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Secretary Gray Warns County Clerks of Attempts by Private Actors to Fund Election Administration Across the Country

CHEYENNE, WY – On August 10, 2023, Wyoming Secretary of State Chuck Gray sent a letter to Wyoming's 23 county clerks warning and cautioning against the rise in efforts and tactics used by third parties to fund the administration of elections across the country.

“As Wyoming's 23 county clerks continue to prepare for the 2024 Election, I am writing to warn and caution against any attempts made by third parties to fund the administration of elections in Wyoming,” Secretary Gray wrote in the letter. “This is especially imperative, given the influx of millions of dollars to initiatives, including the deceptively-named ‘U.S. Alliance for Election Excellence,’ that have set their sights and misleading tactics on local elections offices across the country.” In his letter, Secretary Gray went on to note that “[t]he source of funding for many of these new efforts range from partisan groups to potentially foreign actors living here in Wyoming... With the ever-changing landscape of new entities pushing their agendas on elections administrators nationwide, local elections officials are at a growing risk of these foreign influences should they accept funding in any way.”

In a separate statement, Secretary Gray reiterated his concern that foreign actors may be able to exploit existing laws to improperly influence election administration. “I find it deeply disturbing that private entities have been working to influence election administration nationwide, and could also be used as a conduit for foreign actors to improperly influence American election administration. I am also disturbed that Wyoming remains especially vulnerable given our lack of a statutory ban on private funding of elections. This is why our office is leading the charge in Wyoming to ensure county clerks are aware of the complexity of strategies used to strongarm election administration, and to ensure that Wyoming adopts a ban on private funding of elections. Under our administration, we will work to make sure private funding of elections and foreign influence have no place in the Cowboy State.”

In response to the partisan risks associated with the rise in private funding of election administration, 25 states have enacted legislation which bans or otherwise restricts private funding of elections. Wyoming law does not currently prohibit or restrict private funding of elections. During the Joint Corporations, Elections, and Political Subdivisions Committee meeting in May, Secretary Gray asked the committee to draft legislation to address this concern, which will be up for consideration at the committee's next meeting in Douglas on August 24th. Secretary Gray's letter to Wyoming's county clerks can be found [here](#).