

FEBRUARY 2021

REPORT 7

A REPORT FOR THE PEOPLE OF MISSOURI

THE HIDDEN ASSAULT ON DEMOCRACY

**THE REPUBLICAN ATTORNEYS
GENERAL ASSOCIATION, THE
RULE OF LAW DEFENSE FUND,
AND DARK MONEY**

PREPARED BY
ELAD GROSS

QUICK SUMMARY

We asked for communications between the staff of the Missouri Attorney General's Office - including the Attorney General - and two dark money political organizations: the Republican Attorneys General Association and its policy arm, the Rule of Law Defense Fund. The latter organization put out a robocall recruiting people to march on the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021 and "stop the steal." Several Republican Attorneys General claimed to have no knowledge of the recruiting effort and opposed it.

In response to our request, we received 90 pages of documents that provide a glimpse into how outside groups are influencing our local governments.

- **The Rule of Law Defense Fund (RLDF) held at least 30 meetings for state Attorney General senior staff from July 2020-mid-January 2021, including one on January 5, 2021, during work hours.**
- **The Republican Attorneys General Association (RAGA) hosted a "War Games" meeting in late September 2020 attended by at least 44 senior Attorney General staff members to plan for a potential electoral defeat of President Trump.**
- **RAGA sent emails addressed to "Generals" with descriptions of independent expenditures the group was making in Attorney General races.**
- **19 corporations and organizations with special access to Attorneys General and their staff held policy sessions with state Attorneys General, including one session with Missouri's Attorney General called "The Business of Making Friends." The U.S. Chamber, which is leading an effort to eliminate corporate liability for COVID-19-related cases, participated in a session called "Civil Liability and COVID" with Florida's Attorney General. Alabama's Attorney General participated in a session with a Facebook representative, and the Attorney General is one of only a few now not participating in a nationwide antitrust action against Facebook.**

The records indicate further investigation is needed into whether state employees misappropriated state resources for political purposes and whether Attorneys General violated election laws regarding illegal campaign coordination.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report was written by Elad Gross, a constitutional and civil rights attorney in Missouri. He began investigating dark money's influence in state government in 2017.

This report resulted from a public records request made by attorney Mark Pedroli of the Sunshine and Government Accountability Project on behalf of Elad Gross. We requested communications, calendar entries, and other records pertaining to the Republican Attorneys General Association and the Rule of Law Defense Fund. These connected dark money organizations were reportedly involved in recruiting attendees to come to the United States Capitol on January 6, 2021, to "stop the steal." Missouri Attorney General Eric Schmitt is the Vice Chair of the Republican Attorneys General Association.

We received 90 pages of documents in response to our request.

This report is the seventh in a series exposing the influence of hidden dark money political contributions over our government. You can view all of the reports online.

Several volunteers helped design and edit the reports. These volunteers, from different backgrounds and with different perspectives, gave many hours to help Missourians see the impact dark money is having on our state. No one was paid for any of the time spent on these reports.

Their work stands as a testament to what Missourians can do when we work together.

We hope that our work inspires others to get even more involved in making Missouri better.

You can learn more about our work to take back Missouri for We the People at TakeBackMO.org

You can contact Elad at Elad@TakeBackMO.org or at 314-753-9033.

WHY IS

DARK MONEY IMPORTANT?

**DARK MONEY GENERALLY REFERS TO
SECRETIVE DONATIONS THAT AFFECT OUR
POLITICAL SYSTEM.**

Dark money is used to influence governments, laws, and policies without disclosing who is providing the money. Dark money organizations also operate without revealing how they spend their money.

When government officials are beholden to hidden interests, people with less money and power get less attention. When our government serves powerful people who hide their identities, we get failing schools in poor neighborhoods, hospital shutdowns in rural Missouri, crumbling roads, health care for some, opportunity for the wealthy and the lucky, and far too many people who stop participating in our democracy.

Dark money can radically change a government's focus from the people it represents to the powerful who can pay.

**THE USE OF DARK MONEY HAS
COMPROMISED OUR COUNTRY. IT'S UP
TO US TO FIX IT.**



INVESTIGATION

On January 11, 2021, the Sunshine and Government Accountability Project – led by attorney Mark Pedroli – and attorney Elad Gross submitted a Sunshine Request to Missouri’s Attorney General’s Office. We requested any records of emails between the Office and email accounts associated with the Republican Attorneys General Association and the Rule of Law Defense Fund. We also requested communications between Attorney General Eric Schmitt and his executive staff with other state’s Attorneys General, RAGA, or RLDF. And we requested calendar entries mentioning RAGA or RLDF.

