"All the News That's Fit to Print"

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As Party Meets, Xi Embodies Imperial Rule

Resolute Despite Covid and Fiscal Malaise

By CHRIS BUCKLEY

In his first years as China's leader, Xi Jinping paid for his own steamed dumplings in a cheap diner, casually rolled up his trouser legs to avoid splashes in the rain, and was serenaded with sugary pop tunes. His image-makers cast him as "Xi Dada," the people's firm but genial "Uncle Xi."

How vastly different now. A decade on, Mr. Xi looms over the country like a stern Communist monarch, reflecting on China's fallen ancient dynasties and determined to win its lasting ascendancy in a turbulent world.

Chinese officials praise his speeches like hallowed texts, professing loyalty with a fervor that sometimes echoes Mao Zedong's era. Privately mocking Mr. Xi can lead to prison. His public encounters are regimented displays of ac-

A Communist Party congress opening Sunday is shaping up to be Mr. Xi's imperial moment, strengthening and extending his rule, while also intensifying the long-term hazards from his singular dominance. At the meeting in Beijing, he seems sure of winning a third term as the party's general secretary, breaking with recent expectations that Chinese leaders would reign for around a decade.

"The certainty will really only be in the arrangements at the topmost level, that his power is beyond challenge, but beneath that we'll face a great many uncertainties," Wu Qiang, a political analyst in Beijing, said in an interview.

The evolution of Mr. Xi's public face has paralleled his transformation of China into a proudly authoritarian state, scornful of criticism from Washington, increasingly sure that Western democracy has lost its allure, and impatient for a bigger say in shaping the 21st-century global order.

The party congress will be Mr. Xi's stage to demonstrate that he remains undaunted, despite the recent economic malaise, Covid outbreaks and increasing animosity with the United States, which has labeled China a national security threat. He is likely to tell the

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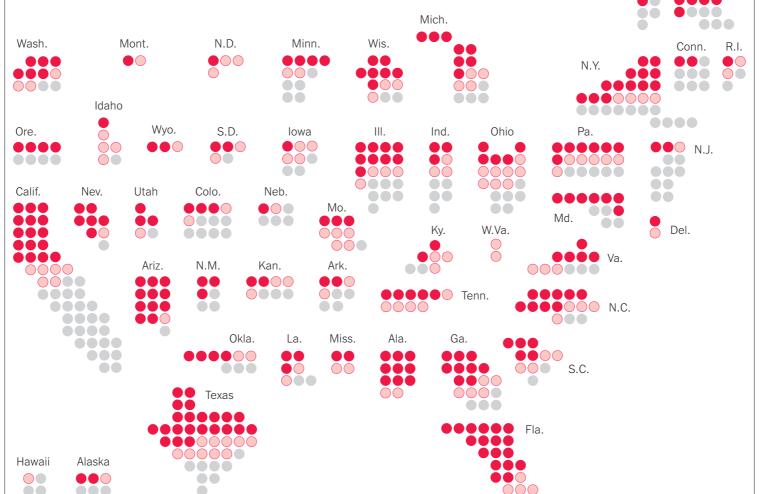
Putting 2020 on the 2022 Ballot

Hundreds of Republican midterm candidates have questioned or spread misinformation about the 2020 election — most of them still are. Together they represent a growing consensus in the Republican Party, and a potential threat to American democracy.

Each dot represents a U.S. Congress, governor, secretary of state or state attornev general.

 Candidate questioned the 2020 election in 2022 (and may have before this year) Ocandidate questioned the 2020 election before this year (but The Times did not

find evidence of doubt cast in 2022) The Times found no evidence of the candidate questioning the 2020 election



Note: Data is based on a Times analysis of public statements of more than 550 Republican midterm candidates

THE NEW YORK TIMES

N.H.

Mass.

Vt.

Maine

2020 Election Skeptics Crowd the Republican Ticket Nationwide

This article is by Karen Yourish, Danielle Ivory, Weiyi Cai, Nick Corasaniti and Jonathan Weisman.

They include candidates for the U.S. House and Senate, and the state offices of governor, secretary of state and attorney general - many with clear shots to victory, and some without a chance. They are united by at least one issue: They have all expressed doubt about the legitimacy of the 2020 election. And they are the new normal of the Republican ers decide elections and candi- Donald J. Trump was defeated.

