

#1362 Politics is Pointillism: Back Up to See Things Clearly (Voter Suppression)

JAY TOMLINSON - HOST, BEST OF THE LEFT: Welcome to this episode of the award-winning Best of the Left podcast in which we shall learn about the long history of voter suppression, and why some want to suppress the vote in the first place. Your first hint is because their policies are deeply unpopular.

But first, to clarify, I'm supposed to be on a combination of vacation and also doing a bunch of work tasks separate from producing episodes right now. So, why am I talking to you instead of just posting a rerun without any commentary as I had promised?

Well, there's this sort of classic comic, internet comic, that explains a little internet culture. The guy is just furiously typing on his computer, and his partner from the other room calls, hey, are you coming to bed? And he says, I can't right now. Someone is wrong on the internet. I've been going through a little bit of that, myself. I've been encountering people being wrong on the internet, and that has been a major distraction. I thought, should I try to ignore it which is really hard, or should I get it off my chest and then move on?

So, I decided to get it off my chest and move on. So what I have for you today is not a rerun episode. It is a remix episode with some old clips that are as relevant today as ever, but with a huge, totally new commentary at the beginning to get us started.

First, just honorable mention. I can't tell the story because if I start in on it, I'll talk for 10 straight minutes. But, I had some choice comments to make about more people being wrong in their criticism of *How To Be an Antiracist* and/or *White Fragility*, the major books available right now. I am wide open to good, genuine, nuanced, thoughtful criticisms of those works. I've read them both. I think they're not perfect, but I like a lot of what they have to say. I have my own critiques that members have heard, but I criticize what was actually in the book. I came across yet another person who was criticizing those works and was so wrong -- just 180 degrees or a hundred percent, whatever analogy you want -- just completely wrong about their framing that I had to spend a bunch of time writing a detailed tweet, pulling quotes, a bunch of work like that.

So, if you want to make me feel good for having gone through all that work, check out our Twitter feed right now. Obviously, it's at Best of the Left, and it's pinned at the top because I want people to see it.

I posted it, and it didn't get any traction, but I thought I'd let you know so you can go see for yourself.

Secondly today, our main course, we have a new listener, which is really exciting. I mean, I'm not, we don't announce every new listener that joins the show, but Trey wrote in recently, he didn't say explicitly he's brand new, but I just got that impression. He describes himself as being on the center-right, but he wrote in specifically because he loved the episode on restorative justice. So, I'm going to talk about Trey for a few minutes, and I want to clarify at the beginning, and I'm going to remind you later, I am not picking on Trey. I'm not mad at him. I don't think he's a bad dude, nothing like that. Not to mention, he's not a public figure,

and I can tell that he is genuine. He is doing his best. And so we're just going to have a little disagreement, but it's all meant with love and compassion, and I'm just trying to be helpful.

Okay, so, Trey, in his message about the restorative justice episode writes, "I'm sure I will still find myself at odds with some of your future podcasts only because I feel the obvious questions aren't often asked, but will continue to do so in order to get balanced information and understanding." Again, just a very nice message that he wrote to me about the restorative justice episode.

So, I thanked him for his message, and, based on that comment, I said, if you hear the absence of obvious questions or the answers to obvious questions are conspicuously absent from my show, let me know. I would love to make the show better, and I don't want to leave stuff out, glaring holes in my argument or anything like that.

So, when Trey wrote back, he gave me an example of what he means by obvious questions not getting asked, and so he took the news of the day talking about Trump and the Postal Service and vote-by-mail and all of that, and here's what he has to say: "The media would have you think he, meaning Trump, just wants to keep mail-in balloting from happening because he wants to win an election. The problem with the premise is nobody knows what would happen if we all could vote by mail or which party would be adversely affected. Yes, there probably will be issues, but nobody really knows if that would affect one party more than the other."

Only on the strictest rules of logic would I agree that yes, perhaps it's true that nobody knows with certainty what would happen if we had universal mail-in voting. But what's more relevant I think to this discussion is, first of all, what's likely to happen based on historical evidence and what Trump and the Republicans think would happen if we have universal mail-in voting or any other mechanism that increases voter turnout because their actions are based on what they think, and what they think may or may not be based on actual evidence.

In this case, I think it is based on actual evidence. So, let's go through some historical references and get some context for this. Now, I'm not even going to go all the way back to pre-Civil Rights Era voter suppression, with the literacy tests and all of that sort of stuff. I don't want to be accused of cheap-shotting.

In a modern context, almost no one openly advocates preventing Black people from voting because they're Black. People will pretty much openly advocate preventing people from voting based on their party affiliation. Of course, in America, that gets a little squishy because party affiliation and skin color, when it comes to Black people, there's a lot of cross over on that Venn diagram. So, we're not even going back as far as literacy tests. We're only going back 40 years to the year 1980.

BRIAN LEHRER - HOST, THE BRIAN LEHRER SHOW: Here's an old clip from 1980 of conservative activist Paul Weyrich, cofounder of the Heritage Foundation, Moral Majority and other groups, in a speech that we think is before a Christian right audience in Dallas, but he speaks very candidly to this group, in 1980.

PAUL WEYRICH: How many of our Christians have what I call the goo-goo syndrome -- good government? They want everybody to vote. I don't want everybody to vote. Elections are not won by a majority of people. They never have been from the beginning of our country, and

they are not now. As a matter of fact, our leverage in the elections quite candidly goes up as the voting populace goes down.

JAY TOMLINSON - HOST, BEST OF THE LEFT: So, that was from 40 years ago, and now to bookend that, here's a quick clip of Donald Trump when he is referring to a proposed coronavirus relief package a few months ago that included funding for mail-in voting and other measures that would increase voter turnout.

DONALD TRUMP: I will tell you this, if you look at before and after, the things they had in there were crazy. They had things, levels of voting that, if we ever agreed to it, you would never have a Republican elected in this country again. They had things in there about election days and what you do, and all sorts of clawbacks. And they had things that were just totally crazy.

JAY TOMLINSON - HOST, BEST OF THE LEFT: So, I would argue that it doesn't matter that we don't technically know with 100% certainty what would happen if we had universal mail-in voting. But, what is most important is that for at least 40 years, the conservative party has been under the impression that voter turnout being high is bad for them, and voter turnout being low is good for them. And we'll get into why.

But Trey continues and says, "Negotiations between Republicans and Democrats for coronavirus aid have broken down. Trump has said without evidence that having universal mail-in ballots for the November 3rd election would lead to fraud. And yes, Trump is dumb to say fraud. What he should be saying is problems, failures, issues with mail-in voting, but everyone keys in on fraud, and that becomes the topic of discussion."

