



HOW WE COVER ELECTIONS

What we've learned calling races, checking facts, and covering politics online — and how to apply it to your own channel.



OUR CREATOR PHILOSOPHY

38% of Americans ages 18–29 say they regularly get news from influencers on social media, per Pew Research Center.

Creators offer something newsrooms structurally can't: a two-way connection. You reply to comments. You engage with your community in person, not just from behind a desk. You're reachable in a way a news anchor never has been.

Our goal is to combine that accessibility with journalism standards — and **give creators the tools to cover candidates, races, and issues fairly, accurately, and with integrity.**

We're not here to tell your audience what to think, or how to vote. We're here to help you give them what they need to decide that for themselves.



HOW WE CALL RACES

Election coverage requires an especially high standard of accuracy — higher than almost anything else you'll cover this year.

Here's how we approach it.

We use Decision Desk for election calls.

They've built a long track record of accuracy and speed, and they're independent of any single network's incentives — their whole business is being right, not being first (although they usually are first).

If we're not using Decision Desk, we wait.

We hold until two traditional, reputable news organizations to call the race before we do. And then we cite them as our sources.

We don't take a candidate's concession or victory claim as fact.

Only an official call counts. Candidates can say whatever they want on Election Night — that's not the same as the race being decided.



BEING RIGHT DOESN'T MEAN MAKING YOUR AUDIENCE HAPPY

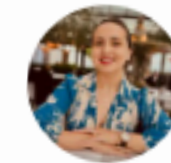
In 2024, we called several swing states for Trump before outlets like the AP had made the same call because we were following Decision Desk HQ's data, not waiting on the networks.

Safe to say our audience was angry, but being accurate and being popular aren't always the same thing on Election Night.



theacornfactory 96w

Y'all are not AP. Stop posting these until AP calls it. Bad journalism if you can even call



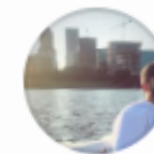
downtothebits 96w

WTH are you guys doing?! You're causing major anxiety by posting these "updates". Most of these are too early to call at all. This is impossible.



plaidervoteur 96w

Too early to announce. Dismissed!



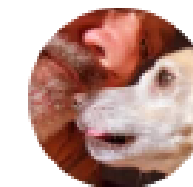
mr_bbpitts 96w

[@therecount](#) all your predictions are more premature than the TV experts



jpa2988 96w

Unfollowing because you guys are making calls way too early



kevinamell 96w

Nope. Fake News.



SOME PAST ELECTION CONTENT



RE

What happens next?

The new maps in Texas and Missouri are already facing **legal challenges**:

- In Texas, voting rights groups filed a lawsuit that alleged racial discrimination under the Voting Rights Act.
- In Missouri, voters challenged their state's new maps, arguing the mid-decade redraw violates the state's constitution, and have started gathering signatures on a petition to force a statewide referendum on the matter.

Meanwhile, Indiana, Kansas, Virginia, and Florida have all taken steps toward mid-decade redistricting, and **other states could follow**.

And then there's **SCOTUS**: The Supreme Court appears ready to gut a key part of the Voting Rights Act next year which could eliminate more than a dozen Democratic districts across the South.

TL;DR — the redistricting battle is far from over.

We prepped this carousel before the election so that we could post immediately after results were announced.