DARK MONEY ORGANIZATIONS

REPUBLICAN ATTORNEYS GENERAL ASSOCIATION (RAGA)



RAGA is a 501(c)(4) dark money organization that does not reveal its donors. It is managed by an executive board made up of Republican Attorneys General throughout the country. Its Chair is Georgia Attorney General Chris Carr. Its Vice Chair is Missouri Attorney General Eric Schmitt.

RAGA uses different federal and state PACs to funnel secretive money to political campaigns.

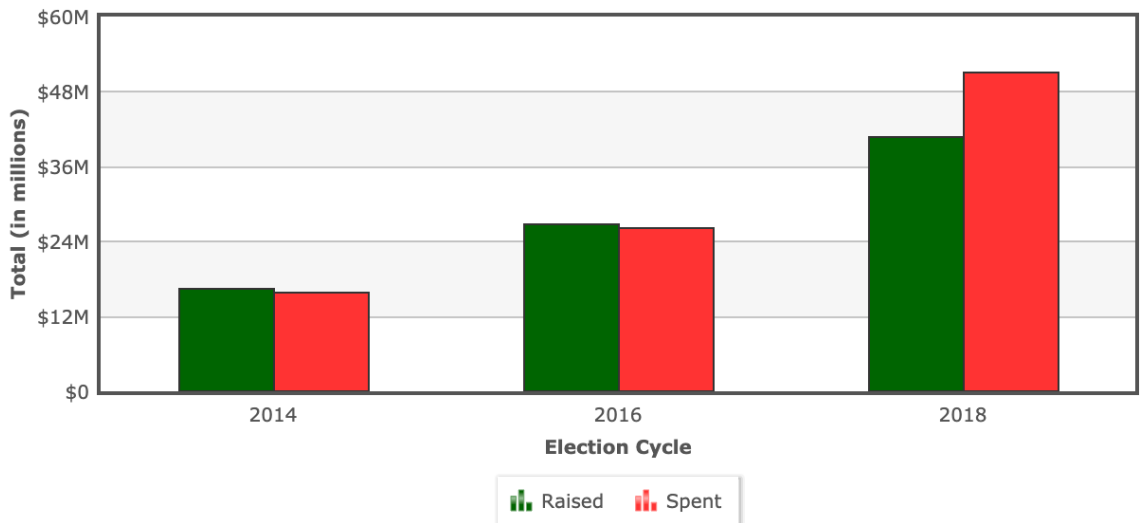


Chart from the Center for Responsive Politics

RULE OF LAW DEFENSE FUND (RLDF)



RLDF is also a 501(c)(4) dark money organization that does not reveal its donors. It is the public policy arm of RAGA and is run by Alabama Attorney General Steve Marshall.

JANUARY 6, 2021

Our investigation started just days after public reports that RLDF was involved in the “Stop the Steal” event at the nation’s Capitol on January 6, 2021. RLDF made robocalls to recruit participants. At the time, several Attorneys General, including the leadership of RAGA and RLDF, stated they had no knowledge of that activity and distanced themselves from it.

"At 1:00 p.m., we will march to the Capitol building and call on congress to stop the steal. We are hoping patriots like you will join us to continue to fight to protect the integrity of our elections."

- Robocall from Rule of Law Defense Fund

RESPONSE TO SUNSHINE

We received 90 pages in response to our request for public records, all appearing to be emails or attachments. The emails give the public a small view into the operations of normally hidden dark money influence in American government.

- The staff of state Attorneys General were in regular contact with a non-governmental, political, dark money entity.
- RLDF held 5 meetings in December 2020 and another on January 5, 2021 for senior Attorney General staff.
- Corporations regulated by state Attorneys General received special access to those charged with holding them accountable.
- State Attorneys General received updates on how an independent dark money group was spending money in Attorney General elections.

POLITICAL MEETINGS FOR GOVERNMENT STAFF

RAGA and RLDF held at least 30 meetings for senior Attorney General staff from July 2020-mid-January 2021 during work hours, including five meetings in December 2020 and one meeting on January 5, 2021.

