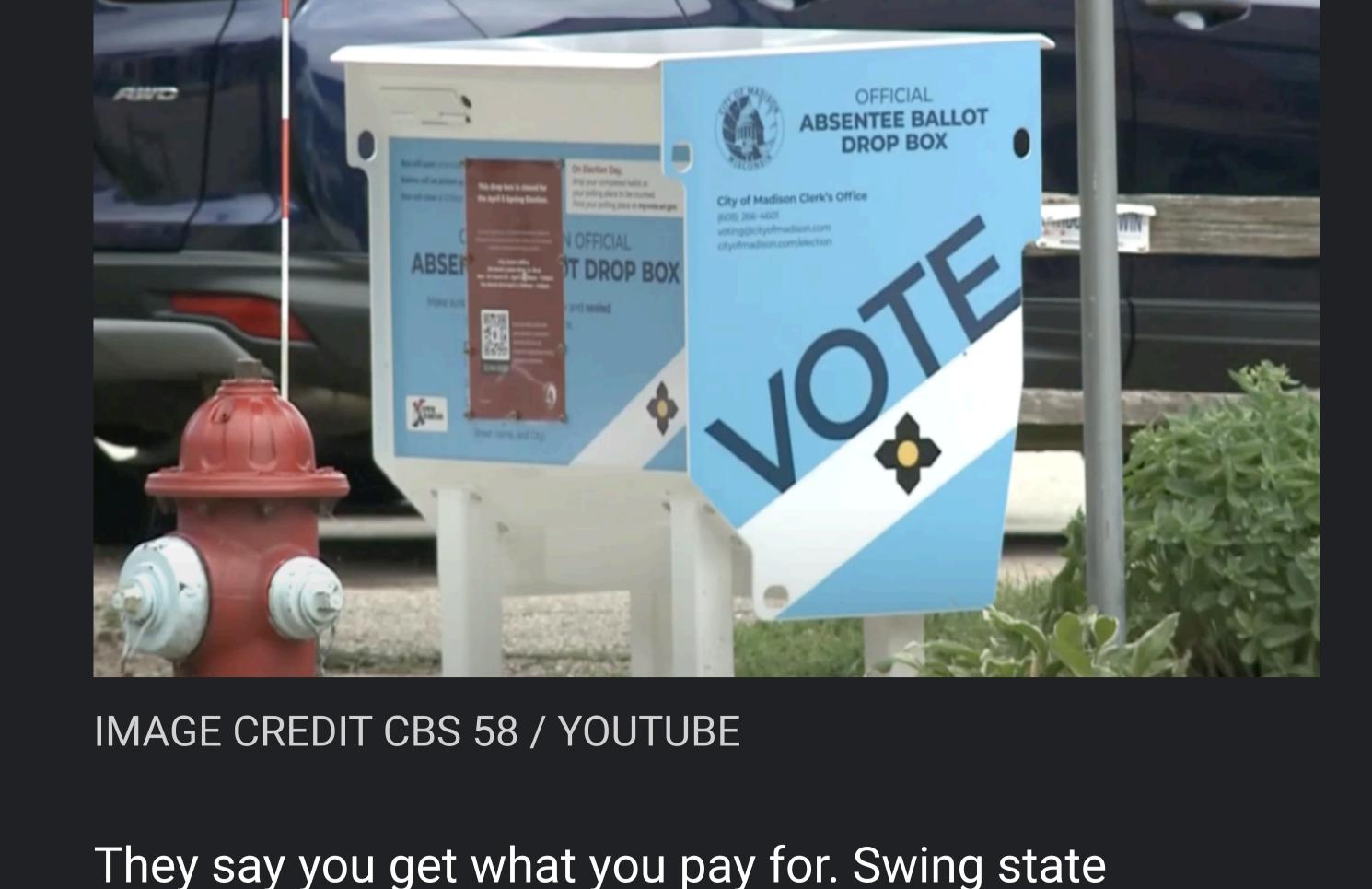


## WI Leftists Get What They Paid For In Drop Box Ruling Flip-Flop



Wisconsin is getting the erosion of election integrity

changed the makeup of the state's Supreme Court. On Friday, just as President Joe Biden was slated to make a campaign visit to capital city and leftist enclave Madison, the left-leaning Wisconsin Supreme Court

reversed a previous court ruling and endorsed the

laws, thanks to a mountain of leftist money that

widespread use of absentee ballot drop boxes in November's election. The ruling opens the door to the same kind of election shenanigans that plagued the Badger State in 2020. "Our decision today does not force or require that any municipal clerks use drop boxes. It merely acknowledges what [state statute] has always meant: that clerks may lawfully utilize secure drop boxes in an

ruling states. But that's not how the Wisconsin Supreme Court saw the matter in 2022 when the then-conservative majority ruled that widespread use of unattended absentee drop boxes violated state law. The court ruled that way because the statutes in question do not allow for the widespread use of absentee drop boxes.