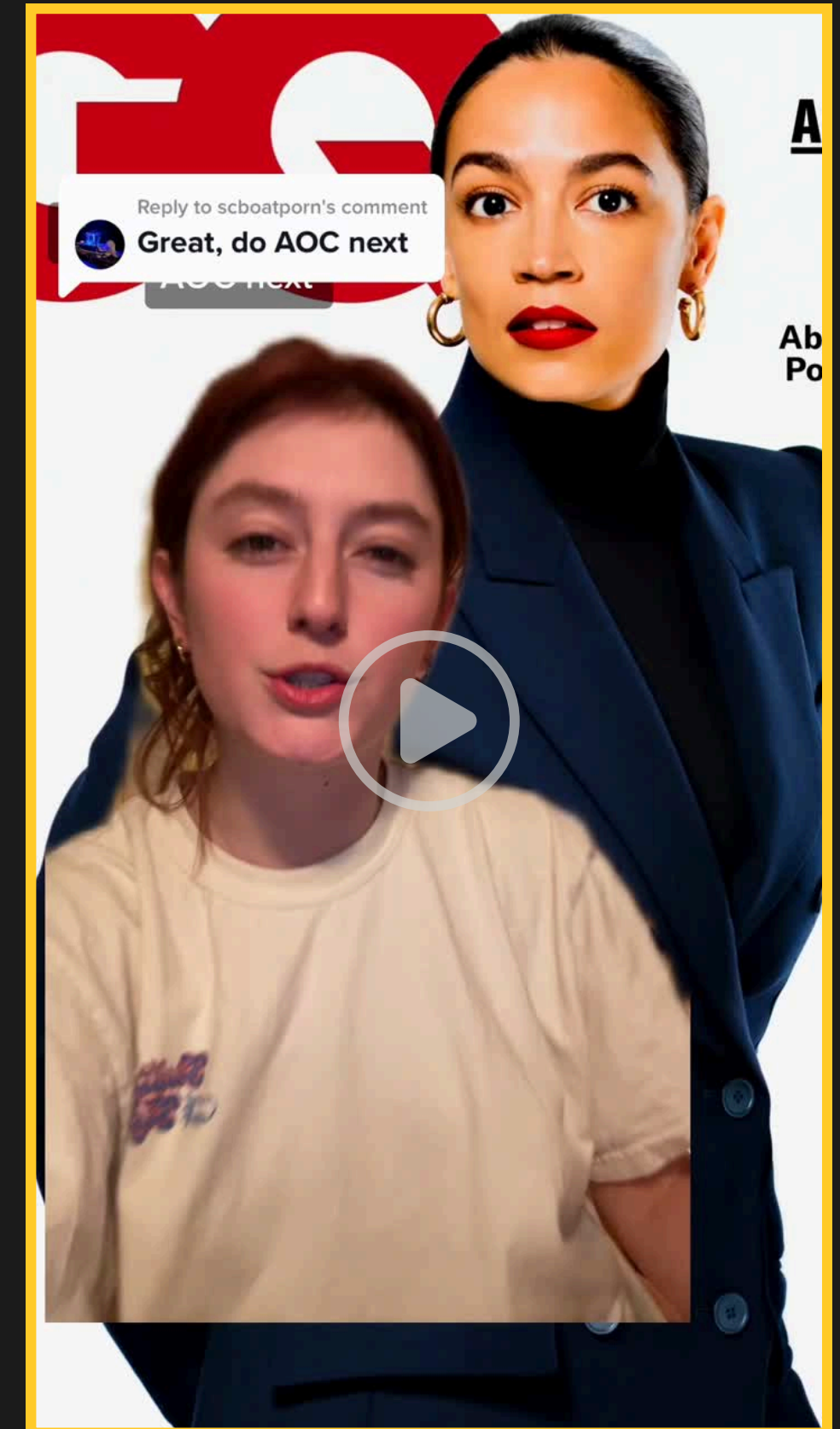
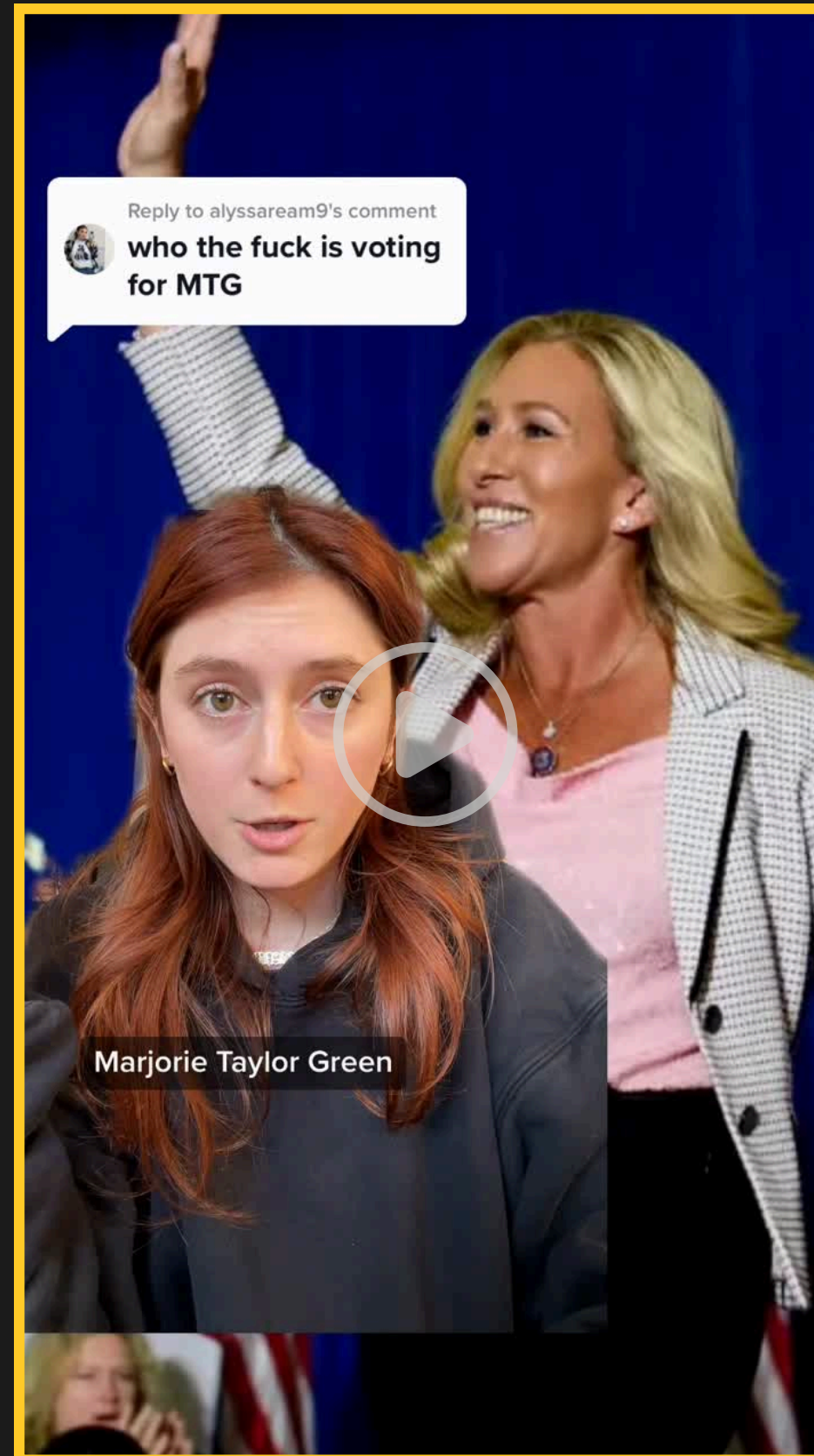
In addition to this being a breaking news headline, we used the subsequent slides to put the impact of