To: Peter Bisbee[pbisbee@rldf.org]
From: Peter Bisbee
Sent: Thur 1/7/2021 1:54:59 PM
Subject: Re: RLDF AG Senior Staff Calls - Tuesday & Thursday at 3:00 PM ET

::
Folks,

Just a reminder that our call will begin shortly at 3:00 PM ET. To join, simply dial 202-750-2207.

Best,

Pete

From: Peter Bisbee
Sent: Monday, January 4, 2021 10:28 AM
To: Peter Bisbee
Subject: RLDF AG Senior Staff Calls - Tuesday & Thursday at 3:00 PM ET
Folks,

We'll be hosting two AG senior staff calls this week - tomorrow at 3:00 PM ET and Thursday at 3:00 PM ET, both calls will be at 3:00 PM ET. To join, simply dial 202-750-2207.

Please let me know if you have any items for the agenda.

Best,

Pete

Peter Bisbee

Rule of Law Defense Fund | Executive Director

pbisbee@rldf.org

(517) 206-0084

RLDF.org

PRIVATE AND PUBLIC EMAILS

Although we are unable to see the email recipients on most of the emails we received, the emails were turned over under Missouri's Sunshine Law because at least one Attorney General staff member received emails at his official account. It also appears that emails were sent to private accounts based on a response from Brian Kane from Idaho's Attorney General's Office.

Carter, Janet

Subject: FW: RLDF AG Senior Staff Call - Thursday at 3:00 PM ET

Begin forwarded message:

From: Brian Kane <brikane@gmail.com>
Date: January 11, 2021 at 12:06:18 PM MST
To: Peter Bisbee <pbisbee@rldf.org>, Lawrence Wasden <lgwasden@gmail.com>, Adam Piper <apiper@ruleoflawdefensefund.org>
Subject: Re: RLDF AG Senior Staff Call - Thursday at 3:00 PM ET

Hi Pete--

Idaho will not be participating in any RLDF activities until further notice or the satisfactory conclusion of the inquiry. Any participation by Idaho will be solely through RAGA subject to the approval of Attorney General Wasden.

Sincerely,

Brian

On Mon, Jan 11, 2021 at 11:19 AM Peter Bisbee <pbisbee@rldf.org> wrote:

Folks,

There will be an AG senior staff call this Thursday at 3:00 PM ET. To join, simply dial 202-750-2207.

Please let me know if you have any items for the agenda.

Best,

Pete

POLITICAL INFLUENCE

On September 23-24, 2020, RLDF held a Senior Staff Summit, which included three policy sessions:

Topic	Senior Staff Summit- September 23 and 24, 2020
Description	Please join us for a two-day Senior Staff Summit. The link you receive for the zoom meeting will be the same for both days.
	<p>**Session 1, September 23** 4:30 PM ET - 6:00 PM ET : Policy Session with conversations on Healthcare, Opioid Litigation, Section 230, China Litigation, Civil Liability</p>
	6:00 PM ET: Session Ends

	<p>**Session 2, September 24** 9:00 AM ET - 10:30 AM ET: Policy Session with conversations on Consumer Protection, Antitrust, Religious Liberty, Environmental Litigation, The Previous Administration</p>
	10:30 AM ET- 11:00 AM ET: Break (Please feel free to log off or talk amongst yourselves until the next scheduled event)
	11:00 AM ET - 12:00 PM ET: Breakout Sessions for Coms, SGs and Chiefs (You will automatically be assigned and put into a room)
	12:00 PM - 1:30 PM ET: Lunch (Please feel free to log off or talk amongst yourselves until the next scheduled event)
	1:30 PM ET - 3:30 PM ET: Policy Session with conversations on Election Integrity and the Future of the Administrative State..
	3:30 PM ET: Summit Ends.

It appears from a RAGA fundraising document that corporations, which would be subject to regulation by state Attorneys General in many of these policy areas, had access to senior staff after donating \$50,000.

Additionally, the Summit included "Breakout Sessions for Coms, SGs, and Chiefs." This appears to reference separate sessions for communications staff, state Solicitors General, and supervisory staff in charge of divisions at the Attorney General's Offices (often called "chiefs"). Emails indicated that this summit included "War Games" so staff could prepare for a potential electoral defeat of President Trump. At least 44 staff members attended.

POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT

On September 19, 2020, Adam Piper, at the time the Executive Director of RAGA who also had a RLDF email account, addressed an email to "Generals."

