



# ARIZONA SENATE REPUBLICANS HINT AT LAWSUIT OVER ELECTION PROCEDURES MANUAL - THE CENTER SQUARE

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Arizona Senate President Warren Petersen hinted that there could be a lawsuit in store for the Arizona secretary of state's office.

The 2023 Elections Procedures Manual was released on Dec. 30 by Secretary of State Adrian Fontes and was approved by Gov. Katie Hobbs and Attorney General Kris Mayes, all three of whom are Democrats.

"Free, fair and secure elections have been this group's commitment to the voter from the very beginning," Fontes said in a statement. "This is what happens when a committed group of leaders comes together to serve their community. It's good for our democracy and it's good for Arizona."

In Mayes' statement, she said that the manual is helpful for local elections workers, as they have been the subject of intense scrutiny amid heightened election fraud claims in recent years.

"Local election officials are on the front lines of democracy, and they need clear, actionable guidance to do their jobs effectively," Mayes said. "The updated manual is a direct response to that need, offering detailed procedures and protocols to navigate the complexities of election administration. It's a comprehensive resource aimed at ensuring that our elections are not only fair and secure but also transparent, reinforcing public trust in the electoral process in Arizona."

However, Petersen said that the manual failed to consider the election laws passed by the Republican-majority legislature.

"We warned the SOS early on that we would sue if the Elections Procedure Manual was not corrected to reflect the laws passed by the legislature. Unfortunately that did not happen. I imagine their will be many plaintiffs join the Senate in protecting our elections," Petersen tweeted on Sunday.

"We witnessed a sad trend in 2023 where the Executive branches led by Democrats blatantly disregard the law. 1. Governor violates confirmation laws. 2. SOS rewrites laws with the EPM. 3. AG fails to fully defend our laws leaving making it necessary for us to intervene," the Republican continued.

His criticism of the manual is not new, as he toyed with the idea of a lawsuit when the draft was released this summer, the [Arizona](#)

[Capitol Times](#) reported in August.



A new manual has to be put out every four years ahead of a general election, and this one was met with critical feedback from Arizonans across the political spectrum, according to [Votebeat](#).

Votebeat reported at the time that Petersen and House Speaker Ben Toma were critical of the draft's timeline that purging the Active Early Voting List if someone has not voted in the past two elections would be put off until 2026, delaying when a 2021 Ducey-era law would be put into practice.

It appears that the current version of the manual still maintains that removal notices will not be made until 2027.

"Because the 2022 election cycle began before S.B. 1485 (2022) took effect and S.B. 1485 does not apply retroactively, the first two full election cycles after S.B. 1485's effective date are the 2024 and 2026 election cycles. Therefore, the first AEVL removal notices must be sent out by January 15, 2027 to AEVL voters who vote by early ballot in zero eligible elections in the 2024 and 2026 election cycles," the [manual](#) states.

As Arizona is a battleground state, election issues will continue to be at the forefront in the 2024 election cycle.