

April 22, 2021

The Honorable Karen Fann  
President of the Arizona State Senate  
1700 West Washington Street  
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Dear President Fann,

As experts in election administration, election law, national security, and voting rights, we share a desire for accurate and trustworthy democratic elections. Collectively, we have decades of election administration, election auditing, and election observation experience in the United States and abroad.

We are very concerned by the recent decision to restrict public access to the Arizona Senate's audit of Maricopa County's November 2020 general election, which includes races for federal, state legislative and local office. Arizona has a strong history of ensuring transparency in the election process<sup>1</sup>, and the current audit observer restrictions violate this tradition, which is critical to the confidence that Arizonans and Americans have in our elections.

This audit, which will include recounting ballots cast for U.S. President, U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives, is a matter of concern to all Americans. The Arizona Senate must not prohibit access to election administration and voting equipment experts from nonpartisan American organizations that support free, fair and secure elections.

Election observation and transparency is a core tenet of American elections. While observers from political parties seek to ensure that election administration does not disadvantage their campaigns, nonpartisan observers are interested in promoting integrity, transparency, and efficiency in the electoral process. Observers focus on checking compliance with election administration regulations and procedures.

With the audit of 2.1 million ballots only days away, we are also troubled by the lack of public information about the audit procedures. These procedures, such as the method of hand-counting and the forms used to collect, report, and aggregate vote totals, will impact the accuracy and integrity of the audit.

We request that you stop restricting the public's access to the audit and grant observation access to election administration and voting machine experts from nonpartisan American organizations and educational institutions across the country. We also urge the Arizona Senate to stop efforts that could undermine confidence in our elections.

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<sup>1</sup> Arizona's election officials are required to permit observation of logic and accuracy testing of election equipment before and after the election, polling places, ballot processing, ballot tabulation, and post-election audits. Also important, "[a]ppointed political party observers *need not be qualified electors in the precinct or county of observation.*" Elections Procedures Manual ch. 8, § III; ch. 4, § II(C) (emphasis added); and statutory provisions cited therein.

Sincerely,

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The Carter Center

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