To: Adam Piper[apiper@republicanags.com]
From: Adam Piper
Sent: Sat 9/19/2020 1:14:24 PM
Subject: 9.19.20 SCOTUS/Policy/Political/Events RAGA Update

.....

Generals,

The October surprise came in September with the passing of Justice Ginsburg last night. However, with 2020 being 2020, there may still be an October surprise.

The email promised polling data on the Supreme Court nomination.

The email also requested that recipients be prepared to coordinate with the political campaign of President Trump and mentioned the two-day Senior Staff Summit in Atlanta.

TRUMP: Please be prepared for surrogate asks from the Trump campaign around both upcoming debates: Sept. 29 Fox News Presidential Debate and Oct. 7 Vice Presidential Debate. Johnny and Kelly are working with Trump campaign staff to provide as much predictability and prior notice as possible.

POLICY: On **Monday**, Pete has an AG Senior Staff call is scheduled for 2PM Eastern (Dial In: 202-750-2207). On **Wednesday**, a handful of AGs have reported that they will be in *DC*. On **Wednesday** and **Thursday**, RLDF is hosting AG staff in *Atlanta* for a series of conversations and planning sessions preparing for the worst case scenario post-November 3.

After requesting that Attorneys General fundraise for RAGA, the email concludes with a lengthy "POLITICAL" section discussing RAGA's involvement in races throughout the country. The email mentioned "RAGA's IE" in West Virginia, which appears to reference the group's independent expenditures in that state. Although the email is addressed to "Generals," it is unclear if this email discussing an independent expenditure to benefit West Virginia Attorney General and RAGA member Patrick Morrissey was also sent to him.

WV: RAGA's IE remains on the air in West Virginia with this spot. AG Morrissey continues to lead an unknown opponent. Cook Political upgraded WV this week from Lean R to Likely R. <https://host2.advertisinganalyticsllc.com/admo/viewer/3104598>
PA: In what has become the chippiest AG race in the country, Heather's campaign is up with their second spot contrasting her experience with Josh Shapiro's inexperience: <https://host2.advertisinganalyticsllc.com/admo/viewer/3070971> - this remains a single digit contest and we will have more insights next week. Both Heather and Josh are up on broadcast with decent frequency.

POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT

On September 24, 2020, Piper from RAGA wrote another email to "Generals." This email was not produced separately in response to our Sunshine Request, but we did receive it as part of a September 25, 2020 email.

This email included several topics, including Kentucky Attorney General David Cameron's handling of the Breonna Taylor investigation. The email also discussed the RLDF Senior Staff Summit:

5. WAR GAMES - 32 AG Staff Members are huddled in Atlanta for a series of conversations planning for what could come if we lose the White House.

The email requested that Attorneys General be prepared to support whomever President Trump nominated for the Supreme Court, made another request to tweet support for the White House, and mentioned that nine Attorneys General who were in Washington, DC participated in fundraising calls with RAGA staff. The email concluded with more political updates, including one of RAGA's "Lawless Liberals" ads.

On September 25, 2020, Piper again wrote to "Generals" and promised talking points for the Presidential debate. He also revealed that more Attorney General staff members participated in the Senior Staff Summit:

5. ATL

Thank you to the 30+ AG Staff members who came the Atlanta and the other 12 who participated virtually. It was a fast paced, productive series of war games, which hopefully will not have to be utilized in November.

On September 26, Piper again emailed "Generals," this time to forward an email sent by RAGA announcing Attorneys General supporting Judge Amy Coney Barret's nomination to the Supreme Court.

POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT

From the only email replies we received, it appears that Missouri Solicitor General John Sauer received at least some of the emails to his official account, and he was an attendee at the War Games Senior Staff Summit.

To: 'Brittany McGivern'[bmcgivern@rldf.org]
From: Sauer, John
Sent: Wed 9/23/2020 2:23:36 PM
Subject: RE: Zoom Wednesday and Thursday

.....

Got it, thanks!

From: Brittany McGivern
Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 2:23 PM
To: Sauer, John
Subject: Re: Zoom Wednesday and Thursday
 We pushed it back to 4:30 pm ET.

Brittany McGivern
bmcgivern@rldf.org

From: "Sauer, John" <John.Sauer@ago.mo.gov>
Date: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 at 3:22 PM
To: Brittany McGivern <bmcgivern@rldf.org>
Subject: RE: Zoom Wednesday and Thursday

[EXTERNAL]

Great, thanks a lot! The first session starts at 4:00 pm Eastern, correct?

