



Indivisible Bainbridge Island Newsletter

Dec. 23, 2023

Guided by Indivisible's [Practical Guide to Defeating MAGA](#)

Help progressives win seats in state legislatures and Washington, D.C.

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On the Calendar

- Dec. 27, 2 pm, [Postcards on Wednesday](#) upstairs at the T&C – writing for Tom Suozzi, the Democrat running for Santos' old seat!
- Jan. 6, a proposed "Vigil for Democracy" at the corner of Winslow Way and Highway 305. [Email Holly](#) if you are interested in attending.
- Jan. 12, 1:30 pm to 2:30 pm, Zoom, [Politics with David Harrison](#), hosted by the [Bainbridge Island Senior Center](#) (Date is TBD)
- Jan. 19, the stopgap funding bill for funding agriculture, energy and water, military construction, Veterans' Affairs, transportation, and housing expires
- Feb. 2, the stopgap funding bill for everything else expires

In This Newsletter

- [Do Something](#) – Postcards to win Santos' open seat! Join Take Action Network!
- [Holding Trump Accountable](#) – D.C. appellate court retakes center stage
- [Elections](#) – Good news in Wisconsin!
- [President Biden and His Administration](#) – Surge in consumer confidence
- [In Congress](#) – Congress is gone for the holidays
- [In the Courts](#) – Another Thomas scandal
- [In the States](#) – Video emerges in Florida
- [In the World](#) – Masha Gessen kicked a hornet's nest
- [Daily Actions](#) - Tell our members of Congress what you think; we have new actions monthly

This newsletter is prepared weekly by Indivisible Bainbridge Island. Previous newsletters are archived [here](#). - [Kathy](#) and [Holly](#)

Do Something

- **Help us write postcards!** We're on a mission to flip the 18 congressional districts Biden won in 2020 but were lost to the GOP in 2022. We meet upstairs at the T&C for every Wednesday at 2 pm. We have addresses and a script in support of **Democrat Tom Suozzi**, who's running to replace George Santos in New York's 3rd CD. Or, pick up postcards from Holly's front porch at 8824 NE New London Ct. and [email Kathy](#) for the addresses and script. The special election is Feb. 13, so this is our highest priority now through January! Republicans have nominated a "Democrat" to keep this seat! See "Elections" below.
- **Join the Take Action Network!** You'll specify your areas of interest (environment, green energy, social justice, gun safety, etc.) and then receive emails with quick, easy things to do from your computer based on your areas of interest. The session in Olympia starts in January, so most if not all actions will be centered on bills in the state legislature. When a hearing is held on a bill in your area of interest, you'll get an email asking you to sign-in "PRO" on "CON" before the hearing. Legislators will know that, for example, 585 people are in favor of a bill that protects orcas and ten people are opposed. **Join Take Action Network** [here](#). **More info** [here](#).

Holding Trump Accountable (ordered by trial date, sort of)

14th Amendment Cases

- On Tuesday, the Colorado Supreme Court [ruled that Trump is disqualified](#) from holding the presidency under the Constitution's insurrection clause and ordered the secretary of state to exclude his name from the state's Republican presidential primary ballot. However, the court paused its decision, saying that if review to the nation's highest court is sought before Jan. 4, its stay will remain in place, and the secretary will be required to list Trump on the 2024 primary ballot until the U.S. Supreme Court rules. [Trump says he will appeal](#).
 - A [YouGov poll found](#) that 54% approve of the Colorado decision, while 35% disapprove.
 - In a fit of pique, the Colorado GOP [is considering switching](#) its presidential contest to a caucus.
 - FBI to [review reported threats](#) to Colorado justices following ruling in Trump ballot case.
- 14th amendment challenges are or have been underway in Oregon, Nevada, New Mexico, Wyoming, [Maine](#), Texas Wisconsin, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, New Jersey, West Virginia, New York and Alaska, according to [Lawfare.org](#). Cases have already been dismissed in Minnesota, Florida, New Hampshire, [North Carolina](#) and Rhode Island.

NY Attorney General Letitia James' Civil Fraud Case Against the Trump Organization; trial started Oct. 2.

