

**Questions for the Record from Senator Charles E. Grassley for the Honorable Maggie  
Toulouse Oliver, Secretary of State of New Mexico  
“Protecting Our Democracy’s Frontline Workers”  
August 3, 2022**

Senator Grassley,

Thank you for posing these questions and giving me the opportunity to answer them. Please find my responses below.

1. The examples you give about Stacey Abrams and Hilary Clinton present an important contrast to the perpetuation of the Big Lie and the deluge of misinformation about our elections that has resulted since 2020.

In the immediate aftermath of a stinging loss, it is normal in American politics for the loser to question that loss, to make statements that don’t always turn out to be true, and/or to avail themselves of legal election procedures to ensure the accuracy of the result (e.g. recounts). But then the loser accepts the results of the election and concedes. Stacey Abrams and Hilary Clinton did that.

In contrast, Donald Trump and conspiracists inspired by his words and actions continue, without any credible evidence whatsoever, to deny the integrity of the 2020 election, continue to perpetuate lies about election administration processes, and continue to believe that Joe Biden is an illegitimate president. These lies have resulted in direct threats to election workers across the nation and have contributed to a diminished sense of trust in our elections, baseless as the claims are.

I do not believe that hot-headed statements made immediately after a political loss that then cease once legal avenues are exhausted seriously erode faith in the democratic process. What does erode our democratic process is a former president and his allies using their immense public platforms to continue to spread lies about free and fair elections, the most fundamental pillar of our American experiment.

2. ActBlue is a fundraising platform that hosts many different candidates and campaigns from across the country. My campaign's use of ActBlue to fundraise does not imply my support of other fundraising efforts on the platform.

Respectfully,

Maggie Toulouse Oliver  
New Mexico Secretary of State

**Senate Judiciary Committee Hearing**  
**“Protecting Our Democracy’s Frontline Workers”**  
**Questions for the Record for Hon. Maggie Toulouse Oliver**  
**Submitted August 10, 2022**

Senator Whitehouse,

Thank you for posing these questions and giving me the opportunity to answer them. Please find my responses below.

**1.** The years-long effort by a former president, elected officials, and private citizens to deny the legitimacy of the 2020 election has resulted in direct threats to election workers and officials across the country, including myself. The work of election administration has become more stressful and uncertain at every level because of the vitriol expressed toward election officials rooted in the lies from 2020.

**2.** Yes. You need only look at the numerous polls and surveys of election officials that have been conducted since 2020 to see the toll that the Big Lie has taken on our election workforce. Feelings of stress and fear have risen because of the harassment and threats toward election offices around the country. Resignations have followed suit. Just this week, in neighboring Texas, [the entire elections staff of rural Gillespie County abruptly quit](#) because of the harassment they have endured. The fear among election administrators like myself is that fewer people will step up to do the vital work of conducting our elections because of the atmosphere that has been created by the Big Lie.

**3.** Yes. The rise in threats and harassment toward election officials has been linked in multiple studies to the continued lies about the 2020 election and subsequent elections. Claims of a “stolen” or “rigged” election and disinformation about Dominion voting machines or mail-in voting or ballot drop boxes all stem directly from the falsehoods that germinated after the 2020 election. Any election official who has experienced threats and harassment in recent years can tell you that the people behind such despicable acts are motivated by the lies from 2020.

4. Yes. Since immediately after the 2020 election there has been a coordinated effort across the country to perpetuate the Big Lie narrative. We saw this in New Mexico, as in other states, when a frivolous lawsuit was filed by the Trump campaign in the wake of the election, and as the state Republican Party sent a slate of fake electors to the official Electoral College count at our state capitol. Since then, there has been a rash of [“election denial influencers traveling the country to share their conspiracy theories with politicians and voters,”](#) including in New Mexico. Politicians, fringe media, and private citizens have all played a role in spreading the falsehoods of 2020 with coordinated messaging and subsequent policy priorities.

Respectfully,

Maggie Toulouse Oliver  
New Mexico Secretary of State