From: Brittany McGivern <bmcgivern@rldf.org>
Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 2:22 PM
To: Sauer, John <John.Sauer@ago.mo.gov>
Subject: Re: Zoom Wednesday and Thursday

Sure! Just registered you on my end so you should have received an email with the zoom info, which includes a direct link. Let me know if you need anything else or have any questions.

Brittany McGivern
bmcgivern@rldf.org

From: "Sauer, John" <John.Sauer@ago.mo.gov>
Date: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 at 2:48 PM
To: Brittany McGivern <bmcgivern@rldf.org>
Subject: RE: Zoom Wednesday and Thursday

[EXTERNAL]

Brittany – Would you be able to send me an invitation to the Zoom meeting, in addition to the meeting ID and password? I think I may need that to use Zoom on this computer. Thanks, John

From: Brittany McGivern <bmcgivern@rldf.org>
Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2020 7:30 PM
To: Sauer, John <John.Sauer@ago.mo.gov>
Subject: Zoom Wednesday and Thursday

Hi John!

Zoom info for Wednesday and Thursday- please let me know if you run into any trouble.

Meeting ID: 852 9519 8151

Password: 899198

Thanks!

Brittany McGivern

Rule of Law Defense Fund | Policy Coordinator

bmcgivern@rldf.org

941-457-1013

This email message, including the attachments, is from the Missouri Attorney General's Office. It is for the sole use of the intended recipient(s) and may contain confidential and privileged information, including that covered by § 32.057, RSMo. Any unauthorized review, use, disclosure or distribution is prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please contact the sender by reply email and destroy all copies of the original message. Thank you.

BOTH MAJOR PARTIES

RAGA's September 25, 2020 email referred with alarm to an organization called the Leadership Center for AG Studies. Piper indicated the organization was a 501(c)(3) nonprofit connected to the Democratic Attorneys General Association (DAGA).

[ABOUT](#) ▼[ISSUES](#) ▼[MEDIA CENTER](#)[CONTACT](#)[CONTRIBUTE](#)[PRIVACY](#)

The Leadership Center for AG Studies focuses on the work of Attorneys General and the impact their offices have on communities.

[LEARN MORE](#)

By conducting original research, analyzing AG actions, and communicating this knowledge to key stakeholders and the public, the Leadership Center hopes to **create a better informed public** on the importance of Attorneys General.

The organization does not appear to have been active on social media since mid-November 2020.

CORPORATE INFLUENCE

On July 9, 2020, RLDF held a General Counsel Virtual Roundtable event, which paired a state Attorney General with a corporate representative for most of the sessions. Those sessions were:



with South Carolina AG Chris Carr
"Managing COVID"



with Florida AG Ashley Moody
"Civil Liability & COVID"



with Utah AG Sean Reyes
"Mortgage Servicing Education"



with Mississippi AG Lynn Fitch
"CVSH Response to COVID 19"



with North Dakota AG Wayne Stenehjem
"Operating during the Challenges of COVID"



with Kansas AG Derek Schmidt
"View on Retail in the Time of COVID-19"



with Texas AG Ken Paxton
"Uber 2020 Update"



with Alabama AG Steve Marshall
"How Tech Platforms Respond in Times of Emergency"



with Alabama AG Steve Marshall
"COVID Response as an Essential Retailer"

CORPORATE INFLUENCE



with Missouri AG Eric Schmitt
"The Business of Making Friends"



with West Virginia AG Patrick Morrisey
"Executive Power during COVID"



with Ohio AG Dave Yost
"Illegal Online Alcohol Sales"



with South Dakota AG Jason Ravensborg
"Law Enforcement Partnerships on Fraud & Price-gouging"



with Louisiana AG Jeff Landry
"The Value of Public and Private Partnerships"



with Tennessee AG Herbert Slatery
"Creating a Healthier World through Advanced Analytics"



with Missouri AG Eric Schmitt
"Timeshare Exit Scams: What's Old is New Again"



with South Carolina AG Alan Wilson
"Cybersecurity and Emerging Threats"



with Kentucky AG Daniel Cameron
"Leadership in Times of Crisis"



with Arkansas AG Leslie Rutledge
"Contact Tracing and Exposure Notification Apps"