- Trump asked for a directed dismissal of this case for at least the fifth time. [Judge Engoron responded with a scathing ruling](#): “A lie is still a lie.”
- Judge Engoron has already found the Trump Org guilty of routinely deceived banks, insurers and others by exaggerating the value of assets on paperwork used in making deals and securing loans. The [six remaining charges](#) include allegations of conspiracy, falsifying business records and insurance fraud.
- If Judge Engoron finds against Trump and Trump appeals, he'll likely have to [pay an appeal bond](#) in the amount of the judgment – or seek an emergency stay of the payment.

E. Jean Carroll's next defamation case; trial set for Jan. 15. (This is the first case Carroll filed when Trump was still president. She filed a second case after he left office; that case has already been adjudicated and this case is only being held to determine monetary damages.)

- Trump [has requested a 90-day delay](#) in this civil case. He wants to wait for the Supreme Court to make a decision on his “absolute presidential immunity,” while at the same time he’s trying to [delay the Supreme Court](#) from making a decision on his criminal immunity claim. The D.C. appellate court [has already determined](#) Trump is not entitled to presidential immunity in Jan. 6 civil cases.
- Trump is [scrambling to block](#) Ashlee Humphreys, a Northwestern University marketing professor who analyzes social media trends, from testifying after realizing what she did in the Giuliani defamation case.

Class Action Multi-level Marketing, Pyramid Scheme Case; trial date set for Jan. 29

- [Summary](#). No news.

Special Counsel Jack Smith's Jan. 6 case; trial date set for March 4, 2024

- The Supreme Court [rejected](#) Jack Smith’s request to hear Trump immunity claim. This leaves the D.C. appellate court to hear Trump’s request to dismiss this case with briefing over the due over the holidays and a hearing on Jan. 9 before a three-judge panel. If the panel rules in favor of Jack Smith, Trump will have 45 days to appeal to the full D.C. appellate court. If the appellate court rules in favor of Jack Smith, Trump will have 90 days to appeal to the Supreme Court. The hope now is that the appellate panel or the full court (if necessary) releases the automatic stay on Judge Chutkan that prevents her from conducting any activities necessary to

move this trial forward, such as allowing motions to be filed responding to motions and interviewing potential jurors.

- The new audio tapes that [capture Trump pressuring Michigan election officials](#) will likely be of interest to Jack Smith.
- Jack Smith has [added](#) Michael Dreeben, a Supreme Court specialist, to his team.
- Trump lawyers [claim](#) Jack Smith 'unlawfully attempted to advance' this case despite the court-ordered pause. (Gasp! Smith handed over more discovery to the Trump team.)
- John Eastman refused to testify before the Jan. 6 special committee about his role in the Jan. 6 insurrection, but he talked for three hours before a California disbarment hearing on Dec. 11, and [Jack Smith has the transcripts](#).

Manhattan DA Alvin Bragg's Falsified Business Records case; trial set for March 25, 2024

- No news.

Special Prosecutor Jack Smith's Documents Case; trial set for May 20, 2024

- Jack Smith is [trying to move this case along](#) by getting Judge Aileen Cannon to set Feb. 2 as the day by which both parties must jointly submit to the court a proposed jury questionnaire if the current trial date of May 20 is to be kept. Trump lawyers are resisting. Delay, delay, delay.

DA Fani Willis Election Interference Case; trial date requested for Aug. 5, 2024

- Federal appeals court [ruled that a former federal officer cannot remove](#) his criminal case from state to federal court, denying Mark Meadows' bid to get out of the Georgia election interference case. The 11th Circuit also found that Meadows was way outside his official duties as chief of staff when he helped Trump get re-elected in violation of the Hatch Act.
- When asked if Trump could get prison time, Fani Willis [said](#) he will not get a "special break."
- Lawyers for co-defendant Trevian Tutti [served notice](#) they want to dump her, possibly because Tutti got on social media and declared she would "f—ck-up" Ruby Freeman.
- On Monday, Trump [filed another motion](#) to dismiss this case, this time based on his First Amendment right to free speech, which federal courts have already dismissed. latest frivolous motion to dismiss the RICO Indictment in Georgia and the effort by his followers to continue to spread the most outlandish lies about the 2020 election.

Enablers

- Chief U.S. District Judge John Boasberg [ruled](#) that prosecutors can get access to 1,659 of the more than 2,000 records found on **Scott Perry's** personal device, which was seized in August

2022. Along with Mike Johnson (R-LA), Perry (R-PA) has emerged as a central player in House efforts to overturn the 2020 election.

