



Written by [Annalisa Pesek](#) on August 29, 2021

Arizona Audit Final Report Due Next Month; AG Brnovich: Maricopa Officials Broke the Law

On Friday, Arizona Republican Representative [Mark Finchem](#) wrote in an e-mail to *The New American*: “The key to audits is accuracy not speed. As a result of the attorney general’s action, more information is coming out which should have been released months ago. It is possible that could delay the report.”

The legislator’s comments came one day after Arizona Attorney General Mark Brnovich announced that the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors (MCBOS) had violated state law by refusing to comply with legislative subpoenas concerning the 2020 election audit. Brnovich has threatened to withhold “state-shared” funds from the county should it “not change course.”

The attorney general’s office released this [statement](#) on Thursday:

Today’s decision stems from a “SB 1487” complaint filed by Senator Sonny Borrelli under [A.R.S. § 41-194.01](#), which authorizes any legislator to request the Attorney General investigate a county or city alleged to be in violation of state law. On July 26, 2021, Arizona Senate President Karen Fann and Senator Warren Petersen issued a subpoena to MCBOS related to the Senate’s audit of the 2020 election. The Senators requested [six categories](#) of items for production by August 2, 2021, including routers and network logs.

MCBOS objected to the requested information, and to date, has not provided all of the subpoenaed materials. Moreover, in its [response to the AGO](#), MCBOS failed to explain why it is not required to comply with the legislative subpoena. Its only response was that the Arizona Senate is not currently in session, so MCBOS could not be held in contempt.

If MCBOS fails to resolve the violation within 30 days, the AGO, in accordance with state law, will notify the Arizona Treasurer to withhold state revenue from Maricopa County until MCBOS complies. More information on “SB 1487” investigations can be found [here](#).

Since the audit began in late April, Maricopa officials have maintained the county has complied with every request by the Arizona Senate. In a searing August 2 written [statement](#), County Board Chairman Jack Sellers attacked Arizona Senate leaders, stating they “hired the wrong people, enabling and enriching unvetted, unqualified, private companies with known biases who never should have touched federally-certified elections equipment or the people’s ballots.”

Last week, several members of the Cyber Ninjas team, the auditors carrying out the forensic review of the county ballots, [reportedly](#) tested positive for COVID-19, delaying the final report.



AP Images
Mark Brnovich



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Arizona Senate President Karen Fann has confirmed that “Cyber Ninjas CEO Doug Logan and two other members of the five-person audit team are ‘quite sick,’ and the full draft of their report will not be delivered on Monday as expected.”

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Statement from Senate President [@FannKfann](#) [#AZSenate](#) [#Audit](#) pic.twitter.com/H7xDHdRiK3

— AZSenateRepublicans (@AZSenateGOP) [August 23, 2021](#)

On July 15, the Cyber Ninjas team released the preliminary findings of the review to Fann during a [Senate hearing](#). Fann, joined by Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Warren Petersen, received reports from audit liaison Ken Bennett, cybersecurity expert and CyFIR founder Ben Cotton, and Cyber Ninjas CEO Doug Logan.

Reported were widespread discrepancies in hundreds of mail-in ballots missing a chain of custody, as well as images of ballot envelopes with unverifiable signatures, more than 10,000 voters registered after Election Day, and a staggering 74,000 mail-in ballots with “no evidence of ever being sent.”

“Every election has defects of one kind or another,” said Finchem, who is running for secretary of state in 2022. “It is what we do about the defects once found that is important. I look forward to seeing what the audit team has to report. The alleged discrepancies must be proven or disproven for voters to have restored confidence in our systems.”

Arizona Secretary of State Katie Hobbs has referred to the review as “an absurd [spectacle](#),” adding, “the proliferation of conspiracy theories is staggering: ballots are being disqualified because of Sharpies; ballots were shipped in from China; ballots were burned in a chicken-farm fire.”

In response, audit spokesman Bennett remarked, “The allegations of those opposing the audit, in my opinion, are completely unfounded.... Ever since the ballots were delivered on April 22, they have been under 24-hour locked security, in cages, and the only people who have access to those cages are those who have to go in there to do their job. There is very tight security. You don’t get in the building unless you’re on a list — there’s no risk to the ballots. All counters are required to pass a background check and all volunteers are vetted.”

“The People have a right to audit every election,” commented Finchem. “And when there is a question or controversy, they should [conduct an audit]. That is but one role of the State Legislator in every [governing] body around the nation. It takes courage to ask questions that challenge the status quo, but courage will be rewarded in this pursuit.”

Since June, Republican lawmakers from as many as 13 states — among them Washington, Georgia, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Nevada, Wisconsin, and Michigan — have toured Phoenix’s Veterans Memorial Coliseum, the audit venue, to get a sense of how to conduct similar reviews in their jurisdictions.

During Mike Lindell’s Cyber Symposium, held August 10-12 in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, more than 30 legislators representing all 50 states joined forces to form an Election Integrity Caucus, spearheaded by Virginia State Senator Amanda Chase and Arizona State Senator Wendy Rogers.

In a recent message to her supporters, Senator Rogers said she plans to “make a tour of the country to give support to our allies in the Election Integrity Caucus who are working to get audits in places like Pennsylvania.”



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Perhaps, as Arizona GOP chairwoman Dr. Kelli Ward tweeted earlier this summer, “[#AmericasAudit](#) is soon to be [#AmericasAudits](#)! Arizona is leading the way to [#ElectionIntegrity](#) in America.”

“I don’t know that we can say audits across the nation are because of Arizona,” suggested Finchem. “I think it is more out of an awakening of the People. Many have told me that their confidence is shaken because of what they observed and the facts that the formerly ‘free press’ refuses to acknowledge. Those who still possess and use critical thinking skills are asking serious questions rooted in known vulnerabilities of electronic systems. If anything, the call for audits in other states is, in my mind, something that we should have been doing for some time. It is an oversight activity long overdue.”



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