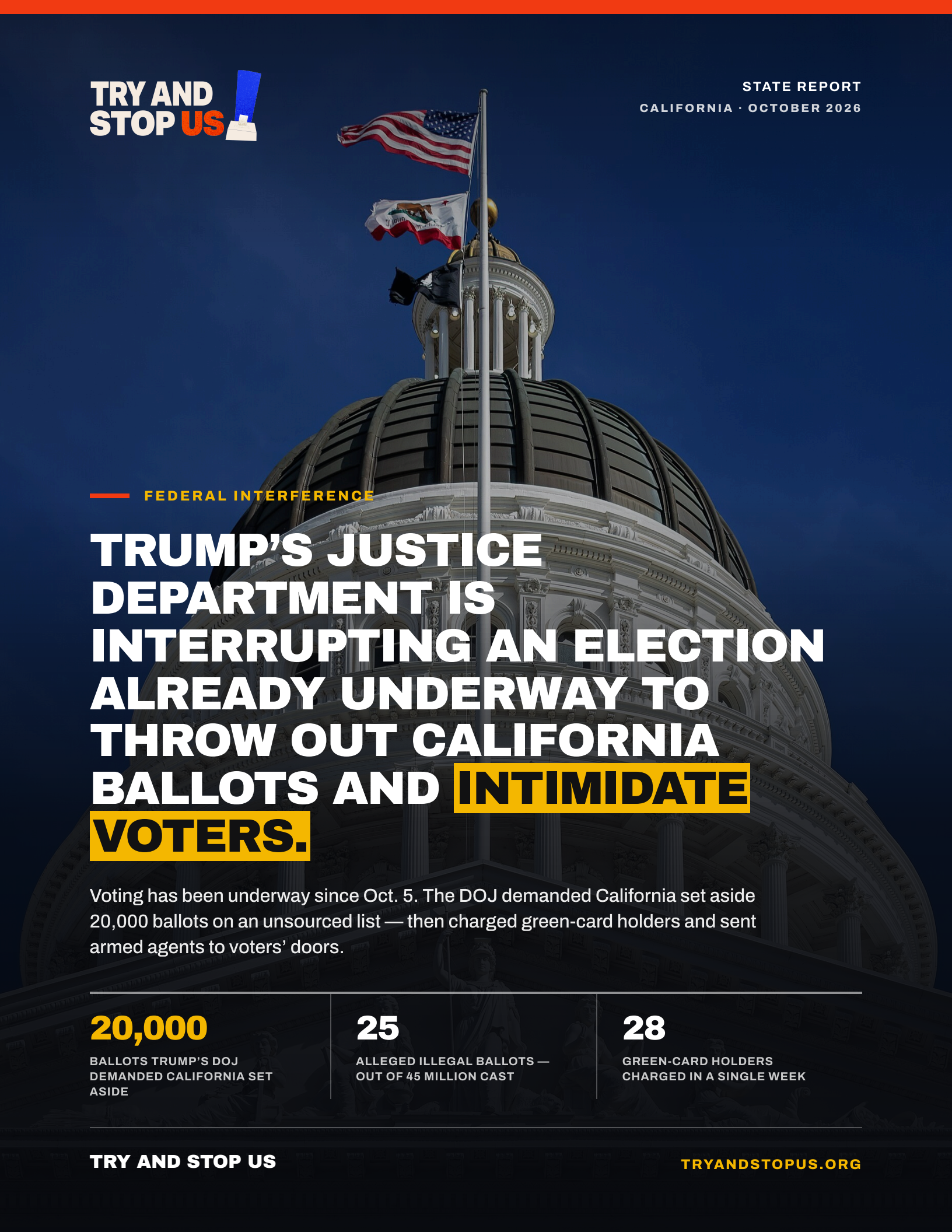
TRY AND STOP US

STATE REPORT
CALIFORNIA · OCTOBER 2026



FEDERAL INTERFERENCE

TRUMP'S JUSTICE DEPARTMENT IS INTERRUPTING AN ELECTION ALREADY UNDERWAY TO THROW OUT CALIFORNIA BALLOTS AND INTIMIDATE VOTERS.

Voting has been underway since Oct. 5. The DOJ demanded California set aside 20,000 ballots on an unsourced list — then charged green-card holders and sent armed agents to voters' doors.

20,000
BALLOTS TRUMP'S DOJ DEMANDED CALIFORNIA SET ASIDE

25
ALLEGED ILLEGAL BALLOTS — OUT OF 45 MILLION CAST

28
GREEN-CARD HOLDERS CHARGED IN A SINGLE WEEK

THE RECORD

WASHINGTON IS INTERRUPTING CALIFORNIA'S ELECTION — RIGHT NOW.

