinking about is this first past the post winner take all system we have in our elections, right? You know, Terry McAuliffe won his governorship the first time. And I think the libertarian candidate got seven percent, so Terry McAuliffe didn't get over 50 percent. I think he'll likely get over 50 percent this time, but maybe not. And that means half or even over half of the electorate wanted someone else now for a singular office like governor. That's one thing. Perhaps we could do ranked choice voting and make a big difference there. But for the state legislature, right, we've got these districts where, you know, even in the reddest part of our state, there's still 25 percent, 30 percent of those folks in that district or what have you who are Democrats? And in Richmond here, right, 80 percent, 85 percent Democrat. But they're still, you know, a section of Republicans. Why don't we move to a multi-member proportional system that would get rid of this Winner-Take-All system? It's

pretty clear that that multi-member districts would make a big difference. And also, by the way, if you have big enough districts where you have, you know, instead of 100 districts in Virginia that elect one member to the House of Delegates, why don't we have 20 that elect five each? They'd be bigger districts. You'd have, you know, more diversity in that mix. But you when you see that, when you see those bigger districts, it also makes gerrymandering less of a tool, no matter who's doing it.

**Will Hitchcock** [00:26:16] Hmm. Well, let me wrap up with this very timely conversation just to ask you both. You know, how's Virginia doing in comparison to other states today? I don't mean it's economic policy or it's unemployment numbers. I really mean in terms of how the state government is responding to the needs of voters, but also how the system works. It is, it seems, on the cusp of some significant changes, but put it into comparative context as Virginia kind of somewhere in the middle. Is it? Is it on the crest of a wave? Is it a laggard? Should the country be looking at what Virginia is doing for some inspiration?

**David Toscano** [00:26:48] If I could take that first. This election is going to tell folks a lot. You know, McAuliffe has run a campaign that. Basically said don't reelect Donald Trump and elect me because I've done this, this and this, but the emphasis is anti-Trump, at least to this point. The House of Delegates candidates are running different kinds of elections. The anti-Trump sentiment is key in their campaign, but they've been talking about what they have done. Increasing the minimum wage, ending the death penalty. Many, many voter reforms that word were dead on arrival in the in the General Assembly just three years ago, including early voting. Ease of registration. Other reforms that are being made. And racial reconciliation area. You go down through the list. There are a lot of things that have happened in the last several years and the House of Delegates candidates on the Democratic side are running on those issues. So big changes in Virginia and I think positive changes and we'll see how the campaign pans out. The Democrats win, it's a ratification and will be a ratification of other places around the country who are seeking this kind of change that they know that the voters will support them if they adopt them.

**Will Hitchcock** [00:28:06] Brian, you see it similarly.

**Brian Cannon** [00:28:08] I do. I would say that, you know, Virginia's not going to be on the bleeding edge of democracy reform or most reforms, right? We're late to the party on marijuana. We're late to the party on redistricting. We're late to the party on early voting. The states out West are going to do that first because they have the citizens initiative process that David talked about and just go around their legislature and get it done. However, of the states that don't have that process in which about half of them and particularly in the South. I think Virginia is leading the way in a lot of that right where we're a step behind those folks with the citizens initiative, but as far as the rest of us that have to go through state legislature, Virginia's pushing the way. And we're going to do it in a slightly different way. And it may not always work out, right? Bipartisan Citizens Redistricting Commission It looks like it's gridlocked right now, but we're going to do it in a slightly different way, and I hope that the lessons we do in Virginia will help inform folks in Georgia and North Carolina and other states. And I think that the Democrats in the General Assembly have done a hell of a job of moving those ideas forward. And I think they're pushing the Overton window a bit as well for the Republicans that are in there. And I hope that you're starting to see more Republicans embrace this and realize that, hey, Trump voters vote early too. Like it's not a partisan thing to have access to voting in this state.

**Will Hitchcock** [00:29:21] Well, Brian Ackerman, David Toscano. You guys are modeling civility in politics, and thank you very much for joining us on Democracy in Danger.

**David Toscano** [00:29:30] Thank you so much for having us.

**Brian Cannon** [00:29:31] Our thanks will appreciate you all having us.

**Will Hitchcock** [00:29:40] That was Brian Cannon, director of campaigns at the Institute for Political Innovation, and David Toscano, a retired member of the Virginia House of Delegates and the author of the new book *Fighting Political Gridlock: How States Shape Our Nation and Our Lives*. Democracy in Danger. is part of the Democracy Group podcast network, visit [DemocracyGroup.org](http://DemocracyGroup.org) find all our sister shows. Here's a quick message from our friends.

**Elie Bashkow** [00:30:06] Hi, I'm Elie Bashkow, an intern here on Democracy in Danger. We wanted to let you know about a podcast we've been listening to from Foreign Policy Magazine. It's called *Ones and Tooze*. Economic historian Adam Tooze is like an encyclopedia about basically everything from the COVID shutdown to climate change and pasta sauce. On *Ones and Tooze* he joins FP editor Cameron Abadi and together they unpack two numbers, one from the news, and the other something fascinating. Find *Ones and Tooze*. That's t-o-o-z-e on Apple, Spotify or wherever you get your podcasts.

**Will Hitchcock** [00:30:42] That's all we have for this installment of some fine states. Next up in our series: Colorado.

**Jena Griswold** [00:30:47] To be very clear, Mesa County clerk and recorder allowed a security breach. And by all evidence at this point, assisted it.

**Will Hitchcock** [00:30:58] So have you wondered why we're doing this series in October? Well, there's an election coming up next month for some of you. We want to urge you to get out and help us save democracy. Please, if you can go vote and if you can't get registered. Once you've done that, connect with us on Twitter at [d-in-d](https://twitter.com/d-in-d) podcast that's DIND podcast and keep the conversation going. Find more on our website, [DinDanger.org](http://DinDanger.org) and subscribe to the show wherever you get your audio. Democracy in Danger is produced by Robert Armengol with help from Jennifer Ludovici. Sydney Halleman edits the show. Our interns are Denzel Mitchell, Jane Frankel and Elie Bashkow. Support comes from the University of Virginia's Democracy Initiative and from the College of Arts and Sciences. The show is a project of UVA's Deliberative Media Lab, where distributed by the Virginia Audio Collective of WTJU Radio in Charlottesville. I'm Will Hitchcock and, don't worry, Siva Vaidhyanathan will be back next week. We'll see you then.