More than 370 people — a vast majority of Republicans running for these offices in November have questioned and, at times, outright denied the results of the 2020 election despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary, according to a monthslong New York Times investigation. These candidates represent a sentiment that is spreading in the Republican Party, rupturing a bedrock principle of democracy: that vot-

Over 370 Candidates Have Voiced Doubts About the Results

dates accept results.

This skepticism has stretched into political races in every state and is still frequently being raised as a campaign issue, The Times nas iound, nearly two years after

Hundreds of these candidates are favored to win their races.

Far from fading over time, as many Americans had hoped, election lies and misinformation have proved strikingly resilient, even amid a political campaign season in which far more is being said by candidates and their party officials about issues like inflation and abortion. The Times has for the first time identified more than 240 candidates who are still casting doubt on the presidential elec-

Continued on Page A14

AFTER BLOWBACK, **BRITAIN REVERSES ECONOMIC COURSE**

PERILS OF BIG TAX CUTS

Central Banks Proposing Subtler Maneuvers to Combat Inflation

By PATRICIA COHEN

LONDON - Government leaders in the West are struggling with rising inflation, slowing growth, and anxious electorates worried about winter and high energy bills. But Liz Truss, Britain's prime minister, is the only one who devised an economic plan that unnerved financial markets, drew the ire of global leaders and the public and undermined her political standing.

On Friday, battered by savage criticism, she retreated. Ms. Truss fired her top finance official, Kwasi Kwarteng, for creating precisely the package of unfunded tax cuts, billion-dollar spending programs and deregulation that she had asked for.

She reinstated a scheduled increase in corporate taxes to 25 percent from 19 percent, a rise she had previously opposed. That announcement came on top of backtracking last week on her proposal to eliminate the top 45 percent income tax on the highest earners. The prime minister, in office a little over five weeks, also promised that spending would grow less rapidly than proposed, although no specifics were offered.

The drama is still playing out, and it's unclear if the Truss government will survive.

In the United States, President Biden, while waging his own political battles over gas prices and inflation, has not proposed anything like the kind of policies that Ms. Truss's government attempted, nor have any other leaders in Eu-

Still, for European governments whose economies are suffering greatly from shocks and energy price surges caused by Russia's war in Ukraine, there are timely lessons from the debacle playing out in London.

One of the strongest was delivred early on by the International

Continued on Page A8

Protest and Prayers Became a 'Massacre' in Iran Furor Unmasks

This article is by Cora Engelbrecht, Nilo Tabrizy and Ishaan

Some of the wounded tried to crawl away to escape the gunfire. Others bled to death on prayer mats as people tried to drag them to safety. But the snipers and officers

kept pulling their triggers, firing bullet after bullet into men and young boys at a worship area where Friday Prayer had been un-The horrific scene unfolded on

Sept. 30 in Zahedan, a city in southeastern Iran that is home to the ethnic Baluch minority, after a small group of worshipers emerged from the Great Mosalla prayer complex to confront security forces posted at a police station across the street.

The protesters chanted antigovernment slogans and threw rocks at the officers, prompting the security forces to fire indiscriminately into the crowd, according to witnesses. As the demonstrators scattered, the gunshots stalked their retreat back toward the complex, where thousands were still praying.

"It was a massacre I had only seen in movies," said Jamshid, 28, a worshiper, who was reached by phone and identified himself only by his first name to avoid reprisals. "They started shooting as



Nearly 100 people were killed in Zahedan, Iran, on Sept. 30.

people still had their heads bowed in prayer." Young men threw themselves in front of children and older people to shield them from the bullets, Jamshid said.

"People had nowhere to go." The massacre, called "Bloody Friday" by residents, represents the most lethal government action

since a crackdown began against nationwide demonstrations a month ago. Sixty-six to 96 people were killed over the course of the next several hours, according to local and international human rights groups, including Amnesty International.

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A Caste System **Among Latinos**

By MIRIAM JORDAN LOS ANGELES — Ivan

Vasquez arrived in Los Angeles in 1996, a teenager who had crossed the border to find work and improve the lot of his family in Mexico. As a newbie washing dishes in restaurants, the young man from the majority Indigenous state of Oaxaca was often called "Oaxaquita," or Little Oaxacan, by other Mexicans because of his deep tan skin and diminutive stat-

Still, he eventually rose to become a regional manager at Baja Fresh and opened his own restaurant in 2013, a celebration of his native state's unique cuisine. Powered by mole and mezcal, the restaurant, Madre, has won rave reviews from food critics and grown to three locations in a city that embraces multiculturalism. So Mr. Vasquez, now 41, was shocked this week to hear disparaging remarks about Oaxacans from Nury Martinez, a powerful Latina politician who was president of the City Council.

