

COLORADO NONPROFITS FILE FEDERAL LAWSUIT AGAINST VOTER INTIMIDATION

Group Claiming Election Fraud Is Reportedly Visiting Residents' Homes

[DENVER, Colo.] – The League of Women Voters of Colorado (LWVCO) has partnered with legal advocacy nonprofit Free Speech For People (FSFP) for a federal lawsuit against the U.S. Election Integrity Plan (USEIP), an organization touting false claims of election fraud. The suit names USEIP and three of its members – Ashley Epp, Holly Kasun and Shawn Smith – as defendants. As filed by law firm Lathrop GPM, the suit seeks an injunction under Section 11(b) of the Voting Rights Act (VRA) to prevent USEIP from engaging in voter intimidation activities. The Colorado-Montana-Wyoming State Area Conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) has taken a lead plaintiff role, with Mi Familia Vota joining LWVCO as co-plaintiffs.

"The actions of USEIP are intimidating to many under-represented people and may have a cooling effect on a voter's participation in future elections," Karen Sheek, Board President of LWVCO, said. "The League of Women Voters of Colorado is partnering in this suit with other organizations in our community who view voter intimidation and the undermining of our elections as a direct assault on our democracy." Beth Hendrix, Executive Director of LWVCO, elaborated on these points. "The League of Women Voters of Colorado strongly opposes any and all efforts at voter intimidation, including undermining voter confidence by spreading disinformation about the security of Colorado's elections," Hendrix said. "We're proud to stand with our partners in halting this illegal and anti-democratic activity."

The lawsuit seeks immediate federal court intervention to stop USEIP's ongoing voter intimidation campaign in Colorado, where the group's agents, some of whom are armed, are using public voter lists to go door-to-door interrogating voters, demanding to know if they participated in the 2020 election, pressing them for information on how they cast their votes, questioning them about so-called fraudulent ballots, and taking photographs of their homes.

"No one should have to be afraid to go to the polls or fear that doing so will mean being threatened in their own homes," Courtney Hostetler, Senior Counsel at FSFP, said. "Free and fair elections can only occur when people know that they are able to safely vote without reprisal or intimidation." FSFP serves as co-lead counsel for the plaintiffs in this case. FSFP is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to defending our democracy and our Constitution. The organization serves as a leading force in the country in litigation to protect the right to vote, including prior litigation stopping illegal voter intimidation in Minnesota leading up to the November 2020 election and current cases challenging voter suppression laws in Arizona and Texas.

"Voting is a fundamental right of every American citizen," Amy Erickson, Attorney at Lathrop GPM, said. "The firm is proud to co-lead this action, which is intended to ensure that every voter feels safe and unintimidated when exercising their right to vote." A full-service AmLaw 200 firm with 13 offices nationwide, Lathrop GPM has recent experience with voting rights and election law litigation. For example, Lathrop GPM and FSFP represented the League of Women Voters of Minnesota and the Minnesota chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations in their lawsuit against private security contractor Atlas Aegis. The company advertised that it was seeking armed guards for polling places on Election Day. A preliminary injunction against Atlas Aegis in late October 2020 prevented their

presence during the election, and a consent decree ruling in February 2021 barred the company from intimidating activities near polling places or other electorally significant locations through 2024. More recently, Lathrop GPM represented Common Cause Minnesota, OneMinnesota, and Voices for Racial Justice in Minnesota's special redistricting proceedings, advocating for the rights and interests of Minnesotans of Color.

LWVCO was founded in 1928 as the state chapter of the League of Women Voters, which was founded in 1920. The League is a nonpartisan organization that advocates for issues and legislation at the state level without endorsing candidates or parties. Today, Colorado has 19 local Leagues representing cities and regions across the state. During the 2021 legislative session, LWVCO supported or opposed more than 90 bills, nearly all of which were signed or defeated in alignment with League testimony. Since July 2021, local Leagues have provided more than 100 educational events, including candidate forums, ballot issues, civics education and civil discourse presentations.

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