

Scotland County, Missouri Ditches 'Zuckbucks 2.0' Group

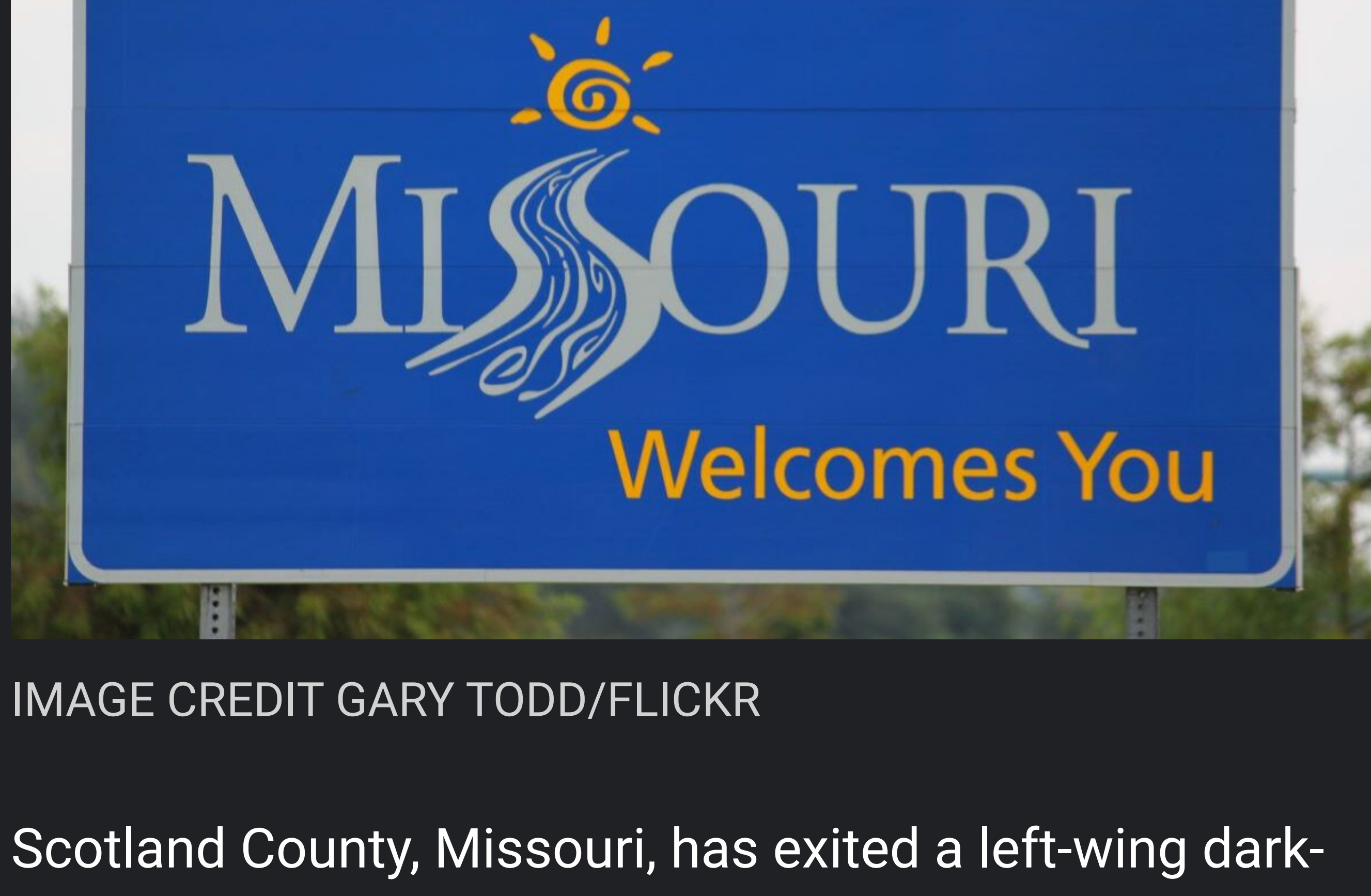


IMAGE CREDIT GARY TODD/FLICKR

Scotland County, Missouri, has exited a left-wing dark-money organization that aims to influence local election administration, The Federalist has learned.