Trump's Justice Department is interfering with the 2026 midterm elections in California — even with voting already underway and ballots in voters' hands since Oct. 5. The Trump DOJ claimed it has a list of 20,000 registered Californians who are not citizens, and demanded that the state set their ballots aside before checking a single name, even though the list came with no source or method and a sample turned up both canceled registrations and U.S.-born voters. Federal law forbids purging anyone from the rolls this close to an election, but that's not stopping Trump and his cronies in the Justice Department. Rather than prove its case in court first, the DOJ is threatening the election workers who count Californians' ballots with prosecution after charging two dozen green-card holders in a single week and sending armed immigration agents to voters' front doors since September.

Unfortunately, none of this is new. California Republicans have spent the past decade trying to shrink the electorate on their own, from fake ballot drop boxes to hand counts to local voter ID pushes. Trump has called California's elections rigged in every cycle since 2016, and his demand for every Californian's voter record is one of over two dozen that courts have thrown out nationwide. Meanwhile, the three men California Republicans have nominated for governor, attorney general and secretary of state would hand the state's side of every one of these fights to Washington. **Here's the record.**

HAPPENING NOW

TRUMP'S ADMINISTRATION IS TRYING TO THROW OUT 20,000 CALIFORNIA BALLOTS AFTER SENDING ARMED AGENTS TO CALIFORNIANS' DOORS IN THE MIDDLE OF AN ELECTION

In A Move A Judge Called "Unprecedented and Illegal," Trump's DOJ Demanded Every Californian's Voter Record.

Last year, Trump's Justice Department began demanding states' voter registration records. At least 18 states complied, but most refused to offer up sensitive, legally-protected voter data, prompting the DOJ to launch a pressure campaign against elections officials and, when that failed, to pursue the matter in court. The DOJ sued Orange County for unredacted records on voters it suspected were noncitizens, then sued the state for its full file on 23 million voters, birthdates and partial Social Security numbers included. A federal judge dismissed the state case in January, writing that the administration "may not unilaterally usurp the authority over elections," and the department has since lost all 26 such cases decided nationwide. On October 9 a federal judge in Washington vacated the whole program, finding the department had ignored how often its citizenship databases flag citizens by mistake.

DHS Claimed 190,000 Noncitizens Were on California's Rolls, Then Delivered 20,000 Names on a Thumb Drive and Gave the State 48 Hours.

Trump's DHS Secretary wrote in July that a "preliminary review" found California "may" have 190,832 noncitizens registered, without saying how, and the secretary of state answered that the letter offered "no detail whatsoever that my office can use to evaluate the veracity of your allegations." The same review produced 185 names in Nevada, every one of them a U.S. citizen. On October 13 the Justice Department hand-delivered Los Angeles County's registrar a password-protected thumb drive, the password on a handwritten sticky note, with about 20,000 names it called "likely" noncitizens, statewide and unsorted by county with no indication of their source, and gave California 48 hours to pull their ballots. The registrar found canceled registrations, people who had never voted and voters whose records list a U.S. birthplace in a sample of 200 names, most of whom had never voted or been sent a ballot, and the secretary of state refused what she called "an unprecedented suspension — and even denial — of voting rights."

DOJ Sued to Stop the Count, Threatened Election Workers With Prison, and Trump Said They "Will All Go to Jail.".

The department sued the state and the county on October 15 to bar them from counting those voters' mail ballots, and the next day the acting deputy attorney general warned county counsel that anyone who "knowingly" tabulates them "risk[s] becoming aiders and abettors to a federal crime." That evening Trump posted that California officials "will all go to jail for a long period of time!!!" On October 19 the department asked for an emergency order, calling 20,000 "the floor" and promising more names on a rolling basis.

DOJ Charged 28 Green-Card Holders, Whose Alleged Ballots Amount to 25 Out of 45 Million.

Federal prosecutors in Los Angeles charged 28 lawful permanent residents on October 19 with registering or voting, 22 of them accused of casting at least one ballot, arresting 11, and the top federal prosecutor in Los Angeles said state election officials "are being complicit in noncitizens voting" and could face charges themselves. Across the three general elections the cases cover, the alleged illegal ballots total about 25 of the 45,071,805 Californians cast. The department says it has charged 113 noncitizens in 20 states in seven weeks.

DHS Illegally Sent Armed Agents to Knock on California Voters' Doors.

DHS launched a "surge" operation led by Homeland Security Investigations — a DHS division that normally handles trafficking and smuggling — on September 1 in which agents were given lists built from state voter files and commercial data, told to clear at least 40 suspected cases each at no more than 12 minutes apiece, and sent for in-person "field interviews" at homes in California and five other states, which agents posted photos and video of themselves conducting. On Oct. 21, a federal judge barred DHS from "elections-related field operations and field interviews" of anyone agents know or should suspect is a citizen in nine states, citing a "high likelihood of error" in the target lists and the Voting Rights Act's ban on intimidating people who help others vote. The order runs through the close of polls on Election Day.

ON THE BALLOT

THE REPUBLICANS ON THE BALLOT WOULD HAND CALIFORNIA'S SIDE OF EVERY ONE OF THESE FIGHTS TO WASHINGTON

GOP Attorney General Nominee Michael Gates Defended A Local Anti-Voter Law, Then Signed DOJ's Suit for Orange County's Voter Records.

