



Written by [Rebecca Terrell](#) on October 28, 2022

Michigan Secretary of State Flouts Court Order on Election Integrity

Michigan Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson is asking her state Supreme Court for permission to ignore election law during the upcoming midterms.

Last week, 4th District Judge Brock Swartzle [ordered](#) Benson and Director of Elections Jonathan Brater to revise or rescind a [manual](#) they published in May that contains guidelines for poll watchers and challengers.

Swartzle detailed five [directions](#) in the manual that clearly violate state election law.

In his decision he noted that an “executive-branch department cannot do by instructional guidance what it must do by promulgated rule,” and enjoined Benson and Brater from “using or otherwise implementing the current version of the May 2022 Manual.”



AP Images
Jocelyn Benson

The officials immediately [appealed](#) the ruling, but on October 28, Benson also filed an emergency application to leapfrog that appeal, requesting “expedited relief... no later than 3:00 p.m. on November 1.” Should the Supreme Court grant her request, her illicit manual will continue to be used during the midterms on November 8.

“If Benson is successful in obtaining her desired relief, the 2022 election would literally be conducted in an unlawful manner thus bringing into question any election results,” states a [press release](#) from the Michigan Grassroots Alliance. This outreach is part of MGA’s [Operation Election 2022 Overwatch](#), a program the group launched in September to proactively “ensure lawful elections.”

MGA accuses Benson of subversion and deceit, and says she claims that there is not enough time to update the guidelines before November 8. Meanwhile, her defense team, “which now features Marc Elias, former lawyer for Hillary Clinton,” has filed more than “460 pages of pleadings to date in opposition to updating five paragraphs of her election manual to comply with Michigan law.”

“Since certified poll challengers have been instructed to ensure compliance with the law while poll inspectors have been instructed to follow Benson’s unlawful guidelines, it appears that the relief that she is seeking is designed to create conflict during oversight of election activities,” states MGA.

Republican Kristina Karamo, who is challenging Benson for secretary of state on November 8, criticized her opponent during an Oakland County media event following Swartzle’s ruling. She labeled the guidelines as “an attempt to suppress poll challengers from their lawful duty - their constitutionally-protected rights to supervising the election process.”



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Karamo also filed a lawsuit this week seeking a court order that would prevent thousands of potentially fraudulent absentee ballots from being counted in the midterms. She is asking the court to require Detroit voters to cast ballots in person or to show valid photo identification at their clerk's office to vote absentee. According to the [Detroit Free Press](#), election officials now rely on signature verification only rather than photo ID.

Why is she targeting the city of Detroit and not the state? "The city of Detroit is illegally utilizing privately funded Relia_Vote technology to 'verify' signatures," Karamo tweeted Friday. "This illegal process is an attack on voting rights."

We have a constitutional right to vote absentee, and we also have a constitutional right to secure election. The city of Detroit is illegally utilizing privately funded Relia_Vote technology to "verify" signatures. This illegal process is an attack on voting rights.
pic.twitter.com/jcGT61qDc0

— Kristina Karamo (@KristinaKaramo) [October 28, 2022](#)

Karamo also accuses Detroit officials of improper administration of drop boxes and absentee counting procedures, as well as illegal duplication of ballots.

"Illegal ballots and the manipulation of citizens' votes are a threat to our Constitutional Republic," reads her tweeted campaign press release. "With the future of our nation at stake, make sure YOUR VOTE determines election outcomes - not SoS Benson-managed corruption."



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