And my argument is that he is not dumb for saying fraud. Claiming fraud is exactly in line with 10 years of Republican strategy, which brings us to Chris Kobach. So, Chris Kobach was sort of the figurehead of the voter fraud movement. He's from Kansas. He was claiming that there was voter fraud in Kansas, and he wanted to prosecute people in Kansas for committing voter fraud. He managed to prosecute almost no one because he couldn't find any legitimate cases of voter fraud. And then he became, I think, the vice chairman of Trump's anti-voter-fraud commission, which utterly failed and ended up being disbanded because, once again, they couldn't find any instances of voter fraud.

So, just a few headlines for you from *ProPublica: How the Case for Voter Fraud was Tested and Utterly Failed* and a quick line from it: "From a new Supreme Court ruling to a census question about citizenship, the campaign against illegal registration is thriving, but when the top proponent was challenged in a Kansas courtroom to prove that such fraud is rampant, the claims went up in smoke." That was referring to Chris Kobach. From *Rolling Stone: Kobach and Trump's Spectacular Voter Fraud Failure*, and a quick line: "As Trump makes new unfounded claims about voter fraud and mail-in voting, it's worth looking back at the colossal train wreck of his administration's first efforts to prove voter fraud. Next one: *Chris Kobach's Voter Fraud Claims: Five Fast Facts You Need to Know*. Number one: during the 2016 election, Kobach repeatedly made claims of widespread voter fraud; number two: Kobach was the vice chairman of the now-disbanded voter fraud panel under the Trump administration; number three: Both of the reports that Kobach has consistently referenced have been described by experts as "inaccurate" and "amateurishly done." Number four: Kobach tried to send a 20-year-old girl to jail for accidentally voting twice. Just a quick word on that story is that the girl was away at college. She voted for Trump, by the way, from

college, and then got a call from her mother that her mother had submitted her ballot from home, as well. So, she voted twice by accident because her mother voted on her behalf without talking to her first. Kobach wanted to send that girl to jail. And number five: In June, a judge called Kobach out for his unsubstantiated voter fraud claims.

So, it was a complete disaster. Claiming voter fraud turned up so few instances of voter fraud as to have been a massive embarrassment to everyone making the claim. Even Paul Ryan, at the time just after Trump's inauguration, agreed that there was "no evidence of mass voter fraud as Trump had claimed."

So, why then the claims of voter fraud? Again, once you take a long view and understand the context, it is clearly to lay the groundwork for extensive voter ID laws that can be crafted in a discriminatory way.

Here's from a PBS *Frontline* article about when North Carolina's voter ID law was struck down for having targeted Black voters, trying to prevent them from being able to vote. The article reads: "A federal Appeals Court panel struck down North Carolina's voter ID law on Friday, overturning what's considered the broadest piece of restrictive voting legislation passed in recent years. This is the second voter ID law to be overturned in as many weeks, while another was weakened." And just a quick pause, this article is from 2016. Continuing: "North Carolina's bill extended beyond requiring a state-issued photo ID at the polls. The law cut early voting days and banned same-day voter registration, eliminated straight ticket voting, which allows voters to choose all candidates from a single party by checking one box, and introduced more restrictions on casting provisional ballots. It prohibited preregistration for 16- and 17-year-olds who previously were allowed to indicate their intent to vote when applying for a driver's license. The law also allowed for more poll watchers, and made it easier to challenge voters or their ballots. On Friday, the three-judge panel of the United States Court of Appeals in Richmond, Virginia found the law not only had a discriminatory effect but that lawmakers did so on purpose, discrimination with 'almost surgical precision.' The Court said that, in crafting the law, the Republican-controlled General Assembly requested and received data on voters' use of various voting practices by race. It found that African-American voters in North Carolina are more likely to vote early, use same-day voter registration, and straight ticket voting. They were also disproportionately less likely to have an ID, more likely to cast a provisional ballot, and take advantage of pre-registration. Then, the Court said lawmakers restricted all of these voting options and further narrowed the list of acceptable voter IDs. Quoting the court, 'With race data in hand, the legislature amended the bill to exclude many of the alternate photo IDs used by African Americans. As amended, the bill retained only the kinds of IDs that White North Carolinians were more likely to possess.'"

So, Trump isn't being dumb when he's making claims of voter fraud. He is staying on message for a party that has been beating the voter fraud drum for a decade so that they would have a false basis to call for restrictive voter ID laws.

So, number one, we know that Republicans believe that increased voter turnout is bad for their chances of winning elections. I happen to agree with them, and I think it is largely due to the fact that their policies are incredibly unpopular. And number two, we know that claiming fraud is not an accident, or the result of Trump being dumb. This is a multi-pronged strategy. You can decrease voter turnout broadly, because they think that that will help

them. But, they can also target Democratic voters with burdensome laws that act as a sort of speed bump between a voter and actually voting to, again, help decrease turnout of their political opponents.

And just one more note on how voting suppression efforts are known to disproportionately affect Democratic voters. As with so many things in America, it comes down to money. If elections happen on Tuesdays, which they do, and it's not listed as a holiday, which it's not, and there are no laws that say employers need to give their staff time off to vote, which for the most part there is not--I'm not sure if that is the case anywhere--then that is an example of how all, for instance, essential workers and anyone working an hourly job is going to have a harder time getting to the polls. And we know what kinds of workers those are as has been laid bare by the coronavirus and the disproportionate levels of Black and brown workers who are listed as essential workers and are treated as expendable. Anyway, it's the same group of people who are going to end up having a harder time voting, for all the same reasons that they're having a hard time not getting sick with coronavirus. While someone with a salary job, and they don't have to be the boss, they can just have the power in their job to take an hour or two away from work without fear of losing money or fear of being reprimanded for missing part of a shift so that they can go vote. So, poorer people who, on average, vote more Democratic -- that should not be a contested fact; Republican voters on average make more money; Democratic voters, on average, make less -- so, if these people have a disproportionately harder time voting with these kinds of just everyday restrictions in place, then the system like mail-in voting, which would remove a lot of those barriers, naturally then would disproportionately benefit those same voters. Speaking of economics, here's another aspect of it.

Why Do We Still Wait in Line to Vote? Part 1 - The Other Washington from @civicskunkworks - Air Date 5-18-17

HOST, THE OTHER WASHINGTON: I was curious if you could talk to us a little bit about the nexus between disenfranchisement and the economy. Because I think there's a lot of overlap there, but I don't know that very many people have unpacked that.