- **Rudy Giuliani/Ruby Freeman/Shaye Moss defamation case**

- Giuliani [filed for bankruptcy](#) days after being ordered to pay \$148 million in defamation case. Rudy is really, really [broke](#).
- Former Georgia election workers [sue Giuliani again](#), asking the judge to permanently stop him from lying about them or [get tossed in jail](#).
- An Arizona judge [has ruled that the defamation lawsuit](#) filed by Maricopa County Recorder Stephen Richer against Kari Lake can move forward. In 2022, Lake claimed that Richer used improper 19-inch ballots and counted 300,000 fraudulent ballots. *And there's plenty of malice.*
- Trump lawyer, Alina Habba, [has been bragging](#) that federal judge Donald Middlebrook fined her \$1 million for repeatedly filing frivolous lawsuits in Florida on behalf of Trump.
- Elise Stefanik (R-NY) [sent a strongly worded complaint](#) to the Judicial Council of the District of Columbia about Judge Beryl Howell's speech to the Women's White Collar Defense Association warning about the country's risk of descending into authoritarianism.

"Tourists"

- Ex-Proud Boy leader [gets 3 years in prison](#) for rioting on Jan 6.
- Former Marco Rubio intern [was arrested and charged](#) for actions at the Capitol on Jan. 6.

Elections

- **Keeping candidates off the presidential ballot**

- In 1860 in slave states, Democrats [removed Abraham Lincoln](#) from the ballot. In 1892, the Republicans in Florida [took the incumbent president](#) Benjamin Harrison (R) off the ballot in favor of James B. Weaver. In 1912 Republicans in [South Dakota](#) and [California](#) replaced incumbent president, William Howard Taft (R) with Teddy Roosevelt. In [1948](#) in Alabama, Democrats replaced incumbent president, Harry Truman (D) with Strom Thurmond (D) and in [1964](#), Democrats did not put incumbent Lyndon Johnson (D) on the ballot. Their faults: Truman issued an executive order to end segregation in the military and Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- Republican conspiracy theorists [tried](#) to get Obama kicked off the ballot in 2008.
- In 2016, Trump decried that [Ted Cruz](#) should not be allowed to run because he was born in Canada and that [Hillary Clinton](#) should not be allowed to run "based on her crimes."

- In 2012, current SCOTUS justice Neil Gorsuch, who was then serving on the Colorado Supreme Court, [authored an opinion](#) that kept a naturalized U.S. citizen, Abdul Hassan, from appearing on the Colorado presidential ballot. Gorsuch wrote that “a state’s legitimate interest in protecting the integrity and practical functioning of the political process permits it to exclude from the ballot candidates who are constitutionally prohibited from assuming office.”
- [Judge upholds decision to leave Chris Christie](#) off Maine primary ballots, saying he failed to get enough signatures.
- A [New York Times/Siena College poll found](#) that just 33% of voters think Trump has **not** committed serious federal crimes, while 58% of voters think **he has committed serious federal crimes**. Never the less, 46% of voters say they will vote for Trump anyway.
- Multiple devastating reports [reveal](#) DeSantis is in deep trouble.
- **Trump past and future**
 - **Past:** Not Mein Kampf – in a resurfaced interview with Ivana Trump she [says](#) Trump kept a book of Hitler speeches by his bed.
 - **Future:**
 - Trump would “indemnify” all on-duty police officers, essentially shielding them from misconduct lawsuits, even though they are already shielded. ““We are going to indemnify them, so they don’t lose their wife, their family, their pension and their job,” Trump said at a recent rally.
 - Trump continues to accuse immigrants of “poisoning the blood” of the country. [Watch](#) Nicole Malliotakis (R-NY) re-write Trump’s ant-immigrant rhetoric.
 - 42% of Iowa Republican caucus goers say they are more likely to support Trump when he says immigrants who enter the U.S. illegally are “poisoning the blood” of America. 43% percent are more likely to support Trump when he says “the radical left thugs that live like vermin” need to be rooted out. 50% are more likely to support Trump when he advocates for “sweeping raids, giant camps and mass deportations.” [Details](#)
 - Authoritarianism expert spots Trump line showing [who he’ll target](#) after immigrants.
- **Redistricting**
 - The **Wisconsin** Supreme Court [ordered new state legislative maps](#); Democrats hope fair maps will eliminate the extreme gerrymandering that have given Republicans a strangle-hold on the state legislature, which controls the drawing of congressional maps.

