



Speak Out Now

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Their Democracy: Buy or Block Our Votes

In the first-ever Republican Midterm Convention on September 9 (which cost Dallas taxpayers nearly \$2 million), Trump put on a show before his captive audience. He promised that every adult U.S. citizen would get \$5,000 if the Republican Party maintained control of both the House and the Senate in the 2026 midterm elections.

How's that for a bribe? It's also an obvious, outright lie. When has Trump ever delivered on his outlandish promises? Fat chance we would see that money, even if enough people were fooled by this scam.

Trump's open display of arrogance in offering to buy the election is not that different from what the billionaires have been doing forever – but the billionaires do it more quietly. So far, \$615 million has gone into funding Senate races in the upcoming 2026 midterm elections. Super PACs (Political Action Committees) have contributed \$38 million so far. These are groupings that are allowed to fundraise unlimited amounts of money for campaign advertising. Much of this campaign funding comes from “dark money” via nonprofit organizations, which are set up to receive unlimited donations from corporations, individuals, and unions and do not need to disclose their donors. This means that the rich and powerful, like Elon Musk and Peter Thiel, can use their massive wealth to buy elections with no receipts. And sometimes they do it openly. So far Musk's PAC has spent \$800,000.

There are still two months until the elections and they have plenty of money left to spend. Trump's MAGA Inc. Super PAC has \$350 million of cash on hand to help influence election outcomes. Often, the candidate who wins an election is simply the candidate with the most money. Is this democracy? The democracy of the rich.

For the votes that they can't buy from us, they are trying to threaten or block who can vote. In April, the Supreme Court gutted the 1965 Voting Rights Act, removing representation and voting protections for minority voters. This has led to billionaires pouring millions into massive redistricting efforts to control election outcomes. In the South, this is like going back to the denial of voting rights during the Jim Crow era.

In late August, the Supreme Court upheld Trump's executive order to hinder mail-in voting and threaten postal workers who do not follow the confusing demands, which

have nothing to do with their job description. Trump has been promising to station the National Guard and ICE at the polls as an open threat to voters. And states have been empowered to increase their own voter-restriction bills and remove polling sites, making it harder for people to vote.

These attacks are not just about voting in this election cycle. These attacks on our democratic rights are part of the overall attack on working people, increasingly expanding to more layers of society. Social services are being slashed, cutting access to food, medical care, housing, after school programs, and other essentials. While the cost of everything is soaring, wages are falling behind.

ICE and Border Patrol are carrying out open terrorist attacks on working class people they identify as immigrants, kidnapping and sometimes killing people with no legal consequences. And people who mobilize in their defense are being criminalized. And some are now facing trials or lengthy time in prison. This is a warning to us all.

These attacks on our rights are not new. They are just more open. These rights weren't handed to us. Social Security, the right to unionize, the right to vote, civil rights, immigrant rights, social services, and environmental protections were all the result of massive working class and social movements. And these gains have faced attacks by both Republican and Democratic parties since they were won. Just as these rights were won through mass struggles – in the streets and in workplaces – we can and must defend every democratic right we have by mobilizing our power.

Their capitalist system is in crisis, and those behind Trump understand that people react when we are under attack. So they threaten and revoke our rights to maintain control. We need to protect all our rights, including the right to vote. But not because electing someone new will save us. Their elections are part of their system of control, but we can use these rights as we organize.

As we organize to defend our polling places, defend our families and neighbors being targeted by ICE and our postal workers being threatened with election meddling charges, we are also building our numbers and our networks for a much bigger fight. We have a real democracy to win – a democracy of the majority, of the working class – a democracy of equals.