GREG PALAST: Racial vote suppression is class war by other means. When we talk about people who can't vote because of Mickey Mouse rules to supposedly stop voter fraud, yes, it's usually the victims can be identified by their color; they're Black voters, they're Brown voters, and Asian American voters now. But in general, we're talking about a class issue. So for example, take the issue of voter ID. Now, we do know that in voter ID, the demand that you produce a voter ID in order to vote, is meant to stop voter fraud so someone can't use your name. So, I'm going to vote for Greg Palast. Someone steals my name and votes in my name. Well, the thing is it started in Indiana, and in 100 years of record keeping Indiana didn't have a single example of someone voting using someone else's name to vote. They couldn't come up with one example. Wisconsin, one single example. So what's happening? Well, when the studies were done about who didn't have the proper ID, this meant, who doesn't have drivers licenses? Well, to begin with, it's people who don't drive. Who doesn't drive? People who can't afford a car. And so now not being able to afford a car means not being able to afford to vote.

So, that's a class issue. And to me it really sharpens when you get to people like, for example, who supports the requirement to have a picture ID to vote? Andy Young. Andy Young is a multi-millionaire. Martin Luther King used to call [him] my favorite Republican. He was mayor of Atlanta. He was a UN representative under the Carter administration for the United States. So, he's Ambassador Young, and he's also on the board of directors of big corporations. He was on the board of directors of Barrick Gold Mining, a corporation known for its vicious and bloodthirsty tactics in Africa, for example. But Andy Young's on the board.

So Andy Young thinks, well, yeah, people ought to have ID to vote because he has an ID. He has a passport. He has his UN diplomatic papers, et cetera. So he's part of that ruling class. He can't imagine what it is for someone who doesn't have an ID or driver's license to get it. In Indiana, the ACLU measured it, the average county seat to get a non-voter ID to get that non-voter ID, [it's] 17 miles away from the average voter. If you don't have a car, you've got to take a bus. It's an average of three buses. It takes all day to get there and come back. And by the way, when you show up at the voting office at the DMV to get your non-voter ID, you need an ID. Seeing the ID to get an ID. So, you know what happens and the Supreme Court justice Scalia, who the devil took back, Justice Scalia had a black BMW, and he wrote that 17 miles is 17 miles to get to the office where you get your non-voter ID. 17 miles is 17 miles if you're Black or if you're White, or if you're rich or you're poor. No, that's not true. Right. And if you have a black Beamer, you can make 17 miles in about 13 minutes. The reason I know that it's 13 minutes is that he was given a speeding ticket in his Beamer. That's how I know he had his black Beamer. But if you are poor, and you don't have a black Beamer, then it takes you all day to go back and forth. So, you know, it's actually to the point where these people don't know and don't care that the right to vote is becoming a mark of the privileged, not just a mark of the White.

JAY TOMLINSON - HOST, BEST OF THE LEFT: So now getting back to Trey, the main focus of his email was giving an example of the media, doing a bad job asking questions and about how he thinks the media didn't dig deeply enough into the details of what exactly Trump said and what exactly he meant by it when discussing funding of the Post Office.

So, Trey gives this quote from Trump, "if we could agree to a bill, the overall bill, which is obviously a much bigger number than just the Post Office, that would be fine" Trump told reporters at the White House. And then Trey continues, speaking himself, saying someone did ask, would you support a measure to fund the USPS apart from the virus bill and he, referring to Trump, said yes. But no one asked what that would look like, an obvious next question, according to Trey, which he is frustrated that no one asked. So then Trey concludes, saying, "this is just one example where I feel there is dishonesty on both sides of the aisle as they both do it as a posturing position, and we have devolved into opinion journalism across the board."

So, the big reveal in Trey's email seems to be that Trump seemingly said that he would be willing to fund the Post Office apart from the virus recovery bill, and that that is, I suppose, a way to sort of debunk or at least throw cold water on the whole idea that Trump is trying to sabotage the Post Office in order to help his election chances. But this perspective only makes sense if you have no perspective, no historical context for anything that's being said, not to mention, deciding to choose to take Trump at his word, but only selectively. Like if he says fraud, then that's dumb, and he shouldn't have said that, but if he says he'd fund the

Post Office, then that must be evidence that he doesn't want to prevent mail-in voting in order to win the election, even though he's basically said that exact thing multiple times.

As Trey has made very clear to me in both of these emails he sent, he seems to think that the search for truth is nearly synonymous with a search for balance. The way he sees, as you just heard him describe, there's dishonesty happening on both sides, and so he feels that he needs to, he considers himself center-right, but he wanted to listen to Best of the Left to try to get some balance in the hopes that that balance would lead to truth. He praised the show, and says he'll continue to listen because we do a good job at balance, which I appreciate, but I absolutely bristle at the term balance because it's being used as a stand-in for truth or nuance. Why not just stick with truth and nuance? If my show is good, it's because it reveals truth and is expansive enough to use a wide-angle lens to have a nuanced understanding of the truth, not because it is artificially balanced between two ideological sides.

So again, just quick reminder, I'm not picking on Trey. It is obvious that he is well-intentioned and is genuinely trying to do his best to find the best approximation to truth that he can. I am just trying to make an argument for an even better way of finding it. So, he's calling for greater context when he complains that the media doesn't ask enough followup questions on details. That is great; I have no problem with that. But, if you're only asking for deeper context on one statement -- I mean, I know he has other examples -- but in this example, one statement Trump made about being willing to fund the Post Office, if you're looking to drill down to that fine grain level, and that's where your focus is -- I'm not saying that that's wrong or not helpful -- but if that's where your focus stays, then it's like looking at a tree leaf under a microscope, and you think this is interesting, but I know that if there's a forest here, I can't see it. Not, I'm missing the forest for the trees, I'm missing the forest for the cells of the leaf. And so you think, oh god, I'm going to take a step back. I got to see more of this picture. And so you take a step back and so you can see like the leaf and maybe a few branches around, and then you think, nope, still not a forest, I guess it was just this one tree after all. No, no, no;! Another! Take another step back! More context, more context!

Politics is pointillism. Each individual news story is just an amorphous splotch that can be interpreted differently through everyone's filter bubble to fit their preconceived notions. Only when you step back far enough can you see with absolute clarity how all the dots fit together. And that is definitely the case when it comes to the Republican campaign against voting.

So with that, what must be a record-breaking introduction to a podcast out of the way, we'll now move on to our remix. Not a rerun, but a remix of old clips that have been in the show before, but are as relevant today as ever. Clips today come from *The Other Washington*, *Decode DC*, *Democracy Now*, *The David Pakman Show*, and *The Brian Lehrer Show*.

Victoria Bassetti of the Brennan Center on the myth of widespread voter fraud - @DecodeDC - Air Date 10-20-16

JIMMY WILLIAMS - HOST, DECODE_DC: Victoria, talk to me about voter fraud. Does it exist, or is it like the man on the moon?

