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Statement from the Arizona Commission for Election Accountability on Bennett Scheme to Swipe Elections Authority from Recorder Adrian Fontes

Maricopa County voters put up with a lot in 2016, from historically long lines in the March Presidential Preference Election to repeated instances of incorrect information being sent out by County elections officials. As is often the case, these issues disproportionately affected voters of color.

In response to these failures, Maricopa County voters elected a new County Recorder who ran on a platform that included expanding voting access, properly allocating polling places to avoid long lines, and promoting civic engagement. The non-partisan Arizona Commission for Election Accountability looks forward to working with Recorder Fontes and his administration in each of those areas.

Last week, it came to light that former Secretary of State Ken Bennett is pushing a plan to take for himself the election duties and authority the voters granted Recorder Fontes in the November election. Aside from showing utter contempt for the will of the people of Maricopa County, Bennett’s self-serving scheme to strip power away from Maricopa County’s first-ever Latino official elected countywide mere months after he was sworn-in evokes an ugly and repressive history that our community needs to move beyond.

We call on every member of the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors to publicly reject not only the Bennett plan, but any scheme that would undermine the Recorder’s Office and the will of the voters.

The Arizona Commission for Election Accountability was formed after the March 2016 Presidential Preference Election to fix systemic issues plaguing Arizona’s elections and especially affecting marginalized communities. The organizations comprising the Commission are: Arizona Advocacy Network (Chair), Arizona Center for Empowerment, Foundation for Arizona Students, Mi Familia Vota – Arizona, One Arizona, and Promise Arizona.

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