CORPORATE INFLUENCE

NOTES

- Florida Attorney General Ashley Moody sat in with a representative from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to discuss "Civil Liability & COVID." Later that same month, the U.S. Chamber signed and published a letter requesting governments eliminate corporate liability related to COVID-19.
- Alabama Attorney General Steve Marshall held a session with a representative from Facebook called "How Tech Platforms Respond in Times of Emergency." Attorney General Marshall is one of only a handful of state Attorneys General who refused to join a nationwide antitrust lawsuit against Facebook. He is also the Policy Chairman for RAGA.
- Missouri Attorney General Eric Schmitt's talk with a representative from Anheuser-Busch was entitled "The Business of Making Friends." It appears that business was very lucrative for RAGA. According to a 2019 Membership Benefits document from RAGA, corporations that donated at least \$50,000 were given special access to Attorneys General and their staff, including serving on panels, leading issue briefings with Attorneys General, and attending events including the Senior Staff Policy Retreat, the Issue Symposia, the Tech Summit, and the General Counsel Summit. The document is reproduced below from the Center for Media and Democracy.

CORPORATE INFLUENCE



2019 MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

VICTORY FUND **(\$250,000+ CONTRIBUTION)**

Details available upon request

EDMUND RANDOLPH CLUB "ERC" **(\$125,000 ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION)**

- Invitation to annual ERC Retreat: June 6 – 9, 2019
- **5 passes** to RAGA National Meetings
 - Registration fees (up to 5 people)
 - Invitation to Host Committee Dinner
 - Invitation to ERC and Capital Club events
 - Invitation to ERC, Capital Club, Roundtable & Sponsors Dinner
 - Opportunity to submit issue panel topics, and to be a panelist
 - Recognition as a platinum sponsor (optional)
 - Annual opportunity to lead issue briefings with Republican Attorneys General
- **3 passes** to the following RAGA events (and complimentary entry to all RLDF Events):
 - Senior Staff Policy Retreat
 - Issue Symposia
 - Tech Summit
 - General Counsel Summit
- Policy Conference Calls
- Monthly Political Briefing

ATTORNEYS GENERAL CAPITAL CLUB **(\$50,000 ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION)**

- **4 passes** to all RAGA National Meetings
 - Registration fees waived (up to 4 people)
 - Invitation to Capital Club events
 - Invitation to ERC, Capital Club, Roundtable & Sponsors Dinner
 - Opportunity to submit issue panel topics, and to be a panelist
 - Annual opportunity to lead issue briefings with Republican Attorneys General
- **2 passes** to the following RAGA events (and complimentary entry to all RLDF Events):
 - Senior Staff Retreat
 - Issue Symposia
 - Tech Summit
 - General Counsel Summit
- Policy Conference Calls

ATTORNEYS GENERAL ROUNDTABLE **(\$25,000 ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION)**

- **3 passes** to all RAGA National Meetings
 - Registration fees waived (up to 3 people)
 - Invitation to ERC, Capital Club, Roundtable & Sponsors Dinner
- Policy Conference Calls

ATTORNEYS GENERAL COMMITTEE **(\$15,000 ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION)**

- **2 passes** to all RAGA National Meetings

LEGAL AND ETHICAL ISSUES

The emails received in response to our Sunshine Request reveal four categories of legal and ethical concern:

Use of State Resources for Political Purposes

RSMo. S 36.157 prohibits state employees from using state resources or facilities for political activity. The law also prohibits state employees from participating in political activity while on duty or while located in a room or building used for official duties.

At least one state email account and one state staff member were involved in political activity. It is unclear how many total staff members received emails, attended RLDF meetings during work hours, or participated in the War Games Summit and other political functions.

Violation of Missouri's Public Records Law

Missouri's Sunshine Law, RSMo. Chapter 610, requires state entities to produce public records upon request. It appears that we only received emails from official email accounts, but the law does not limit production to such accounts. The email contents indicate we did not receive all of the material. We did not receive any calendar entries. We also did not receive any communications between Missouri's Attorney General and other state Attorneys General. Missouri's Attorney General notably does not use official email, but storing public records on private accounts does not nullify the Sunshine Law.

Conflict of Interest

State Attorneys General regulate corporate entities. Having corporations pay for access to Attorneys General and their staff, at the very least, creates an impression of impropriety.

Illegal Political Coordination

In many states, it is illegal for candidates to coordinate their activities with independent expenditure groups like RAGA. RAGA's political updates to candidates implicate those laws.