VICTORIA BASSETTI: Well, I think most Americans are familiar with Tammany Hall, and they've heard all sorts of stories about stealing elections in the 19th century, throwing ballot boxes into the river and intimidating voters, and so that kind of history is like a cloud that hangs over our contemporary understanding of voter fraud. We think it's kind of rife, but it's not. Voter fraud is minuscule. It's sort of like saying because you've got a pimple on your arm it means you've got cancer running throughout your entire system. Not, not so.

JIMMY WILLIAMS - HOST, DECODE_DC: Tell me how, or show me or give me some sort of nugget I can chew on if I believed in the conspiracy theory of voter fraud. Is there anything out there that you can give me?

VICTORIA BASSETTI: Jimmy, virtually every study that's been conducted on incidences of voter fraud in America have concluded that it is *de minimis*, that it is simply not there in a way that impacts our democracy and our system.

Nevertheless, when you go online and type in voter fraud, you're going to see news stories that come up that sort of say this election official in Kentucky was arrested because he or she switched the numbers on a machine. So, you're going to see lots of little anecdotal stories of this, but when you add up all of these anecdotal stories, they amount to maybe 321 cases over a billion votes that have been cast in the last five elections.

So, what's happening is we're being led by stories that are very colorful about voter fraud, but we're failing to see the forest for the trees, if you will.

JIMMY WILLIAMS - HOST, DECODE_DC: I want to talk about this idea of -- and this is my Republican friends are always so good about this, I love them -- they talk about dead people in Chicago voting.

VICTORIA BASSETTI: Yeah, that's a fabulous story, and again, virtually every single study that been done that's tried to analyze whether or not dead people are voting has been debunked. A few years ago, there were allegations of exactly that happening in South Carolina, Jimmy, in your home state, and what happened is a group of Republicans went through and they found all of these dead people who had voted. I think they said something like 300 dead people had voted or something like that. When someone went back and carefully cross-checked the list, what they found was that there was a lot of confusion over names. So, a John Smith versus a John Smyth was voting, and when they actually called up the people who had voted, they found they were real people. So...

JIMMY WILLIAMS - HOST, DECODE_DC: So they weren't dead?

VICTORIA BASSETTI: They weren't dead. They were alive and they actually voted.

JIMMY WILLIAMS - HOST, DECODE_DC: That's good, right?

VICTORIA BASSETTI: Nevertheless, the truth is that our voter registration rolls are, and can be, a little bit of a mess, and we've got extensive regulations dictating when voter rolls can be purged and cleaned up. So it makes it kind of hard for registrars of voters to clean up and to kind of wholesale eliminate people from the list. There's a good reason for that. And the reason is, is that we'd rather have slightly messy voter roles than disenfranchised people en masse. So what we do is we try to make sure that when you vote, you're checked off, you present some form of identification. It can be your utility bill, it can be your employer ID,

your student ID, or something like that. So we make sure that the people who are coming to the polls are actual people, that they are who they say they are, and then we take their ballots. And so that's how we make sure that messy registration rolls don't slip into voter fraud.

JIMMY WILLIAMS - HOST, DECODE_DC: Alright. So then, even if the rolls are messy, once you vote, then, it's almost as if you've been taken out of the picture. You can't go do that again. I don't understand how people can vote 5 or 10 or 30 times. How can that happen?

VICTORIA BASSETTI: Well, I actually asked Michael Brandi who is the head of elections enforcement in Connecticut whether or not I could do that. I asked him, how, if I wanted to, could I vote 10 times?

(BEGIN PRE-TAPED INTERVIEW)

MICHAEL BRANDI: The truth is you wouldn't be able to vote 10 times, because when you appear at the polling place, you've already registered to vote so you're on the voting rolls. So you've already gone through the process of registering to vote in some manner. When you show up at the polling place, you're going to be asked to provide some form of identification, not photo ID, but some form of identification. If you have nothing with you at all, Connecticut has a process where you could fill out an affidavit and through that affidavit, you'd be given a ballot. Now it's a provisional ballot at that point, because they have to certify that, based on your certification on that affidavit, that you are in fact the person and you are voting in the right district, and it's you on the voter rolls. To show up and try to impersonate somebody, I'm just not sure how you would do that. You're still required to give some type of identification. It could be a phone bill, it could be your electric bill, a credit card with your signature on it. It's usually multiple kinds of identification that you need to provide to verify that the person that's on the voter rolls is you.

VICTORIA BASSETTI: So if I wanted to do it, I suppose the first thing I need to do is find the names of some other registered people, right? So presumably they should be women. And I'd also have to be reasonably certain that they weren't themselves going to show up that day.

MICHAEL BRANDI: Correct. So you have to make sure that they're not already there to vote. And you're also going to have to somehow acquire some type of identification to show that Jane Doe who lives at 23 Smith Street, you have some form of identification, whether it's your utility bills that you somehow had to acquire. It would be a real process to try to engage and steal one vote.

VICTORIA BASSETTI: And then if you caught me, what would you do to me?

MICHAEL BRANDI: If we caught you, you would be subject to the criminal violations of voter fraud. Under 9-360, fraudulent voting would subject you to a fine of somewhere between \$300-\$500 and a jail sentence of between one and two years. And that's written in 9-360 of the Connecticut General Statutes. So, to risk that, to vote for one person and impersonate one person doesn't seem to be a great--the cost/benefit there doesn't seem to match up.

VICTORIA BASSETTI: So why all of this push for kind of strict voter ID that you hear about across the United States?

MICHAEL BRANDI: Great question. Looking in the state of Connecticut, we're just simply not seeing these types of voter impersonation situations. We don't know why a photo ID would be required. To me, it's the proverbial solution in search of a problem here.

(END PRE-TAPED INTERVIEW)

So Jimmy, if this were 1888, and you and I were Tammany Hall bosses, we might be able to vote 10 times, but it's the 21st century. We've got a modern election system that's heavily regulated, that's overseen by multiple political officials and on multiple levels. It's simply not possible in the modern era to do what Tammany Hall bosses were able to do in 1888.

@AriBerman: Kris Kobach Is Helping Trump Lay Groundwork for Nationwide Voter Suppression Effort - @DemocracyNow - Air Date: 07-05-17

AMY GOODMAN - HOST, DEMOCRACY NOW!: Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach has defended President Trump's unfounded claim that millions of people illegally voted, supposedly costing Trump the popular vote. He lost by, what, about 3 million votes to Hillary Clinton, but won the electoral college. This is Kansas Secretary of State Kobach being questioned by reporters.