A recording of a closed-door meeting in 2021, in which Ms. Martinez was heard referring to

Continued on Page A17

Discovery by Chaucer Scholars Scrubs Stain From His Legacy

By JENNIFER SCHUESSLER

For nearly 150 years, a cloud has hung over the reputation of Geoffrey Chaucer, the author of "The Canterbury Tales," long seen as the founder of the English literary canon. A court document discovered in

1873 suggested that around 1380, Chaucer had been charged with raping Cecily Chaumpaigne, the daughter of a London baker. In the document, Chaumpaigne released Chaucer from "all manner of actions related to my raptus"a word commonly translated as rape or abduction. In recent decades, the sugges-

tion that Chaucer had been accused of rape helped inspire a rich vein of feminist criticism looking at sex, power and consent in stories like "The Wife of Bath's Tale" and "The Miller's Tale," which contain depictions of sexual assault (or what to modern readers appears like it).

But this week, two scholars stunned the world of Chaucer studies with previously unknown documents that they say show that the "raptus" document was not in fact related to an accusation of rape against Chaucer at all.

The new documents, the two scholars say, establish that the one that surfaced in the 1870s had

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY CROWN COPYRIGHT, VIA THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

A 1380 legal document about a "raptus" was not about a rape case at all, scholars now say.

been misinterpreted. Instead of stemming from a rape case, they argue, the document had been filed as part of a labor case, in which another man charged Chaumpaigne with leaving his household to work in Chaucer's before her term of labor was over.

It's an explosive claim in the world of Chaucer studies. And in a telephone interview, Sebastian Sobecki, a professor of English at the University of Toronto, who did the research with Euan Roger of the British National Archives, summed it up carefully, while emphasizing that the discovery

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INTERNATIONAL A4-12

Two Different Wars

As Russia continues to bombard Kyiv from the air, Ukrainian ground troops are reclaiming territory.

Chinese Doctor's Final Days

A Times investigation details the death of Dr. Li Wenliang, who sounded an PAGE A10 early alarm on Covid-19.

NATIONAL A13-21

Rampage Unnerves Raleigh

A 15-year-old boy was in custody as investigators searched for a motive in a shooting that killed an off-duty police officer along with four others. PAGE A20

Appeal to Stop Special Master

The government asked a court to end a special master review of the files hoarded by the ex-president. PAGE A17

Helping At-Risk Families

The Biden administration is proposing spending \$20 billion over a decade to help some of the most vulnerable families in the country.

BUSINESS B1-6

Seeking a \$24.6 Billion Merger

Kroger and Albertsons, two of the biggest U.S. grocery chains, announced a deal, which is likely to face tough federal scrutiny.

Waging a Battle Over Wages

More places are challenging a system that counts tips toward the minimum wage for service workers. PAGE B1

SPORTS B7-9

Yankees Wilt in Extra Innings

Pitcher Jameson Taillon was undone by defensive miscues, and the Guardians evened the playoff series at 1-1. PAGE B7



ARTS C1-12

Her Facets Can Now Shine

Unity Phelan's fall season with New York City Ballet has shown her beauty and range in a string of debuts. PAGE C1

A Dickens Tale Reimagined

Barbara Kingsolver reinvents "David Copperfield" as a story of the opioid crisis in Southern Appalachia. PAGE C1 TO OUR READERS

The Return of '36 Hours'

With today's newspaper, The New York Times is bringing back the popular Travel feature, which had been paused because of the pandemic. It will be just part of expanded Travel coverage in a weekly presentation in the Arts section, which also will include a "What to Cook" feature. SECTION C

OPINION A22-23

Jesse Wegman

PAGE A23



'Big Tech and blue-state

liberals stole the election

'We know it.

MARK FINCHEM,

secretary of state

2022 campaign ad

candidate for Arizona

and they know it.

'That election was

JIM BOGNET, U.S. House candidate,

stolen from us.'

Eighth District, Pennsylvania

Donald Trump won.'

from President Trump.'

▲ KAY IVEY, candidate for Alabama governor

2022 campaign ad

'When you look at the results

anomalies in there, to put it

very lightly, that are simply

mathematically impossible.