- **Georgia** was ordered to redraw its congressional and legislative district maps to come into compliance with the Voting Rights Act. The latest maps drawn by the state legislature make a mockery of that. A hearing was held Dec. 20 to decide whether to order another redraw.
- **In New York**
 - Gov. Kathy Hochul (D) signed a law aligning local races with state races in even-numbered years in effort overcome voter fatigue.
- **In Washington State**
 - **Decline to sign any petition for the rest of the year!** Multimillionaire Brian Heywood and State Republican Party Chair Jim Walsh are behind six proposed ballot initiatives designed to roll back the work our state legislature has done to improve public education, make communities safer and fight climate change. The initiatives are 2081, 2109, 2111, 2113, 2117 and 2124. For example, 2109 would repeal the capital gains tax on the wealthy that has added billions in education funding. More at [StopGreed.org](https://stopgreed.org).

President Biden and the Administration

- Pres. Biden warned against threats to democracy and asked Americans to speak out.
- [Vice President Harris to tour U.S.](#) to promote abortion rights ahead of election.
- Pres. Biden extends marijuana pardons to convictions on federal lands and Washington, D.C.
- Pres. Biden signed the defense policy bill, extending controversial spying program.

The Administration

- The Biden Administration moves to protect remaining old-growth forests from logging but stops short of limiting timber harvest in younger “mature” stands of trees.
- Dept. of Transportation fined Southwest Airlines \$140 million for its meltdown a year ago.

““This is about the entire industry, sending a signal that you should not be cutting corners — because if you fail your passengers, we will hold you accountable,” said Secretary of Transportation, Pete Buttigieg.

 - Passengers could get \$75 for delays under Southwest settlement.
- **The economy:**
 - Once again, the Dow Jones Industrial Average closed at over 37,000 points.
 - Consumers are ending 2023 with a surge in confidence and restored optimism for 2024.

In Congress

The Senate – Christmas break, back on Jan. 8

The House – Christmas break, back on Jan. 9

- Just 27 bills were signed into law this year, making [this Congress the least productive](#) since 1931.
- House Republicans' [push to shrink the size of the country's leading anti-hunger program](#) would disproportionately hit their own Hispanic constituents, just as the GOP is trying to build on recent gains with the key voting bloc ahead of 2024.
- **House Speaker Mike Johnson**
 - How Mike Johnson [became too right-wing](#) for his own father and step-mom.
- The House [passed a bill](#) allowing schools to serve whole milk.

In the Courts

• The Supreme Court

- SCOTUS was rocked again this week by [another report from ProPublica](#). The report includes a letter by Clarence Thomas sent Jan. 11, 2000 to then Rep. Cliff Stearns (R) in support of a bill to raise the salaries of Supreme Court justices. "It's worth a lot to Americans to have the constitution properly interpreted. We must have proper incentives here, too," Thomas wrote. [He threatened to quit](#) if a raise did not happen. Clinton was president and it looked like Al Gore would follow him – no possibility of a GOP-appointed justice to replace Thomas in sight. But [donors like Harlan Crowe came through](#). Eventually SCOTUS pay was increased (from \$173,600 to [\\$274,200](#) today).
- On Tuesday, a [service was held](#) at Washington National Cathedral for former Supreme Court justice Sandra Day O'Connor, who died on Dec. 1.
- On Dec. 13, Justice Amy Coney Barrett [refused to block](#) Illinois' assault weapons ban, leaving the ban in place while challenges to the law are being heard in lower courts. On Dec. 14, the full court issued an unsigned order denying a similar request for an injunction by the National Association for Gun Rights, one of the plaintiffs in a lawsuit challenging both the statewide ban and a local ban in the city of Naperville.

• Lower Federal Courts

- The ACLU [is suing Ohio](#) over an Ohio voting law, saying the law violates federal disability law.
- A federal judge [temporarily blocked](#) a California law that would ban carrying firearms in most public places.
- A judge [halted removal of confederate memorial](#) at Arlington Cemetery.
- A federal judge [denied](#) a request to block Massachusetts assault weapons ban.