KRIS KOBACH: I think the President-elect is absolutely correct when he says the number of illegal votes cast exceeds the popular vote margin between him and Hillary Clinton at this point.

REPORTER: What tangible evidence is there that that actually happened?

KRIS KOBACH: Well, this is the problem with aliens voting and aliens registering. There's no way you can look on the voter rolls and say, this one's an alien. This one's a citizen. This one's an alien. Once a person gets on the voter rolls, you don't have any way of easily identifying them as aliens. So you have to rely on post-election studies like the Cooperative Congressional Election survey, where you get data from aliens themselves saying, Oh yeah, I voted. It does appear that aliens do vote in very large numbers.

AMY GOODMAN - HOST, DEMOCRACY NOW!: So that was Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach in November, right after the election. In February, he, again claimed there was widespread voter fraud in the presidential election. Here he is sparring with a CNN anchor Kate Baldwin.

KRIS KOBACH: Of the 30 states, we have about 3 million people who are registered in more than one state and that's not a crime, that's just an administrative bookkeeping...

REPORTER KATE BALDWIN: Including the President's son-in-law, including the President's Treasury Secretary.

KRIS KOBACH: Exactly. Yeah. And many of your viewers are probably registered in more than one state. But what is a crime is if you actually vote in both of those states or in more than two states.

REPORTER KATE BALDWIN: Of course it's a crime. But where is the evidence of this widespread, rampant, millions of people voting? If it had happened, why haven't we seen it, Secretary?

KRIS KOBACH: Well, it, well, actually, if you, maybe, I don't know if your network has covered it, but in my state, uh, just to people voting in Kansas and another state, my office prosecutes it, I just got that prosecutorial authority a year and a half ago. We've already filed nine cases.

REPORTER KATE BALDWIN: Yeah, in the notes that I saw, you give nine cases: six guilty pleas, one dismissed, two pending. That's as of January 25th. Nine cases does not rampant widespread voter fraud make.

AMY GOODMAN - HOST, DEMOCRACY NOW!: So, that was CNN host Kate Baldwin questioning Kris Kobach, the Secretary of State of Kansas. Ari Berman:

ARI BERMAN: it's important to note, first off, that Kobach is really the leading architect of voter suppression efforts nationwide. He's not just the Secretary of State of Kansas. He's been going all around the country trying to put in place suppressive voting laws. So one of the laws that Kansas has in place, for example, is proof of citizenship for voter registration. You have to have a passport, a birth certificate or naturalization papers to be registered to vote in Kansas, if you register after 2013. Most people don't carry around those documents with them when they go to register to vote. In Kansas, one in seven new registrants have been blocked from voting because of this one law alone, and Kobach says he wants to see proof of citizenship laws in every state, which would have an unbelievably suppressive effect on voter registration, disenfranchise millions of people.

So Kobach has been going all around the country claiming that voter fraud is widespread, trying to build support for President Trump's lie that millions of people voted illegally, to then put in place policies like preferred citizenship for registration that make it very, very difficult to register to vote.

And it's interesting, you know, for my *New York Times Magazine* article, I looked into all of Kobach's claims about voter fraud, and I found number one, that non-citizen registration is exceedingly rare nationwide. There's no reason why a non-citizen would register to vote and risk a felony and deportation.

The second thing is that Kobach is the only secretary of state in the country with the power to personally prosecute voter fraud cases. So he can actually bring these cases, and of all the cases in Kansas, he's only convicted one non-citizen of voting. So, if it was so widespread, you'd think that in Kansas, where he has prosecutorial power, he would be able to show this, but he has not shown this. And this entire commission is predicated on this gigantic lie that millions of people voted illegally, and Kobach is the one who's whispering in Trump's ear, telling him this, and then trying to prove this evidence. That's why he wanted this data from all 50 States even though there's no evidence to show that voter fraud is widespread.

AMY GOODMAN - HOST, DEMOCRACY NOW!: So let's talk more about your *New York Times Magazine* piece, Ari Berman, "The Man Behind Trump's Voter Fraud Obsession." Give us Kris Kobach's history.

ARI BERMAN: So, Kris Kobach is interesting because before he was a leading proponent of voter suppression he was a leading proponent of restricting immigration. And most people think of these issues as separate. They think of immigration, and they think of voting. But what Kobach has tried to do is combine these two issues. So, first he drafted all of these anti-immigration laws like Arizona's SB 1070, which was the "papers please" law, where police could stop anyone and check their citizenship based on reasonable suspicion if they were in the country illegally. He went all around the country drafting these laws. Then he became Secretary of State of Kansas and started drafting anti-voting laws. And basically what he was saying was that all of these people were in the country illegally and that they were voting illegally, as well. So, he combined anti-immigrant sentiment with policies that would restrict voting rights. And I think the goal here is twofold. First, it's to try to boost the Republican Party in terms of eliminating the pool of voters who could be citizens and then eliminating the electorate itself. But number two, to try to preserve America's shrinking White majority. He is looking at the demographics of the country. He's seeing how the demographics of the country are changing. He's seeing how White people are becoming a minority in many states. And they're pushing both anti-immigrant policies and voter suppression policies to try to protect the Republican Party and try to protect the shrinking White majority in this country.

AMY GOODMAN - HOST, DEMOCRACY NOW!: Talk about his connections to White supremacist right-wing groups.

ARI BERMAN: Well, this was really alarming. So since 2003, 2004, Kobach has been counsel to a group called FAIR--Federations for American Immigration Reform, which is called a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center, really the main group that's promoted restricting immigration.

The founder of that group, John Tanton, who was an ophthalmologist in Michigan, has said unbelievably racist things about Latinos. He said there was going to be an explosion of Whites against Latinos in the US, has republished a book called *Camp of the Saints*, a French novel that's unbelievably racist. Steve Bannon is one of its friends.

So, that's one of Kobach's influences. Another influence was Samuel Huntington from Harvard, who was a longtime professor there known for his work, *The Clash of Civilizations*. But, Huntington really had two very radical ideas that influenced Kobach. The first was that there is such a thing as too much democracy. After things like the Voting Rights Act were passed, Huntington worried about the effect that "the Blacks" would have on the political system. The second thing Huntington denounced was the hispanicization of the US -- the idea that Latino immigrants were threatening anglo-protestant christian values in the US. And so, Kobach talks about the rule of law, he talks about voter fraud, he talks about these things...

AMY GOODMAN - HOST, DEMOCRACY NOW!: Huntington was the mentor of Kobach at Harvard...

ARI BERMAN: ...was a mentor of Kobach when Kobach was at Harvard. So, Kobach talks about all of these things, like the rule of law and voter fraud like it's just these common sense things, but you scratch right below the surface, and you realize that his intellectual influences are really leading proponents of White nationalism and White supremacy in the US.