The numbers

do not make

sense.

'Four states in our

nation went around the

based on what I believe

■ MARK ALFORD, U.S. House candidate

is a man-made virus.'

Fourth District, Missouri

Constitution to establish their

own rules for voting in 2020,

MONICA DE LA CRUZ,

U.S. House candidate

15th District, Texas

■ JOHN GIBBS, U.S. House candidate,

of the 2020 election, there are

Third District, Michigan

2022 interview

Some Say the Election Was Stolen ...

'Trump won and everyone knows it.'

'Donald Trump won

this state, period.'

MIKE COLLINS, U.S. House candidate,

'I think the election was

stolen from Trump.'

J.D. VANCE, Senate candidate, Ohio

'It was taken

U.S. House candidate, Eighth District, Texas

From Page A1

tion this year — many of them within the

The Times analysis is a detailed ac-

counting of the spread of election denial

in the Republican Party. The analysis in-

corporates not only what candidates

have said, but also when. Many candi-

dates' views have changed over time —

as new conspiracies were born, as Mr.

Trump demanded fealty, and as primary

voters weighed in. The Times found

Some candidates became less vocal after

tently pushed falsehoods about the elec-

No evidence of widespread irregular-

ities was found by top Trump administra-

tion officials in the Justice Department

and the Department of Homeland Securi-

ty, which investigated the election, or by

judges throughout the country and even

auditors commissioned by political oper-

that falsehood but criticized the election,

often persistently, in ways that were

the Capitol riot, and some have consis-

last couple of months.

from us.

MORGAN LUTTRELL.

2022 campaign ad

10th District, Georgia

▲ BRIAN FLOWERS, U.S. House candidate, Second District, Mississippi

Promoting '2000 Mules'

Some examples of at least 50 candidates citing the documentary directed by the conservative commentator Dinesh D'Souza or the theories behind it.



If you don't think there was MASSIVE can convince you. The amount of



It was an honor to attend

The film exposes 5% of the illegal votes cast in 2020.

ever seeing it May 6, 2022



US House candidate, NY-03

2000 Mules by @DineshDSouza is not only eye opening it's a 80 min

#ElectionIntegrity



Congress 🐶

Just finished watching #2000Mules. I don't like cheaters

Some examples of dozens of candidates news media. Facebook and the F.B.I.



The FBI and Big Tech censored the election. Let that sink in...



US Senate candidate, Iowa

We now know Facebook censored spread of Hunter Biden laptop story after FBI approached them. FBI & Facebook/Big Tech interfered in 2020 election Facebook acted as an arm of govt Both Facebook & FBI should b ashamed of interfering in our electoral process



US House candidate, NY-24

BigTech and retired US Spies coordinated to coverup the corrupt evidence revealed in Hunter's laptop from Hell to swing the election in Biden's favor. This is felonious and bright line election interference. March 24, 2022



Once elected to Congress I will help lead the charge in investigating Joe Biden and his son for the crimes the media covered up, while trying to sway an election! March 27, 2022



Hunter's laptop was real, and the mainstream media illegally interfered in our election. March 31, 2022



voter fraud in the 2020 election after seeing 2000 Mules, then NOTHING criminal fraud all caught ON CAMERA will SHOCK vou! 2020 was NOT "free & fair" at ALL. GO SEE 2000 MULES!!



@DineshDSouza's movie premiere of 2,000 Mules!

And that is exactly why the Left will do everything possible to stop you from



shock of reality that a lot of Americans

US House candidate, NC-04

Hunter Biden's Laptop

promoting an unproven theory that the alluded to interfere in the 2020 Flecti



US House candidate. NC-09

accurate information in order to swing Aug. 25, 2022



atives intent on proving fraud. The Times scoured the public records of more than 550 Republican candidates in all 50 states, examining their social media accounts, political emails, newsletters, speeches, interviews and campaign materials. The analysis distinguished between the many dozens of candidates who said unequivocally (and inaccurately) that the 2020 election was stolen, and those who stopped short of

> seemingly more reasonable but perhaps more influential The Times did not automatically categorize candidates who objected to the 2020 Electoral College results or who supported lawsuits challenging the results as denying the election outright. As a recent Times investigation reported, those candidates often cited more nuanced arguments for their votes or said