As Huntington Beach's city attorney, Gates defended the voter ID charter amendment the courts struck down and boasts of ushering in "the State's very first local VOTER ID law." He then joined Trump's Civil Rights Division and signed the June 2025 complaint demanding Orange County's unredacted voter records, a federal personnel document indicated he was terminated for cause in November, which he calls a fabrication, and he announced his campaign on a promise of "election integrity by enforcing election laws."

GOP Secretary of State Nominee Don Wagner Told His County to Hand DOJ the Voter Rolls, and Wants To End Universal Mail Ballots.

As an Orange County supervisor, Wagner urged the county registrar to give the Justice Department unredacted voter records in June 2025, saying "it is up to affected voters to seek injunctive relief. This is not our fight," the day the department sued the registrar for refusing. He would stop mailing every voter a ballot, require voter ID and cut the 30-day canvass that lets counties verify every mail signature.

· TEN YEARS OF ATTACKS

TRUMP AND CALIFORNIA REPUBLICANS HAVE SPENT TEN YEARS ATTACKING CALIFORNIANS' RIGHT TO VOTE

2016 AND 2017

Trump Blamed His Popular-Vote Loss on "Millions" of Illegal California Votes, Then His Commission Couldn't Find Any.

Three weeks after the 2016 election Trump claimed he would have won the popular vote "if you deduct the millions of people who voted illegally" and alleged "serious voter fraud" in California, with no evidence then or since. California refused his election-fraud commission's request for every voter's personal data the following June, most other states balked at all or part of it, and the commission dissolved in January 2018 without producing a finding.

2020

Trump Called Universal Mail Ballots a "Rigged Election," and the California GOP Planted Fake "Official" Drop Boxes.

When the governor ordered a ballot mailed to every registered voter during the pandemic, Trump tweeted that the ballots "will be forged & even illegally printed out & fraudulently signed" and that "this will be a Rigged Election," and the Republican National Committee and the state party sued to stop the mailing. That October the state party placed more than 100 unofficial ballot drop boxes at churches, gun shops and party offices in Fresno, Los Angeles and Orange counties, some labeled "official," and refused the state's cease-and-desist order, calling it "a thuggish voter intimidation and vote suppression tactic." The party kept collecting ballots at staffed offices and never disclosed where the boxes had been.

2023 TO 2026

Shasta County's Republican Supervisors Tried to Hand-Count Every Ballot, Then Voters Passed a Measure to End Mail Voting for Almost Everyone.

The county's Republican board voted 3 to 2 in January 2023 to cancel its voting-machine contract and count every ballot by hand on the strength of claims the machines were rigged, and the Legislature responded with a law (Assembly Bill 969) barring hand counts in any county with more than 1,000 voters, which the county obeyed only the day before the next election. Ten of the office's 21 employees left by the 2024 election. In June 2026, county voters approved a Republican-drafted charter amendment (Measure B) that would require photo ID at the polls, restrict mail ballots to the infirm, the military and citizens overseas, and keep the voter rolls on a computer disconnected from the state; a judge blocked it in August as a violation of state law. The county's elected clerk then offered a job running the November election to a Colorado clerk convicted of letting outsiders into her county's voting machines, who declined after the governor moved to block her parole transfer.

2025

Trump's Justice Department Sent Monitors to Five Counties at the State GOP's Request, and Trump Called the Vote a "GIANT SCAM" the Morning Polls Opened.

Four days after the state Republican chair asked for them, the Justice Department announced it was sending Civil Rights Division staff to watch the November 4, 2025 special election on congressional maps in Fresno, Kern, Los Angeles, Orange and Riverside counties, and the state deployed its own observers after the secretary of state wrote that there were no federal contests on the ballot and no legal authority for the monitors. Minutes after polls opened, Trump posted that "the Voting itself, is RIGGED," and that mail ballots were "under very serious legal and criminal review."

2026

Trump Called the Primary Count "Cheating," and His Party Put Voter ID on the November Ballot.

Asked on national television in June why California was still counting primary ballots, Trump said "because they're cheating on the election," and asked for proof, "all I have to do is look," when state law gives counties 30 days to verify every mail signature. In a July prime-time address he claimed "hundreds of thousands" of noncitizens were registered in California and other Democratic-run states. A Republican-sponsored initiative (Proposition 39) qualified in April for the November ballot and would require government ID at the polls and an ID number on every mail ballot, and require counties to report every year on how they verify citizenship, at a cost the state's analyst puts as high as the low hundreds of millions a year.

TRY AND STOP US

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THEY CAN'T WIN A FAIR FIGHT.

Try And Stop Us is an organization fighting to defend elections in 2026 and beyond. As Donald Trump and his allies work to rig the game and sow distrust in our elections because they can't win a fair fight, Try And Stop Us moves quickly to amplify the work of organizers and local leaders — helping their voices reach further, faster, as one unified story. For more information, please reach out to info@tryandstopus.org.

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