

# The Case for Election Official Storytelling

## *Want to Save Democracy? Tell Your Story*

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### *What happens when election officials don't tell their story?*

- Misinformation and suspicion spread more quickly in the absence of election officials speaking up. People may fill the gaps with rumors or false narratives, leading to distrust in the electoral process.
- Public engagement declines. When officials don't share their experiences and insights, the public may feel disconnected from the electoral process, resulting in lower voter turnout and reduced civic engagement.
- Election administration challenges are under-recognized. The unique challenges and complexities of managing elections can go unnoticed. Sharing their stories can highlight the hard work that goes into maintaining a fair and secure electoral system.
- Opportunities for improvement and public input may be missed. By not discussing their experiences, officials miss the chance to identify potential areas for improvement in election processes and gain insights from the public.

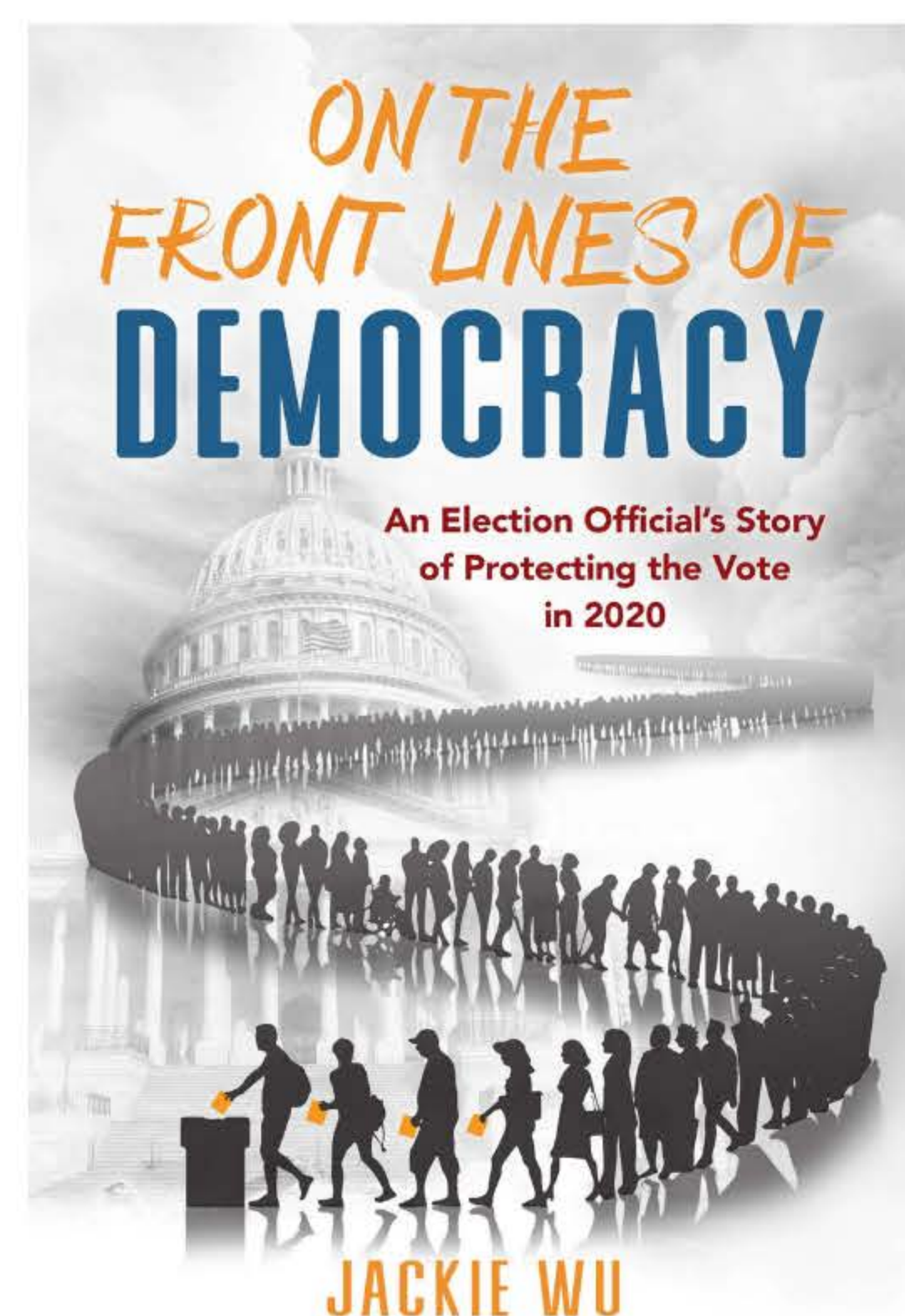


### *What happens when election officials tell their story?*

- The public gains a richer understanding of the diverse challenges and achievements that election officials encounter in their efforts to ensure free and fair elections.
- A comprehensive historical record of election administration is established, capturing both its obstacles and successes. Much of the data currently collected about elections and voting tends to focus more on quantitative metrics rather than qualitative insights.
- Enhanced trust and appreciation for the vital work of election officials is cultivated, encouraging greater civic engagement in the democratic process.
- Election officials share important perspectives on the complexities of managing elections and emerging trends, potentially leading to legislative reforms and increased resources to effectively support the protection of elections and voting rights.
- Individuals, especially youth, may become inspired to pursue careers in election administration or consider serving as temporary election workers in support of the democratic process.

*The sharing of election officials' stories is essential in promoting transparency, accountability, and public trust in the electoral process, ultimately contributing to the preservation and strengthening of democracy.*

### Case Study



"On the Front Lines of Democracy: An Election Official's Story of Protecting the Vote in 2020" serves as a case study in support of election official storytelling by illustrating the critical role that personal narratives play in enhancing public understanding and trust in the electoral process.

