



**For Immediate Release
October 24, 2022**

Contact: Lisa Cutler, 202-674-2052, lcutler@retiredamericans.org
Ashley Rogers, 202-776-7739, press@votolatino.org

Arizona Alliance for Retired Americans and Voto Latino File Lawsuit to Stop Harassment and Intimidation at Arizona Ballot Drop Boxes

PHOENIX – Today, the Arizona Alliance for Retired Americans and Voto Latino filed a lawsuit in the United States District Court for the District of Arizona seeking a temporary restraining order against Clean Elections USA, its founder Melody Jennings, and the individuals who have been gathering at and surveilling drop boxes. A copy of the complaint is [HERE](#).

The lawsuit alleges that Clean Elections USA and its founder are recruiting people to conduct an organized campaign to suppress the vote by harassing and intimidating voters at early ballot return drop boxes. At least five Arizona voters [filed three complaints](#) with the Arizona Secretary of State's office describing people who identified themselves as representing Clean Elections USA who were photographing them and their license plates and in some cases accusing the voters of illegal activities. Additionally, law enforcement has responded to incidents in which people wearing tactical gear and displaying firearms have stationed themselves near drop boxes.

Ms. Jennings has stated publicly that Clean Elections USA's "goal is to be a deterrent" and says that she has organized thousands of supporters. She has further said that they organize large groups because "you don't want to have less than eight people" to post themselves near drop boxes where they video-tape or photograph voters as they return their ballots. In addition to sending crowds to loom over voters, Jennings has implied that she will use the images and video captured by those crowds to "dox" people; opening them up to harassment by the general public.

Early voting in Arizona began October 7, and will continue until October 30. Although the Arizona Secretary of State referred the complaints to the U.S. Department of Justice for investigation, the plaintiffs argue that a restraining order is needed immediately to prevent additional incidents of voter intimidation.

"Older Arizonans are the most likely to vote by early ballot, and must be confident that they can easily and safely deposit their ballots at a drop box," said Sandra Cole, President of the

Arizona Alliance for Retired Americans. "We will take all necessary steps to stop the intimidation and harassment of seniors and all Arizonans who exercise their precious right to vote."

"No one should be subject to harassment and intimidation in the process of casting a ballot," said Maria Teresa Kumar, President and CEO of Voto Latino. "The right to vote is sacred, and we can't allow conspiracy theorists to use vigilante tactics to prevent anyone from casting their vote safely and without the threat of violence. We know from hard experience that some people are willing to make accusations of illegal voting based on nothing more than the color of someone's skin. The tactics being used by Clean Elections USA aren't just profoundly dangerous to voters in Arizona, they're an affront to the fundamental principles of our democracy."

"The voter harassment that has happened in Arizona is outrageous," said Richard Fiesta, Executive Director of the Alliance for Retired Americans. "Voter suppression is taking many forms in 2022, and we are committed to stopping it wherever we can."

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The Arizona Alliance for Retired Americans is a state affiliate of the national [Alliance for Retired Americans](#) and has more than 48,000 members across the state.

Voto Latino is a grassroots political organization focused on educating and empowering a new generation of Latinx voters, as well as creating a more robust and inclusive democracy. Through innovative digital campaigns, culturally relevant programs and authentic voices, we shepherd the Latinx community towards the full realization of its political power.