AMY GOODMAN - HOST, DEMOCRACY NOW!: His relationship with Sheriff Joe Arpaio when he was there in Arizona?

ARI BERMAN: He had a very close relationship to Sheriff Joe Arpaio in Arizona, who branded himself America's toughest sheriff, and was subsequently sued by the Justice Department for racial profiling and held in contempt of court by a federal court. Kobach was really the guy who sold Arpaio on the idea of mass deportation. Kobach had this idea called attrition through enforcement, which really became known as self-deportation. And the idea is you make life so miserable for immigrants that they will just leave the US. So, Kobach is really the guy who ended up getting Arpaio into all this legal trouble by claiming he had this authority that he never had.

AMY GOODMAN - HOST, DEMOCRACY NOW!: What about those who say the point of this commission is simply to identify and then suppress votes of those you don't want to be voting? Where does this commission go now with 44 states refusing to either fully or partly comply with the information requests from Kobach's commission?

ARI BERMAN: I think Trump's commission is still going to make the argument that voter fraud is widespread, rampant and massive, and we have to put in place all of these policies to try to suppress votes in reaction to that. But the point is we're seeing, they're not even going to get the data to be able to do this kind of analysis. So to me, this entire commission is a sham. The fact that all of these states have refused to hand over the data means that this commission in my view should be disbanded. It serves no purpose at this point.

Voter ID Suppressed 200,000 Wisconsin Votes; Trump Won by 22,748 - @DavidPakmanShow - Air Date: 05-11-17

DAVID PAKMAN - HOST, THE DAVID PAKMAN SHOW: Let's talk a little bit about voter suppression. In Wisconsin in 2016, 300,000 registered voters, or about 9% of the electorate, didn't have voter IDs that adhered to Wisconsin's pretty strict voter ID laws. We now have a new study by Priorities USA, and it argues that Wisconsin's voter ID laws reduced voter turnout by 200,000 votes and disproportionately affected Black voters and Democrats. 200,000 people not voting because of voter ID laws: Donald Trump won Wisconsin by only 22,748 votes. Simple math that most of us can do suggests that the new voter ID laws pushed by Republicans, including in Wisconsin, may have given Donald Trump Wisconsin in the 2016 election.

The study contrasted voter turnout in states with similarly strict voter ID laws to states without such laws. We have a chart that we can put up for you related to this. And as you can see, the states that made no changes to their voter ID requirements saw turnout go up from 2012 to 2016. States that changed to go to less strict voter ID laws also saw an increase

in turnout from 2012 to 2016, and, as you can see at the bottom line, states that changed their voter ID laws to stricter laws saw a nearly 2% decline in voter turnout. That's something that Republicans like because Republicans do better when voter turnout is lower.

Let's now go, Pat, to our next graph. Throughout the entire country, the study estimates that strict voter ID laws suppressed about 400,000 votes, again disproportionately affecting Black people, and the study compared numbers between Wisconsin and Minnesota, a state with similar demographics to Wisconsin but no strict voter ID laws. And if you're looking at this graphic, the green line is Black Minnesota voters over recent elections, and as you can see, turnout just ever so slightly lower in 2016 than in 2012, and if you look at the yellow line, you will see that Black Wisconsin voters had significantly [lower] voter turnout from 2012 to 2016. This isn't the only study that says this; it's consistent with a GAO study from 2014, which showed that yes, strict voter ID laws affected the 2012 election enough to change election results, suppressing young and minority voters. Of course, this is the case. This is what these laws are made to do. This is what Republicans want. This helps Republicans win.

Remember this video -- damning video -- from Pennsylvania State Representative Mike Turzai in 2012?

(VIDEO PLAYING)

MIKE TURZAI: "Voter ID, which is going to allow Governor Romney to win the state of Pennsylvania: done." (APPLAUSE)

DAVID PAKMAN - HOST, THE DAVID PAKMAN SHOW: Right? It's not a secret. They've been honest about this for awhile. Lower turnout is good for Republicans or just for the more conservative candidate that's running.

PRODUCER - THE DAVID PAKMAN SHOW: Yeah. It's hard to believe that they support voter IDs just out of principle and not because they know it'll give them a benefit in the upcoming elections.

DAVID PAKMAN - HOST, THE DAVID PAKMAN SHOW: 31 States asked for some form of ID at the ballot. 15 asked for photo ID, and bills that would intensify voter ID laws have been introduced in 19 States so far this year. Iowa and Arkansas have already passed laws like that in 2017. But again, solutions to problems that don't exist. Voter fraud, the way Republicans describe, is not a problem. There were something like you were saying, Pat, four instances of in-person voter fraud during the 2016 election and three of them were Republican voters.

PRODUCER - THE DAVID PAKMAN SHOW: I mean, it's so statistically insignificant and those four cases fall far short of the three to five million people that Trump claims voted illegally in that election.

DAVID PAKMAN - HOST, THE DAVID PAKMAN SHOW: Right? Yeah. As, as if we still are going to pretend that there was even a chance that that was a real thing. We should also be voting on weekends or at least have an election day be a federal holiday. I've mentioned that before.

But you've got to make the IDs easier to get. People say, Hey, the voter IDs are free. That's not really true. Very often, you need documents in order to get the voting ID that you have to pay for copies of. Very often, people have to travel, which has costs, to the place where

you can get one of those voter IDs. And also, many people who work hourly jobs during business hours have to take time off from that job in order to go and get the ID, and that's money that they're going to lose, and not only that, they could also get fired. In a lot of hourly jobs, you can't just say, I'm going to go get a voter ID; give me time off. There are repercussions for that.

PRODUCER - THE DAVID PAKMAN SHOW: Yeah. And those voter IDs have to be completely free because otherwise it violates the 24th amendment which bans a poll tax.

DAVID PAKMAN - HOST, THE DAVID PAKMAN SHOW: If a Republican says, how hard is it to get an ID? You're just trying to get more minorities to vote. That's also not really a criticism, like, are you arguing it's bad for more people to vote? Are you saying we would be better off if our representative democracy was only representative of a smaller portion of the people in the country? Republicans know that they can't continue to win on policy alone, and they have to keep voters as White as possible.

Carol Anderson on the Realities of Voter Suppression - The Brian Lehrer Show - Air Date 9-12-18

BRIAN LEHRER - HOST, THE BRIAN LEHRER SHOW: Carol Anderson is a professor of African-American studies at Emory University and the author of the award-winning book, *White Rage*. Her new book is *One Person, No Vote: How Voter Suppression Is Destroying our Democracy*, and it brings her back to the show. Welcome back, Professor Anderson.