In the States

- How [marijuana legalization failed communities](#) hit hardest by the drug war.
- **In Florida**
 - Amid sexual assault allegations against Florida GOP Chair Christian Ziegler, [a sex tape of his wife, Moms for Liberty co-founder Bridget Ziegler](#), with a woman has been recovered by the police. It is not known if the unnamed woman in the sex tape is the same as the unnamed woman who has accused Christian Ziegler of sexual assault.
 - The Florida GOP has been unable to convince Ziegler to resign, so on Dec. 17 it [stripped chairman Christian Ziegler of his authority](#) and all but \$1 of his salary until it can remove him.
 - [Watch](#) a former student call out Brittany Ziegler to her face.
 - Florida AG [says](#) school libraries are for “government speech,” not free expression.
- **In New York**
 - The right is in an uproar because a New York lawmaker has proposed new legislation that would require restaurants within rest stops on the Thruway and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to be open seven days a week. Some of the affected restaurants are Chick-fil-A restaurants, which [are not open on Sundays](#).
 - The FBI is investigating New York City mayor Eric Adams (D) 2021 campaign [for accepting illegal donations](#), including from the Turkish government.
- **In Ohio**
 - A Black woman was [criminally charged](#) after a miscarriage after seeking medical care and giving birth at home.
- **In Texas**
 - Four things to know about [Texas' new law letting police arrest migrants](#) who illegally enter the U.S.
 - Texas [sends migrants](#) by private plane to Chicago.
- **In Washington**
 - Bainbridge Island School Superintendent Bang-Knudsen [resigned effective June 30](#). Amii Thompson has been appointed as Bang-Knudsen's replacement.
 - In his budget, Gov. Inslee [proposed](#) another \$941 million for clean energy, climate action and transportation in WA, as well as a one-time \$200 credit on residential electricity bills for low- and moderate-income households. The budget would tap into stronger-than-expected revenue from the state's carbon-pricing program, aka, the [Climate Commitment Act](#) passed in 2021.

- Volunteers responded, easing the [threat of evictions](#) at Poulsbo Mobile Home Park.
- [A jury has cleared three Washington state police officers](#) of all criminal charges in the 2020 death of Manuel Ellis, a Black man who was shocked, beaten and restrained face down on a Tacoma sidewalk as he pleaded for breath.
- Gift-giving gesture [grows](#) to thousands of toys given in hospitals at St. Michael Medical Center, Seattle Children's Hospital, Mary Bridge Children's Hospital and St. Anthony's Hospital.
- This week, Indivisible Bainbridge Island signed on in support of a ["Green Amendment" to the Washington state constitution](#). If adopted, the amendment would give the people of this state a right to a clean and healthy environment. The amendment was introduced in 2021 as [HJR 4205](#) but failed to gain traction. Its supporters are trying again this year.
- ["She Immigrated Legally. She Married a U.S. Citizen. But She Was Denied Citizenship for Working in Legal Cannabis."](#) **All this happened in Ephrata, WA.**

In the World

• Israel/Hamas War

- ["In the Shadow of the Holocaust](#), how the politics of memory in Europe obscures what we see in Israel and Gaza today." by Masha Gessen writing at NewYorker.com
 - [Masha Gessen kicked the hornet's nest on Israel and the Holocaust](#), an interview with Gessen
- Amid U.N. Security Council intrigue, U.S. [privately moves to block](#) another option for international accountability for Gaza.
- Israel faces new calls for truce after killing of hostages [raises alarm](#).
- The U.N, Security Council [passed a resolution to boost Gaza aid](#) as U.S. abstained

• Ukraine/Russia

- List of key events, [day 667](#)
- Yekaterina Duntsova, a former journalist and anti-war advocate, [has been barred](#) from running against Russian President Vladimir Putin in the March election.
- [Sanctions on Russian oil have failed](#). Were they ever meant to succeed?
- [U.S. aid debate pushed to 2024](#) as Ukraine continues to battle Russian drones.
- [Zelenskyy is confident](#) the U.S. will not 'betray' Ukraine.
- The White House [is considering](#) seizing \$300 billion in Russian central bank assets, [as is the G7](#).