THE PRICE OF ENTRY TO THE REPUBLICAN TICKET

The Times investigation found that about 70 percent of Republicans running for Congress had questioned the election of President Biden, who won seven million more votes and 74 more electors than Mr. Trump. Of those, nearly two-thirds are favored to win their races, according to the Cook Political Report, which handicaps races for Congress and governor.

they did not want to overturn the out-

Among Republican candidates running for state offices that can play a significant role in elections and recounts governors, attorneys general and secretaries of state - more than half expressed misgivings about the 2020 election. The share was higher, about 65 percent, among candidates running for governor. About half of those candidates for

Sarah Cahalan, Keith Collins, Jennifer Medina and Julie Shaver contributed reporting. Additional work by Aaron Byrd, Meg Felling

and Rumsey Taylor.

Democracy Challenged

Democratic norms are facing a historic test: Many Americans doubt the results of the 2020 election, and extremism. global authoritarianism and disinformation are on the rise. The Times is examining this landscape of challenges through a range of coverage.

▲ ANNA PAULINA LUNA,

'Yes, I believe that

President Trump

won that election.

U.S. House candidate, 13th District, Florida

governor are favored to win.

For Republican candidates who would rather talk about something other than the last presidential election, some have learned that the party's base, and its unofficial leader, Mr. Trump, won't let them drop the issue. It has become, in many cases, the price of entry to the Republi

Wisconsin Republicans learned this lesson the hard way.

In early June, Mr. Trump upended the Republican primary for governor in Wisconsin by endorsing Tim Michels, a wealthy construction magnate, over Rebecca Kleefisch, a former lieutenant governor of the state and a favorite of local Republicans.

The endorsement apparently came with strings. During a July debate, Mr. Michels said

he would not prioritize decertifying the 2020 election in Wisconsin, a legally implausible process that nonetheless remained a fixation of Mr. Trump. "I have to focus on beating Tony Evers

this fall," he said, referring to Wisconsin's incumbent Democratic governor.

A roar came from Mar-a-Lago, communicated through aides to Mr. Michels, demanding that he embrace the decertification movement, according to people familiar with the conversations.

Mr. Michels reversed course, saying that he was "very, very fired up about this election integrity issue" and pledging to consider signing a decertification bill if legislators passed one.

By the final days of the primary, Mr. Michels was promoting the election conspiracy theory amplified in the film "2000 Mules" and was promising to consider signing legislation clawing back Wisconsin's 10 electoral votes from the 2020 election.

The former president has backed nearly 70 percent of the candidates that The Times identified as questioning the 2020 election and who are favored to win their races. Of the more than 370 candidates who

expressed skepticism about the 2020 election, about half are incumbents, nearly all of whom are favored to keep their seats. About a fifth of the candidates are current members of Congress who, on Jan.

cally (and financially) profitable. In the months following the Capitol riot, nearly 80 percent of the objectors who are running for re-election took

some kind of official action that, in effect, continued to promote questions about the 2020 election. These included signing congressional letters alleging widespread fraud or inappropriate interference in the 2020 race; co-sponsoring legislation to fix what they deemed to be

Caucus, which has spearheaded a lot of these initiatives. The candidates identified by The Times include people who have questioned the 2020 election in ways both ex-

problems that emerged during that elec-

tion; and joining a new Election Integrity

plicit and subtle. Fewer than one-third have staked out the most extreme position - stating, without any evidence, that the election

was stolen or rigged An even smaller number of the candidates who explicitly said the election was stolen, about three dozen of them, are favored to win. They include incumbents like Governor Kay Ivey of Alabama, Representative Lance Gooden of Texas and Representative Matt Gaetz of Florida all of whom have tweeted falsely, sometimes repeatedly, that the election was stolen — as well as candidates running

gia, Joe Kent in Washington State and Anna Paulina Luna in Florida. In a recent video, Mr. Collins walks toward the camera with a gun, saying: "You count the legal votes that were cast in the state of Georgia? Donald Trump won this state, period." At the end of the video, he shoots what appears to be a voting machine, and it explodes. Mr. Biden won the election in Georgia by more

for the House, like Mike Collins in Geor-

Some of the most ardent election deniers have made their claims, even though Mr. Biden received more than 51 percent of the popular vote, winning in

battleground states like Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada. Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

Most election skeptics, however, have not denied the 2020 results entirely. Indoubt by suggesting, sometimes repeatedly, that there are unresolved questions

or that further investigation is needed. Some have said they do not know who legitimately won the election, or they have conceded that Mr. Biden is the president, but not necessarily because he was elected fairly. Some have said that there were irregularities or interference in the election but that perhaps those did

not change the results. Others have changed their positions. like Don Bolduc, a Senate candidate in New Hampshire. At an August debate, Mr. Bolduc said, "I signed a letter with 120 other generals and admirals saying that Trump won the election, and, damn it, I stand by my letter."