CAROL ANDERSON: Thank you so much for having me, Brian.

BRIAN LEHRER - HOST, THE BRIAN LEHRER SHOW: You open the book by talking about the results in 2016 when African Americans showed up at the polls in lower numbers than in previous elections. And you make the case that that was as much about deliberate efforts to suppress their votes as because of what the media has talked about a lot more, which is a lack of enthusiasm for Hillary Clinton compared to Barack Obama. So, was the lower turnout primarily in states with impediments to voting?

CAROL ANDERSON: Oh, absolutely. I mean, you can in fact see that in states that had enacted voter suppression laws, those are the states that flipped from blue to Trump, and those voter suppression laws were very targeted hits.

BRIAN LEHRER - HOST, THE BRIAN LEHRER SHOW: So, if we think of those votes, those states generally as in the South: Texas, North Carolina, or are they also Wisconsin, Michigan, Pennsylvania?

CAROL ANDERSON: Yes, they absolutely are. And that is because the drive for this latest wave of voter suppression have been the Republicans. And so where you're seeing Republican governments, where the legislature and the governor are both Republicans, that's where you're seeing the implementation of a lot of these horrific laws.

BRIAN LEHRER - HOST, THE BRIAN LEHRER SHOW: You review in the book the history of anti-Black voter suppression that dates from Reconstruction, things like poll taxes and literacy tests that people know if they know history, and have, in a 1965 Voting Rights Act, finally

resulted in an end to many of those things. And yet something has changed back after the Supreme Court decision that many see as eviscerating that law. Remind us of that.

CAROL ANDERSON: Yeah. And that, that evisceration was the Shelby County v. Holder decision in 2013 by the US Supreme Court, where, in a five-four decision written by Chief Justice John Roberts, he argued that the Voting Rights Act was no longer necessary because of the rampant racism that had required the Voting Rights Act in the first place was no longer active in the United States. He said that the law was basically calcified because so few districts have been bailed out of the preclearance provisions of the Voting Rights Act.

BRIAN LEHRER - HOST, THE BRIAN LEHRER SHOW: And so, one thing that's changed is that, since a Democratic President LBJ pushed through the Voting Rights Act, the Republicans rather than the Southern Democrats became the party resisting expansion of voting access.

CAROL ANDERSON: Absolutely. Because what you had with the Southern Strategy is you had those Southern Democrats being wooed into the party, particularly in 1968 and solidified in 1980, first by Nixon and then by Reagan. And so, it just took that kind of virulent White supremacy that operated policy-wise in the Democratic Party and moved it into the Republican Party.

BRIAN LEHRER - HOST, THE BRIAN LEHRER SHOW: President Trump was elected without winning the popular vote. The second time that has happened in recent history. Of course, George W. Bush won that way in 2000 once Florida's electoral votes were given to him. You see a through line between the two results, but not just what happened in Florida, also in Missouri and particularly voting in St. Louis and especially the--now what we think of as Trumpian idea--that widespread voter fraud needed to be addressed. Give us some of that backstory.

CAROL ANDERSON: So, some of that backstory with St. Louis is that the St. Louis board of elections had illegally purged almost 50,000 voters who were primarily in Democratic precincts, purged them from the voter rolls and didn't inform them. So, this is a clearly illegal purge. People came to the voting precinct to vote, found out they weren't on the rolls, but the poll workers didn't have any way to verify it. They couldn't call in because lines were jammed. People were sent downtown to the board of elections, left there for hours, trying to figure it out. The polls are getting ready to close. Democrats get a court order to keep the polls open for three additional hours to deal with this backlog. Republicans came back and immediately had a court shut down the polls within 45 minutes, hollering that this was about massive voter fraud.

BRIAN LEHRER - HOST, THE BRIAN LEHRER SHOW: And in case anyone is in doubt that the goal of greater voter access is universal, here's an old clip from 1980 of conservative activist Paul Weyrich, a cofounder of the Heritage Foundation, Moral Majority and other groups in a speech that we think is before a Christian right audience in Dallas. But he speaks very candidly to this group in 1980.

PAUL WEYRICH: How many of our Christians have what I call the goo-goo syndrome-- good government? They want everybody to vote. I don't want everybody to vote. Elections are not won by a majority of people. They never have been from the beginning of our country, and they are not now. As a matter of fact, our leverage in the elections quite candidly goes up as the voting populace goes down.

BRIAN LEHRER - HOST, THE BRIAN LEHRER SHOW: Gasp. That was candid.

CAROL ANDERSON: That was candid. And that's the blueprint. That's the blueprint.

BRIAN LEHRER - HOST, THE BRIAN LEHRER SHOW: Let's take a call of pushback, I think, from Leonardo in Yaphank. Hello, Leonardo you're on WNYC.

CALLER - LEONARDO: Can you hear me? Okay. Um, my background is kind of diverse, but part of it includes many years working for the board of elections. And I have to tell you that I have a big problem believing that anyone is trying to suppress minorities, and I'm going to tell you the primary reason why. The truth of the matter is, minorities make up such a small number of the actual voters that it's hard to believe that anyone really would care whether or not they're voting. I have seen this year after year after year, and it's just, it happens all the time, and I'm going to go slightly off-track here and talk about the recent decision in New York to allow individuals who are on parole and probation to vote. And everyone is making a big stink about that. The truth of the matter is that over 98% of men who are incarcerated have never voted. So, they're not going to go out and vote. So that believing that anyone is targeting minorities, then

BRIAN LEHRER - HOST, THE BRIAN LEHRER SHOW: Leonardo, I'm going to leave it there, because our time is short, and get a response. Frankly, I think that's just naive. There's just so much history that proves it.

CAROL ANDERSON: It's so much history that proves that the targeting, particularly of African-Americans, but there's also the targeting of Latinos. And it's well documented. It's North Carolina, where the Fourth Circuit says that the state legislature targeted African Americans with nearly surgical precision. One of the ways they did it was early voting. The impact of that was that Black voter turnout in early voting went down by 8.5%. That means a lot in North Carolina.

BRIAN LEHRER - HOST, THE BRIAN LEHRER SHOW: And with respect to probation and parole, there are pushes on both sides, right? So, there are movements to try to expand the numbers of voters who might be disproportionately African-American, unfortunately, when we're talking about that population. And I guess that's a push and pull over the years. After you've served your time for a crime, how long should you continue to lose your right to vote for?

CAROL ANDERSON: Right because in Florida, you know, you have permanent felony disenfranchisement.