"The law's requirement that a ballot be returned in

person to the municipal clerk does not mean leaving it

somewhere for the clerk to pick up," said Rick Esenberg,

president and general counsel of the Wisconsin Institute

for Law & Liberty, the Milwaukee-based public interest

exercise of their statutorily-conferred discretion," the 4-3

law firm that filed the original lawsuit opposing the proliferation of the drop boxes. "Whether or not you support the use of drop boxes, we should want the law to be followed as it is written. Reconsidering – again – a case decided just two years ago will prove to be a grave and historic mistake," Esenberg added.

The 2024 edition of the Wisconsin Supreme Court has reversed a lower court's ruling in a case known as Teigen v. Wisconsin Elections Commission, the ruling that the state high court two years earlier affirmed. That ruling found WEC's guidance encouraging the use of absentee ballot drop boxes to be unlawful.

"Only the legislature may permit absentee voting via

ballot drop boxes. WEC cannot. Ballot drop boxes

appear nowhere in the detailed statutory system for

absentee voting. WEC's authorization of ballot drop

'Forsakes the Rule of Law'

boxes was unlawful," wrote Justice Rebecca Grassl Bradley, one of four conservatives on the seven-member Supreme Court in the 2022 ruling. "An absentee ballot must be returned by mail or the voter must personally deliver it to the municipal clerk at the clerk's office or a designated alternate site," the ruling, pointing to state law, made clear. "The record

evidence [the Wisconsin Elections Commission] cited

does not support its argument that ballot drop boxes

Mincing no words in her dissent to last week's ruling,

Justice Bradley wrote that the majority "forsakes the

rule of law in an attempt to advance its political

have been in common and longstanding use in this

state."

agenda." Money Changes Everything Much has changed since 2022, most critically the majority. In April 2023, far-left Milwaukee County Judge Janet Protasiewicz was elected to the Wisconsin Supreme Court, giving liberals control of the state's court of last resort for the first time in 15 years. They're

using their newfound power for maximum advantage.

The race was far and away the most expensive in U.S.

judicial history, surpassing \$45 million. Protasiewicz's

campaign raked in at least \$14 million, according to an

OpenSecrets analysis of campaign finance documents.

million of the total, with many of the donations coming

The Wisconsin Democratic Party contributed \$8.9

"Some of the top industries contributing to her

from out-of-state donors.

OpenSecrets.

campaign were lawyers and lobbyists, securities and investment, and education," OpenSecrets reported. By comparison, Protasiewicz's conservative opponent, former Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice Dan Kelly, raised \$2.6 million, with "roughly \$779,000 of that coming from the Wisconsin Republican Party." Protasiewicz's election efforts also received a huge

boost from big-spending leftist groups, including \$6.2

million from the outside political action committee A

Will Not Go Unanswered

Better Wisconsin Together Political Fund, according to

The use of absentee ballot drop boxes exploded in 2020

after the Wisconsin Elections Commission gave its

administration grants handed out to Wisconsin clerks'

presidential election. The money was part of hundreds

blessing. Their use was largely funded through

offices in advance of the bitterly contested 2020

of millions of dollars in donations from Facebook

"Zuckbucks," the \$10 million-plus in election

founder and conservative speech silencer Mark Zuckerberg and his wife designated for local election administration changes across the country — under the cover of Covid. The brunt of the money went to swing states like Wisconsin and to <u>Democrat strongholds</u> such as Milwaukee, Madison, Green Bay, Kenosha, and Racine.

Unmanned absentee ballot boxes have sparked myriad

The Wisconsin Supreme Court's latest ruling comes a

Republican National Convention in Milwaukee, where

the GOP is expected to officially nominate former

President Donald Trump for a third time straight.

little more than a week before the start of the

election integrity concerns, including a high-profile

scandal in a Connecticut election.

powers and public trust in our elections." "[T]he left-wing justices on the Supreme Court of Wisconsin have obeyed the demands of their out-ofstate donors at the expense of Wisconsin," he said in a

Wisconsin Republican Party Chairman Brian Schimming

called the ruling a "setback for both the separation of

statement. "This latest attempt by leftist justices to placate their far-left backers will not go unanswered by voters." Matt Kittle is a senior elections correspondent for The Federalist. An award-winning investigative reporter and 30-year veteran of print, broadcast, and online journalism, Kittle previously served as the executive

director of Empower Wisconsin.