"I'm not switching horses, baby," he

On Sept. 15. he did. "I've done a lot of research on this," he said on Fox News. "I want to be definitive on this — the election was not stolen." On Oct. 3, he staked out what has become something of a middle ground. "I can't say that it was stolen or not," he said. "I don't have enough information."

LOPSIDED COMPARISONS TO ELECTIONS OF THE PAST

Some candidates have bolstered their arguments by comparing themselves to Democrats who objected to Electoral College results in 1968, 2000, 2004 and 2016. In those cases, however, only small numbers objected, having no practical effect, and after the losing Democratic

Questioning the 2020 Election, by Office

Each dot represents a Republican midterm candidate Candidate questioned

 Candidate openly said the 2020 election was

 The Times found no evidence of candidate questioning the 2020

the 2020 election in

other ways

•••••••••

6, 2021, objected to the Electoral College ••••••• results — a distinction that, according to a recent Times report, has become politi-

> Note: Data is based on a Times analysis of public statements

presidential candidates had already con-Others have compared themselves to

... Some Cast Doubt on the Results

'There are enough

irregularities

do an audit.'

candidate for Nevada

JIM MARCHANT,

secretary of state

2022 interview

that we need to

They had

MARJORIE TAYLOR GREENE.

'Do we have a lot

including with the

voting machines here

ROBERT BURNS, U.S. House candidate

in New Hampshire?

Second District, New Hampshire

of voting issues,

100 percent.

2022 interview

U.S. House candidate.

14th District, Georgia

the dirty rotten

media tell lies.'

Democrats who said Russians meddled in the 2016 election. (Conversely, though, U.S. intelligence agencies have determined that Russia did interfere in that election by spreading disinformation.) Their stated reasons for doubting the

election have fallen across a wide spectrum, but most have centered on voting procedures and interference. A number of candidates have cited problems with voting software - sometimes vaguely, sometimes specifically pointing at debunked conspiracy theories, including one that falsely claimed machines sold by Dominion Voting Systems had changed votes to sway the election. Others have contended that large

dead people to commit voter fraud. though several studies have shown that voter impersonation is uncommon. Mr. Biden's son has become a recurring character in conspiracy theories surrounding the 2020 election.

Recently, an unproven theory that the news media, Facebook and Federal Bureau of Investigation colluded to interfere in the 2020 election, perhaps to shift the outcome, has gained more traction since Mark Zuckerberg appeared on a popular podcast hosted by Joe Rogan Mr. Zuckerberg said that Facebook had temporarily restricted access to a negative news story in The New York Post about Hunter Biden weeks before the election because of an F.B.I. warning to the company. (Both Mr. Zuckerberg and the F.B.I. have said that the warning was generally about foreign interference and not specifically about Hunter Biden.)

candidates who have publicly promoted this theory. Others have more generally espoused the belief that big technology and media companies occupy a sort of "ruling class" that meddled in the election. Even before Mr. Zuckerberg's interview with Mr. Rogan. Republican candidates cited as evidence of interference that stories about Hunter Biden had been censored. They pointed to the Post story, which said that a laptop, left in a repair shop by the presi-

dent's son, contained emails that could

The Times has identified dozens of

be damaging to his father. "Big Tech played their part: Mere weeks before the election, Google, Twitter, and Facebook censored explosive stories about Hunter Biden's business dealings with the Chinese Communist Party," J.D. Vance and Blake Masters both Senate candidates, wrote in The New York Post last year. "Given the narrow official margins in critical swing states, tech manipulation alone likely changed the outcome of the election." The Times also identified at least 50

candidates who promoted or cited "2000 Mules." Directed by the conservative commentator Dinesh D'Souza, the movie contends that an army of "mules" stuffed drop boxes - a twist on what is sometimes referred to as ballot trafficking or harvesting — and says those claims

Questioning the 2020 Election, by State

DO YOU QUESTION THE INTEGRITY OF THE 2020 ELECTION? WOO

'We have thousands

American citizens

suspicious election

the 2020 election.