What that means is we have 6.2 million people in the United States who are disenfranchised because of a felony conviction. In Florida: 1.6 million of them reside in Florida. That means that 40% of Black men cannot vote in Florida. Almost 23% of Black adults in Florida cannot vote. Now, they get counted in the census so that Florida gets the kind of representation that they want in the House of Congress, in the U S Congress. But they don't have the ability to vote. It's almost like the three-fifths rule again. And wiping out that kind of population can tip the scales in an election in Florida.

BRIAN LEHRER - HOST, THE BRIAN LEHRER SHOW: And in Florida, you know who was a resident of Florida when he was alive? And there's a story that I've told a few times when we

talk about this topic, because it brings it home for people who aren't usually engaged in this. The late owner of the Yankees, George Steinbrenner, was a resident of Florida, and he was convicted of a campaign finance felony with respect to illegal contributions to the Nixon campaign, and he lost his ability to vote. And Ronald Reagan pardoned him, and the reason Ronald Reagan pardoned George Steinbrenner for illegal campaign contributions to Richard Nixon was so that George Steinbrenner could vote again in the state of Florida.

CAROL ANDERSON: Boom. Boom.

Why Do We Still Wait in Line to Vote? Part 2 - The Other Washington from @civicskunkworks - Air Date 5-18-17

HANNAH BROOKS OLSEN: How much time did you have to take off this year to cast a ballot?

DAVID GOLDSTEIN: Well, man, I had a hard time finding the stamp in my wallet.

HANNAH BROOKS OLSEN: Which is where you keep your stamps . . .

DAVID GOLDSTEIN: Which is where I keep my stamps . . .

HANNAH BROOKS OLSEN: And you only have them

DAVID GOLDSTEIN: I only have them for voting because Washington is one of three states now which is an all vote-by-mail state.

Correct.

Which means that we get our ballots in the mail. We fill them out on our own time. We put a stamp on them. We drop in them in the mail, or we drop them without a stamp in a dropbox and your ballots are counted. There's no waiting in line. There's no broken polling machines

HANNAH BROOKS OLSEN: You don't have to go anywhere. I voted in my jammies this year with like a hot toddy in my hand.

Paul, did you take off any time to vote?

PAUL CONSTANT: I did not. I, voted in an evening. I sat down with the voters guide that was provided to me and went through and made choices based on that. And

HANNAH BROOKS OLSEN: So, you also got to have resources with you, which is the other great thing . . .

DAVID GOLDSTEIN: It's an open book test.

HANNAH BROOKS OLSEN: It is an open book task.

Yeah. You get to have your notes ,and you can google.

PAUL CONSTANT: I have the Google. Yes, yes. And I did. I'm a snail mail guy. I like mailing things, so I always have my Batman stamps, although now I have some Wonder Woman

stamps on my fridge that I'm very excited about using, but I do think that it would be great if Washington State had postage paid because that even that is a barrier for voters.

HANNAH BROOKS OLSEN: Yeah, so I think that's a really good point, and King County has been experimenting with a little bit of postage paid recently, a couple of the really small school [precincts] -- one on Vashon Island. I think. They've been trying it out to see whether or not it increases voter turnout, which it has, and the real question is whether or not it's like worth the cost, but we've already cut the cost by doing vote-by-mail,

DAVID GOLDSTEIN: You know, to borrow a title from your later guest's book, we want the best democracy money can buy. And if the cost of it is the first class stamp, I think, I think it's a bargain.

HANNAH BROOKS OLSEN: Right?

And also, by the way, that's just money that goes from one government hand to the other, because it's the Post Office, which I think we all agree is something that we want to keep operational and help support.

DAVID GOLDSTEIN: Yeah.

So, the great thing for folks outside of the West Coast who aren't used to the whole vote by mail thing, there's vote by mail in every state. In every state and every jurisdiction, you can get an absentee ballot.

The question is what are your absentee ballot laws? Is it something that you can only do if you verify you're going to be out of state the way it is in my native Pennsylvania? Is it something you can request every time regardless? Or is it something where you can put yourself as a permanent absentee as you can do in some states. In Washington, there's no choice. Everybody is essentially an absentee voter and gets their ballots in the mail. And the great thing about this is that much of the voter suppression laws that you see going around nationwide: voter ID, et cetera is intended specifically to suppress the vote. And you can't do any of that stuff with vote-by-mail because there's no polling place. There's no ID to show. You're either a registered voter or you're not. And, if by chance your ballot doesn't show up, you've got three weeks. You can request another ballot. You can go online and print one out.

HANNAH BROOKS OLSEN: You can print it the day it's due, you can print it -- I was telling people if you've lost your ballot that does not mean that you're out of the game.

We make it very easy, even though we don't pay postage for people to vote. I personally have never waited in line to vote. I have never had to go to a polling place my entire voting life. I grew up in Oregon, and now I'm here. I have been able to mail my ballot in, and the idea that I would have had to take a day off of my job as a waitress to stand in line, I wouldn't have done it. I can tell you that I wouldn't have done it. And so even that, the fact that the rest of the country has been so slow to adopt vote by mail, I think, is very indicative of the larger view about who gets to vote and who can vote. Voting day is not a national holiday. You can't -- would you -- I can't imagine, call in sick?

DAVID GOLDSTEIN: It is a crime against our democracy every election day when you see those scenes of people waiting in lines for hours, where they have to go to court to extend the hours of the polling places because they've run out of ballots or a machine is broken. It

doesn't happen here in Washington State; it never happens here in Washington State. Republicans could take over; we have a Republican Secretary of State. It still doesn't happen.

I mean, she is trying her damndest to make it a little harder by that thing, real ID.

She's not evil by national Republican standards.

It's all relative. So one of the first things, I think -- if you made me benevolent dictator -- I would do is national vote-by-mail.

HANNAH BROOKS OLSEN: Yeah.

DAVID GOLDSTEIN: Everybody has the right to be a permanent absentee voter.

JAY TOMLINSON - HOST, BEST OF THE LEFT: And with that, we will wrap up our remix episode. Once again, you just heard The Other Washington, Decode DC, Democracy Now, The David Pakman Show and The Brian Lehrer Show. Thanks as always to everyone for listening. Keep the comments coming in at (202) 999-3991. Especially, thanks to those who support the show by becoming a member or making donations with any size at patreon.com/bestoftheleft. That is absolutely how the program survives. Of course, everyone can support the show just by telling everyone you know about it and leaving us glowing reviews on Apple podcasts and Facebook to help others find the show.

For details on the show itself, including links to all of the sources of music used in this and every episode, all that information can always be found in the show notes on the blog and likely right on the device, you're using to listen. So coming to you from far outside the conventional wisdom of Washington, D C, my name is Jay, and this has been the Best of the Left podcast coming to you as often as we are able, thanks entirely to the members of donors to the show, from bestoftheleft.com.