Scotland County Clerk Batina Dodge confirmed to The Federalist that the locality did not renew its membership with the U.S. Alliance for Election Excellence for 2024. As The Federalist previously reported, the [Alliance](#) is an \$80 million [venture](#) launched in 2022 by left-wing nonprofits such as the [Center for Tech and Civic Life \(CTCL\)](#) to “systematically influence every aspect of election administration” and advance Democrat-backed voting policies in local election offices.

According to [Ballotpedia](#), Scotland County was one of several localities named as part of the Alliance’s 2023 cohort. Notably, neither Scotland County nor Boone County — another Missouri jurisdiction participating in the Alliance — were included in the coalition’s November 2022 [announcement](#) of participating localities.

During the 2020 election, CTCL and the Center for Election Innovation and Research collectively received [hundreds of millions of dollars](#) from Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg. These “[Zuckbucks](#)” were poured into local election offices in battleground states around the country to change how elections were administered, such as by expanding unsupervised election protocols like mail-in voting and the use of ballot drop boxes. To make matters worse, the grants were heavily skewed towards Democrat-majority counties, essentially making it a massive Democrat get-out-the-vote operation.

Leading up to the 2020 contest, CTCL distributed [roughly \\$6.8 million](#) “Zuckbucks” to local election offices in Missouri, according to figures from the Capital Research Center. This prompted state Republicans to [pass](#) HB 1878, which stipulates that “neither the state of Missouri nor any political subdivision thereof that conducts elections shall receive or expend private moneys, excluding in-kind donations, for preparing, administering, or conducting an election, including registering voters.”

Dodge said Scotland County’s decision to let its membership with the Alliance expire stemmed from her decision to resign as clerk at the end of the month.

“After months of consideration, I have resigned my position as Scotland County Clerk effective April 30, 2024, to accept another job offer outside of elections,” she said. “As such, the County did not renew its membership with the Alliance as I did not want to commit my successor to participate in something to which he or she had no part of the decision.”

Dodge said her successor has yet to be named.

Despite its exit from the coalition, Scotland County, as of this article’s publication, has not been removed from the list of participating offices on the Alliance’s website. CTCL did not respond to The Federalist’s request for comment on why Scotland County is still listed as a participating office.

Meanwhile, Boone County is still an active Alliance participant. Clerk Brianna Lennon told The Federalist that Boone County is “a member of the Alliance for Election Excellence” and claimed the locality “does not receive grant funding from the Alliance,” citing Missouri’s “Zuckbucks” prohibition.

“The membership gives us access to subject matter experts that are current or former local election officials on administrative areas like poll worker recruitment (finding enough election judges, especially judges that affiliate as Republicans, is a perennial problem for us) and better ways to design forms and applications so that voters can understand them,” Lennon said.

A [2023 report](#) published by the Honest Elections Project (HEP) and John Locke Foundation noted how the Alliance has sought to provide election offices with “scholarships” to cover membership costs, which can then be “converted into ‘credits’ that member offices can use to buy services from CTCL and other Alliance partners.” HEP Executive Director Jason Snead explained in a [previous interview](#) with The Federalist that CTCL “pivoted” to “a fee-based membership model” as a way of skirting state restrictions on private funding of election offices.

“For jurisdictions that are permitted to receive grants, those fees are effectively waived. But jurisdictions that cannot receive private grants can still buy their way in for a relatively small sum, allowing the Alliance to spread its influence even in states where lawmakers have tried to prevent it,” Snead explained.

Scotland County’s departure from the Alliance comes a month after The Federalist revealed that [Weber County, Utah](#), had exited the coalition. The Federalist also previously discovered that [Cache County, Utah](#), and [Brunswick and Forsyth Counties, North Carolina](#), withdrew from the Alliance in recent months.

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