CLAY HIGGINS,

irregularities on the days

and weeks leading up to

U.S. House candidate. Third District. Louisiana

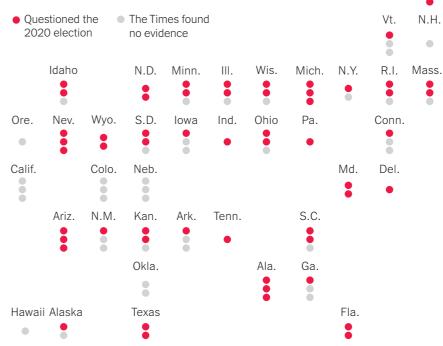
regarding very

of affidavits signed by

Running for the U.S. House of Representatives or U.S. Senate







About the Data The underlying data for this project was collected by Karen Yourish and Danielle Ivory, who analyzed the public statements of more than 550 Republican candidates in the midterm elections. The Times nvestigation most likely undercounted candidates who have expressed skepticism about the last presidential election. It is possible that some have questioned it in ways that did not surface in the materials reviewed. Race ratings data is from the Cook Political Report, as of Oct. 12, 2022.

Note: Data is based on a Times analysis of public statements of more than 550 Republican midterm candidates

were bolstered by tracking of cellphone data but material in the movie has been debunked by several organizations. Many Republicans have latched onto a

narrower procedural argument for the attempt last Jan. 6 to challenge the Electoral College vote — an episode that breathed new life into Mr. Trump's claims of conspiracy and fraud. These candidates have made the unorthodox argument that it was unconstitu-

tional for states to bypass state legislatures when they changed voting procedures during the pandemic, when infections were beginning to surge across the country. Some candidates have hewed close to this narrow constitutional argument, but

others have used the argument as a springboard, accusing Democrats of harnessing the Covid pandemic to steal the election from Mr. Trump. "I believe that the Democrat machine took over our elections before 2020 in the guise of Covid," Karoline Leavitt, a former Trump administration official who is running for a House seat in New Hamp-

shire, said on a news program last year.

"Covid was the greatest gift that the

Democrats ever received. They circumvented state legislatures across the country, which is unconstitutional." A common refrain among candidates is that they are merely reflecting the views of their voters. Polls show a majority of Republican voters do not believe Mr. Biden legitimately won the election. But when the Republican old guard has tried to rein in those views, the efforts have crumbled quickly.

This summer, for example, Bill Palatucci, a Republican National Committee member from New Jersey and an outspoken critic of Mr. Trump's efforts to subvert the election, drafted a resolution that would have denounced the idea that Vice President Mike Pence could have rejected the Electoral College results (though it did not mention Mr. Trump by

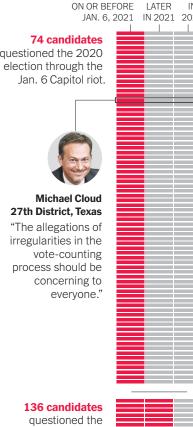
Mr. Palatucci spent a day lobbying members, and his effort seemed to be earning some support. But it fell apart the next evening. Support evaporated once it became clear that a trio of election-denying candidates in Arizona — Blake Masters, for Senate; Kari Lake, for governor; and Mark Finchem, for secretary of state — would prevail in the pri-

Mr. Palatucci said. In the end, falsehoods surrounding the vote have so taken hold of the G.O.P. that it is harder to find Republican candidates

"Any candidate for public office who cannot state forthrightly and unequivocally that the 2020 election results were valid, and that Jan. 6, 2021, was a violent insurrection, should be deemed unqualified to serve," Corey Gustafson, a congressional candidate running in California, said in an interview with The San Diego Union-Tribune in August. He is not favored to win his race.

When Candidates Questioned The 2020 Election Each row represents one Republican candidate over time.

A15



2020 election on and off over the last two years.

Diana Harshbarger, First District, Tenn. "There's ample evidence that unchecked ballot harvesting has led to mischief and voting

auestioned the 2020 election in 2022

Scottv Moore Ninth District, Fla. "The movie '2000 Mules' proves election fraud happened and President Trump

won in a landslide.

have persistently questioned the 2020 election

"There was, well, very polite silence,"

who unequivocally accept the results than those who question or reject them.



recently; their records of casting doubt on the 2020

election may not be publicly available. THE NEW YORK TIME