

Arizona election updates: More ballot results expected Friday morning

Arizona Republic - November 5, 2020 - — Perry Vandell

5:15 p.m.: Faith leaders denounce Wednesday protest as another begins

Two Arizona faith groups issued a statement on Thursday denouncing the more than 100 protesters — including members of the extremist group AZ Patriots — who showed up at the Maricopa County Tabulation and Election Center in Phoenix demanding they be allowed to oversee the vote-counting process.

Valley Interfaith Project and Arizona Interfaith Network

released a joint statement saying they recognized frustrations at the prolonged ballot-counting process, but that threatening election officials was unacceptable.

“The unwarranted provocation, aided and abetted by fringe group extremists, is an affront to the democratic process,” the

statement read. “The belligerent tone of the gathering clearly was intended to intimidate election officials and observers, creating an unsettled atmosphere and perhaps sanctioning future uprisings and potential violence.”

Though no skirmishes occurred between the Trump supporters and the Maricopa County Sheriff deputies who barred them from entering, several supporters were armed with guns. Right-wing extremist Mike Cernovich and Rep. Paul Gosar tweeted on Thursday asking people to protest outside the election center once again but leave the firearms at home.

“I know it’s your right in Arizona but I am against open carry and ask you not do that,” Cernovich said in a tweet. Gosar suggested on Twitter that people bring flags and bibles instead.



On Thursday, fencing was installed throughout part of the election center's parking lot with the exterior being a designated "free speech zone." Deputies allowed protesters to gather just before the steps leading to the building's entrance on Wednesday evening.

— *Perry Vandell*