**Personal Insight into Challenges:** The story provides a firsthand account of the unique challenges faced by election officials during a tumultuous election year, including the complexities introduced by the COVID-19 pandemic. This perspective helps the public appreciate the difficult decisions and adaptations officials had to make to ensure a safe and fair election.

**Transparency and Trust:** By sharing their experiences, the election official fosters transparency, which is key to building public trust. When citizens understand the thought processes and challenges behind election management, they are more likely to support and trust the system.

**Humanizing Election Administration:** The narrative humanizes election officials, illustrating them as dedicated public servants committed to upholding democracy rather than faceless bureaucrats. This connection can help demystify the election process and reduce skepticism toward electoral institutions.

**Highlighting Resilience and Success:** The case study showcases the resilience and successes of election officials in overcoming significant obstacles to facilitate voting. Celebrating these achievements can inspire confidence in the electoral process and encourage civic engagement.

**Educational Opportunity:** The storytelling aspect serves as an educational tool, enlightening voters about the logistics and complexities of elections. This can lead to increased awareness and participation in future electoral processes.

**Encouraging Dialogue:** By documenting this experience, the story opens up avenues for dialogue between election officials and the public. Such conversations can foster collaboration and lead to improvements in voting processes and policies.

**Call to Action:** The narrative can serve as a motivational call to action, encouraging individuals to consider roles in election administration or advocate for fair voting practices, thereby enhancing civic responsibility.

In summary, "On the Front Lines of Democracy" exemplifies how election official storytelling can build trust, educate the public, and inspire active participation, all of which are vital for the health of democracy. This is only the story of one election official for one jurisdiction for one election.

According to the 2023 Elections & Voting Information Center (EVIC) Local Election Official (LEO) Survey, there are approximately 20,000 to 25,000 election staff across the United States. When you consider staff sharing, temporary workers, and poll workers, there are significantly more individuals involved with administering elections. Our democracy would be strengthened with more stories told by those who are on the front lines of democracy.