

# Protect Democracy, States United Democracy Center, Law Forward, Voting Rights Lab: Experts warn of threats to elections due to election subversion measures and disinformation at briefing

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Washington, D.C.—Yesterday election and security experts held a [press briefing](#) to discuss election subversion, anti-democracy trends, and security risks caused by election disinformation, ahead of the 2022 midterms. Panelists at the briefing included Victoria Bassetti, Senior Counsel with States United Democracy Center, Rachel Homer, Counsel with Protect Democracy, Megan Boler Bellamy, Vice President of Law and Policy at Voting Rights Lab, and Olivia Troye, Founder of The Troye Group and former Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Advisor to Vice President Mike Pence.

A recording of the briefing can be found [here](#).

Panelists provided an overview of how the risk of election subversion has shifted since the 2020 election, highlighted where legislative and other efforts to increase the risk of election subversion have succeeded and where they have failed, and what to expect in the future. These topics are all documented in the recently released update to the [Democracy Crisis in the Making report](#), a joint project of States United, Protect Democracy, and Law Forward. The report update found that there have been at least 244 bills introduced in 33 states that would interfere with election administration, and that 24 of this year's bills have become law (or have

been adopted) across 17 states.

At the briefing, Victoria Bassetti explained how election subversion efforts have grown and changed over the past year, saying, “The election subversion trend in state legislatures is evolving and deepening. ...In barely 7 months more than 244 bills that would increase the risk of subversion have been introduced. That’s more than at this time in 2021. The perverse creativity of election subversion is growing.”

When discussing state measures that escalate the enforcement of election laws by creating new law enforcement agencies and imposing disproportionate criminal penalties for election workers who make routine mistakes, Megan Boler Bellamy warned, “From Georgia to Texas, in the past two years, we have seen state legislators introduce a range of legislation that has had a chilling effect on both voters and election officials – legislation essentially treating the places Americans vote like crime scenes.”

In reaction to the Supreme Court’s announcement to hear the Moore v. Harper case, where they will consider a radical theory that would make it more possible for states to subvert elections by removing state-level checks and balances, Rachel Homer said, “the Independent State Legislature theory increases the risk of election subversion. It’s not a separate issue from the threats we’ve identified – it’s part of this same trend.” Though she noted, due to federal law, “even under the most expansive version of the theory, it would not directly give state legislatures the authority to determine election winners contrary to the will of the people.”

Speaking from her experience, Olivia Troye said, “[Disinformation campaigns] are profoundly damaging to our democracy, but they also present a serious risk to our national security as we head into the midterms. Adding that, “As someone who has experienced some of the uglier consequences of election lies and conspiracy theories firsthand with threats to my personal safety and who has spent my career dedicated to keeping this country safe, I am deeply concerned for the future of our free and fair elections.”

If you have any questions or would like to set up an interview with one of the panelists please contact Blake at [Blake.Jelley@protectdemocracy.org](mailto:Blake.Jelley@protectdemocracy.org) or Heidi at [press@statesuniteddemocracy.org](mailto:press@statesuniteddemocracy.org).