



Election Group With Ties to Soros, Zuckerberg Meets in Washington for Conference Closed to Public

Description

USA: An elections group with ties to Democrat mega-donor George Soros and Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg gathered in Washington on May 8 for a meeting that was closed to the public.

The Epoch Times was denied entry to the event, called a “Summit on American Democracy” and hosted by the Center for Election Integrity & Research (CEIR). Organizers said that the event was invite-only. Only preapproved press and other guests were permitted to attend the summit.

Though the event was [live-streamed](#), the closed nature of the event deprived independent media of access to the laundry list of high-ranking officials attending the summit, including a litany of Secretaries of State, who oversee elections, and other election officials. Among those attending the conference were Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger and Bill Gates, county supervisor for Maricopa County, Arizona.

The group describes itself as “committed to a fiercely nonpartisan approach.” But partisan allegations against its founder, funding by Zuckerberg, and indirect ties to the left-wing Soros challenge that description.

During the livestream of the event, the group’s founder, David Becker, set the tone for the conference in his opening remarks, repeating contested claims about the security of the 2020 election, and dismissing concerns about election fraud as unfounded.

“The 2020 election was, simply put, the most secure, transparent, and verifiable election in American history and it’s not close,” Becker claimed.

At least one journalist who challenged this narrative was allegedly removed from the conference.

Laura Loomer, an outspoken ally of President Donald Trump and proponent of theories about widespread election fraud in 2020, [reported](#) that she was thrown out of the conference for confronting election officials from Arizona and Georgia. The organizers later called the police on Loomer.

Becker founded CEIR in 2016. He has also been instrumental in several other electoral organizations and efforts across his career.

Partisan Accusations

During the summit, Becker sought to present himself as nonpartisan and unbiased.

He claimed that he was one of the few election officials who was willing to acclaim Trump's 2016 victory as legitimate, even as others considered claims that voter fraud and election tampering had deprived Hillary Clinton of a victory.

However, Becker founded CEIR in response to concerns about "foreign interference" in elections, an oft-repeated claim that Trump won in 2016 due to widespread Russian interference. But later multimillion-dollar federal investigations into Trump's victory turned up no evidence of these claims.

And the founder's track record is splashed with claims of political biases against conservatives.

In 2005, Becker—who has worked in elections for decades—was the subject of a formal ethics complaint while working in the Civil Rights division of the Department of Justice (DOJ).

During the Republican administration of President George W. Bush, Becker offered his expertise in election law to the city of Boston to defeat a lawsuit from the DOJ regarding election law violations.

In the investigation into this matter, it was discovered that Becker had made a series of "nasty, disparaging remarks about Republicans," Hans von Spakovsky said. Von Spakovsky, who now is employed by the Heritage Foundation, was a DOJ legal counsel at the time.

"In his role with the DOJ, [Becker] was supposed to be nonpartisan," von Spakovsky said.

"Very unethical and unprofessional," he added. "I would never hire or trust him."

Brad Schlozman, who directed the Civil Rights division at the time, was even more critical, suggesting that Becker deserved to be disbarred.

"It was the most unethical thing I've ever seen," Schlozman said. "Classic case of someone who should have been disbarred."

He added that Becker was "a hard-core leftist" and someone who "couldn't stand conservatives."

As recently as last year, Becker portrayed Trump as a liar and a danger to democratic norms in comments to The Washington Post.

"We have a significant percentage of the American electorate right now who have been lied to about the integrity of our elections, who believe that elections ... are rigged unless their candidate wins," Becker said. "Yet it's nowhere close to 50 percent of America overall. But if Trump were to win a narrow victory again, I could see [election denial] ideas ... infecting a larger percentage of the electorate. And if a large segment of a democracy's electorate loses confidence in elections, that

democracy probably is unsustainable.”

CEIR did not respond to an Epoch Times request for comment about these allegations.

However, in past comments to another media outlet, Becker addressed some of the allegations, but left others unanswered: “This complaint was made over 15 years ago, if memory serves, and was dismissed. There was no action taken against me by the Department of Justice as a result of this complaint. As you know, anyone can make a complaint for any reason, with or without basis.

“I served faithfully at the DOJ for seven years, from 1998 to 2005, during which time I received a Special Commendation of Merit from the Attorney General in 2002, during the Bush administration,” he added.

Almost \$70 Million from Zuckerberg

In August 2020, Becker’s organization received a staggering \$69.5 million from Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg.

Under the appearance of COVID-19 safety precautions, this funding was used to furnish key swing states with more mail-in drop boxes.

Zuckerberg’s donation to CEIR came as part of a series of purportedly nonpartisan donations by the Facebook creator.

During his opening remarks at the first day of the conference, Becker acknowledged that “philanthropy” furnished a great deal of his organization’s efforts in the 2020 election.

Becker painted an optimistic portrait of the electoral landscape in 2020, noting that paper ballots were to be used in key battleground states like Georgia and North Carolina. However, he said that the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic changed things.

The disease, which has an across-the-board survival rate of around 99 percent and is asymptomatic for many, forced election officials to balance “the most social of democratic activities, voting” with maintaining social distancing requirements, Becker said.

When states failed to provide enough funding to meet these demands, Becker contended, philanthropy stepped in to fill the gap.

Several million dollars of this “philanthropy” came from Soros, who donated over \$9 million to Democrats in 2020. In addition, the divisive figure donated tens of millions of dollars to groups fighting alleged “voter disenfranchisement” and other electoral causes.

Ties to Soros

Becker also has ties to controversial mega-donor Soros.

Prior to founding CEIR, Becker worked with the Pew Charitable Trust. That organization is funded by

the Open Society Foundation, Soros' primary political funding organization ([pdf](#)).

While working at the Pew Charitable Trust, a formerly right-wing organization that has increasingly veered leftward in recent years, Becker also helped to found the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) in 2012.

Now used across an array of states, ERIC is a tool which claims to help states manage voter rolls. But the system's become controversial among Republicans, who claim Soros supported the creation of ERIC. Others warn that the system that could be used for mass voter fraud due to the sensitivity of the information entrusted to the nonprofit group.

Alabama Secretary of State Wes Allen said during the 2020 election that he planned to remove Alabama from the ERIC system if he were to win his election. Allen cited concerns over Soros ties as his reasoning for removing the state from the system.

Responding to claims that Soros has no direct ties to the group, Allen cited the connection to the Pew Charitable Trust.

"[ERIC is tied to Soros] through the Pew Charitable Trust, their funding partner is Open Society," said Allen. "Well, Open Society is George Soros. So, even though the Soros money may have been all spent by now, there's no dispute that Soros' money helped feed the project."

CEIR did not reply to an Epoch Times request for information on who was invited to the event or the process by which these invitees were selected.

by Joseph Lord

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