



Written by [Annalisa Pesek](#) on July 28, 2021

Arizona Audit: Analysis Continues Despite Maricopa Officials' Refusal to Submit Vital Information

As [previously reported](#) by *The New American*, preliminary findings of the Republican-led Maricopa County audit in Phoenix, Arizona, were released during a state [Senate hearing](#) on July 15, when auditors testified to widespread irregularities found in roughly 2.1 million ballots cast in the state's largest county during the November 2020 presidential election.

During the nearly two-hour, [live-streamed hearing](#), Ken Bennett, former Arizona secretary of state and Senate liaison for the audit; cybersecurity expert and CyFIR founder Ben Cotton; and Cyber Ninjas CEO Doug Logan briefed Arizona Senate President Karen Fann and Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Warren Petersen on the progress of the full forensic audit so far.

According to the auditors, the review revealed significant discrepancies in ballot batch counts; the mismanagement of ballot storage, including cut seals over ballot batches intended to ensure the validity of the batch; hundreds of mail-in ballots missing a chain of custody; images of envelopes with unverifiable signatures; more than 10,000 voters registered after Election Day; and a staggering 74,000 mail-in ballots with "no evidence of ever being sent."

Yet on Tuesday, Fann released a [statement](#) that it was "irresponsible to disclose partial information to the media since they are not 'confirmed' facts until the audit is final. This only leads to confusion and misinformation with the public." Continued Fann, "for that reason, it is imperative anyone working with the audit is required to adhere to the rules of not disclosing unconfirmed information."

Bennett admitted earlier in the week that he had "shared some box counts of how many ballots were in each box, and that was leaked to the press and I apologized to Senate President Fann. I had promised that information would not be leaked to the press, but it indirectly was done, so that's how I was barred from the audit."

The audit from which Bennett is allegedly barred is a third recount of ballots, conducted by the Arizona Senate, a process Republicans in the state legislature hope is the final measure of quality assurance to restore Arizonans' trust in the electoral process.

"Our attorney suggested the Senate perform an independent counting of each ballot paper prior to the ballots being returned," stated Fann in a press release. "This has been accomplished under the direction and authority of the Senate by Randy Pullen, who is a retired auditor with a nationally renowned auditing firm."



Maricopa County ballots cast in the 2020 general election are examined and recounted by contractors at Veterans Memorial Coliseum in Phoenix /AP Images



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Asked for comment about Bennett’s role in the audit going forward, Fann clarified that “Bennett will be involved and a vital part of the draft and final reports to ensure their accuracy with his knowledge and contributions throughout the audit process.”

Determined Not to Cooperate

Meanwhile, Maricopa County Election officials continue to refuse vital information to the auditors, including the release of election routers used by the county on November 3, 2020.

Fann said the county’s unwillingness to cooperate has “created additional costs, months of delays and a lack of transparency on their [the county’s] part.”

“Instead of working with the Senate, our constituents, and the auditors,” she explained, “Maricopa County has engaged in a social media campaign to try to control the narrative, instead of providing the whole truth, facts and items required to be produced by the legal subpoenas.”

Released at the July 15 hearing were findings of the full-hand recount of ballots cast in the county, the paper evaluation, and voter data analysis — the forensic aspect of the audit is still underway.

The results seemed to indicate Arizona could be the first state in the Union to decertify its 2020 presidential election results, yet no definitive answer exists as to what decertification means, as no constitutional rule is in place to address a recall of state electors who have cast their ballots in a presidential election.

Is Decertification Coming?

Arizona Representative Mark Finchem, a Republican, told *The New American* that “Senate President Fann is right in that the Senate cannot act unilaterally to decertify the results, but it can act in concert with the House. It has to be the entire legislature.”

“Under the [10th Amendment](#),” added Finchem, “as long as the House and Senate work together — and the way this is all being presented is looking very much like a joint resolution coming from both House and Senate — as long as we come together as one body and a resolution is passed, it’s resolved. It [decertification] doesn’t call for an action by the governor or the secretary of state.”

The 10th Amendment states that “The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.” And Finchem explained how the Framers were wise enough to know they needed to put limits on the powers of government, so they put enumerated powers in place.

“But just because there is no rule [for decertification] in place, doesn’t mean the states cannot use their unenumerated powers to decertify or reclaim electors.”

Biden prevailed in the state of Arizona by a mere 10,457 votes over Trump, yet the audit indicates that tens of thousands of ballots could be fraudulent.

In her closing statement, Fann reminded Americans that “with the completion of the ‘hands on’ work this week, the auditors will now be doing the analysis of all the data collected to submit the results. We sincerely hope Maricopa County will produce the missing documents and information we have requested for the audit to be complete and finalized. The voters deserve to know their votes are safe, secure and legally counted.”



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