RAGA ELECTORAL ISSUES

RAGA appeared to send emails to state Attorneys General discussing its independent expenditures, especially in West Virginia. Many states prohibit coordination between candidates and organizations making independent expenditures. West Virginia appears to allow coordination up to a set limit if disclosed, but no such disclosures were made. See W. Va. Code Ann. SS 3-8-5c, 3-8-9a.

West Virginia Attorney General Patrick Morrisey is a member of RAGA and has been involved in the leadership of RLDF, holding leadership roles in both organizations until at least 2017. He received more than \$1.8 million in support from RAGA in the 2020 election through its West Virginia organization called Mountaineer PAC.

Mountaineer PAC

Type Independent Expenditure Committee	Mailing Address 1747 Pennsylvania Ave NW Suite 800, Washington, DC 20006	Primary Phone Number (202) 296-5910	Treasurer
Status Active	Date Registered 07/24/2020	Committee ID 99783	

[SUMMARY](#) [CONTRIBUTIONS](#) [EXPENDITURES](#) [FILINGS](#) [DOCUMENTS](#) 2020 Committee Election Cycle ▾

Combined Financial Totals		Top Contributors	
Total Contributions	Total Expenditures	1. Republican Attorneys General Association	\$380,461.09
\$1,807,552.97	\$1,807,552.97	2. Republican Attorneys General Association	\$343,195.75
	In-Kind Contributions	3. Republican Attorneys General Association	\$333,432.88
	0.00	4. Republican Attorneys General Association	\$215,000.00
		5. Republican Attorneys General Association	\$106,699.68

The video player shows a campaign video for West Virginia Attorney General Patrick Morrisey. The video features a silhouette of a person standing on a rocky outcrop at sunset. Text overlays include "★Attorney General★ Patrick Morrisey" and "KEEP WEST VIRGINIA SAFE". A disclaimer at the bottom reads "PAID FOR BY MOUNTAINEER PAC, NOT AUTHORIZED BY ANY CANDIDATE OR CANDIDATE'S COMMITTEE". The video player interface includes a play button, a progress bar at 0:27 / 0:30, and YouTube branding.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Fully Investigate the Issues Identified in this Report

The records we received implicate significant legal and ethical violations that have contributed to ongoing distrust of public institutions. Trust can only be earned through transparency, accountability, and reform. RAGA, RLDF, and its members should be investigated and be required to provide a full accounting of their efforts to influence our government.

Strengthen and Enforce Public Records Laws

The public ought to see what we are paying for. Far too often, government entities try to avoid transparency. With the technology we have today, there is no reason why Americans should not be able to see what our officials are doing. That transparency should also include activities our officials participate in that are hosted by political organizations and corporations influencing our government, like the ones discussed in this report.

Establish and Enforce Conflict of Interest Policies

Public officials should not be participating in secret meetings with those they are supposed to be regulating. Private-public partnerships can benefit Americans, but developing them in the dark builds greater distrust. The American people know that massive corporations have an outsized influence on our democracy. Officials should not further add to that disparity.

Campaign Finance and Dark Money Reform

Organizations like the ones described in this report exist to hide the identities of those influencing our government. States can require that dark money organizations involved in our politics disclose the names of their donors, and they can enact reforms to limit the influence of big money in elections and, as a result, in our government.

Establish More Ombudsman Offices

Some state and local governments have ombudsman offices designed to represent the interests of the People. These offices could be charged with maintaining government transparency and accountability.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

The types of political operations described in this report avoid transparency, and they are most effective when no one pays attention. You can help just by getting involved and making your voice heard, especially when it comes to local government.

You can ask your elected officials to ban dark money by passing the End Dark Money Act and similar laws. This is needed in most states, local municipalities, and at the federal level.

You can also ask your officials to improve our public records laws to require more transparency and greater public access to public records.

Bring your friends into the effort too. You can start writing letters to editors, calling neighbors, and starting groups to keep those you know updated on what is happening locally.

In Missouri, you can [find your elected representatives here](#). And if you need help organizing your efforts or want to stay updated on our work in Missouri, visit us at TakeBackMO.org.

Our government is supposed to belong to We the People. We cannot allow hidden and powerful interests to buy our democracy from the shadows, and we cannot keep allowing our elected representatives to sell our country to the highest bidder.

It is up to us to protect America's democratic republic. Our country needs you now, and we hope you will join us in answering the call.

Sincerely yours,

Elad Gross

Elad@TakeBackMO.org

314-753-9033