California's vote in context with the other states gerrymandering.

SOME PAST ELECTION CONTENT

Political deep dives like these are where you can set yourself apart from other creators just churning out election updates.

Although these require in-depth research and data, they connect with audiences because they're different from the other election content people see on the feeds.





tone is yours to own

Your coverage doesn't need to sound like ours, or like anyone else's.

You know your audience better than any producer or editor does. How you explain a Senate race to your followers should sound different depending on who's watching, but that doesn't mean sacrificing accuracy.

What can flex:

Your tone, your pacing, how much context you give, how casual or formal you sound, what you assume your audience already knows, the format, the topics you decide to cover

What can't flex:

The facts themselves



HOW TO FACT-CHECK LIKE A JOURNALIST

Trace it to the source.

Not “someone said,” not a screenshot of a tweet. Always find where the claim originated.

Independently corroborate.

One outlet reporting something isn’t the same as it being confirmed.

Separate reporting from spin.

What actually happened vs. what someone wants you to think happened can be different.

When you’re wrong, correct.

Deleting instead of correcting looks like you’re hiding something, even when you’re not.



A QUICK VOCAB LESSON

Election Night has its own language. Using it correctly makes you sound credible.

“Leading”

Currently ahead in the vote count.

Not the same as winning.

“Too early to call”

Not enough votes counted yet to know
the outcome with confidence.

“Too close to call”

The margin is within the range where more
counting could change the outcome.

“Projected” / “Called”

A race has been decided based on data and
modeling, even if 100% of votes aren’t counted.



ALL ABOUT MIRAGES

A “mirage” is when early results seem to favor one candidate, then shift as more votes are counted. They can happen to either party, because ballots aren't all counted at the same pace: mail-in ballots take longer than in-person votes, and counties vary in size and speed.

The most common example is mail-in voting. In recent elections, Republican voters have leaned toward voting in person and Democratic voters toward voting by mail. Since in-person votes are usually counted first, early results can favor Republicans before shifting as mail ballots are added, creating a “**red mirage.**”

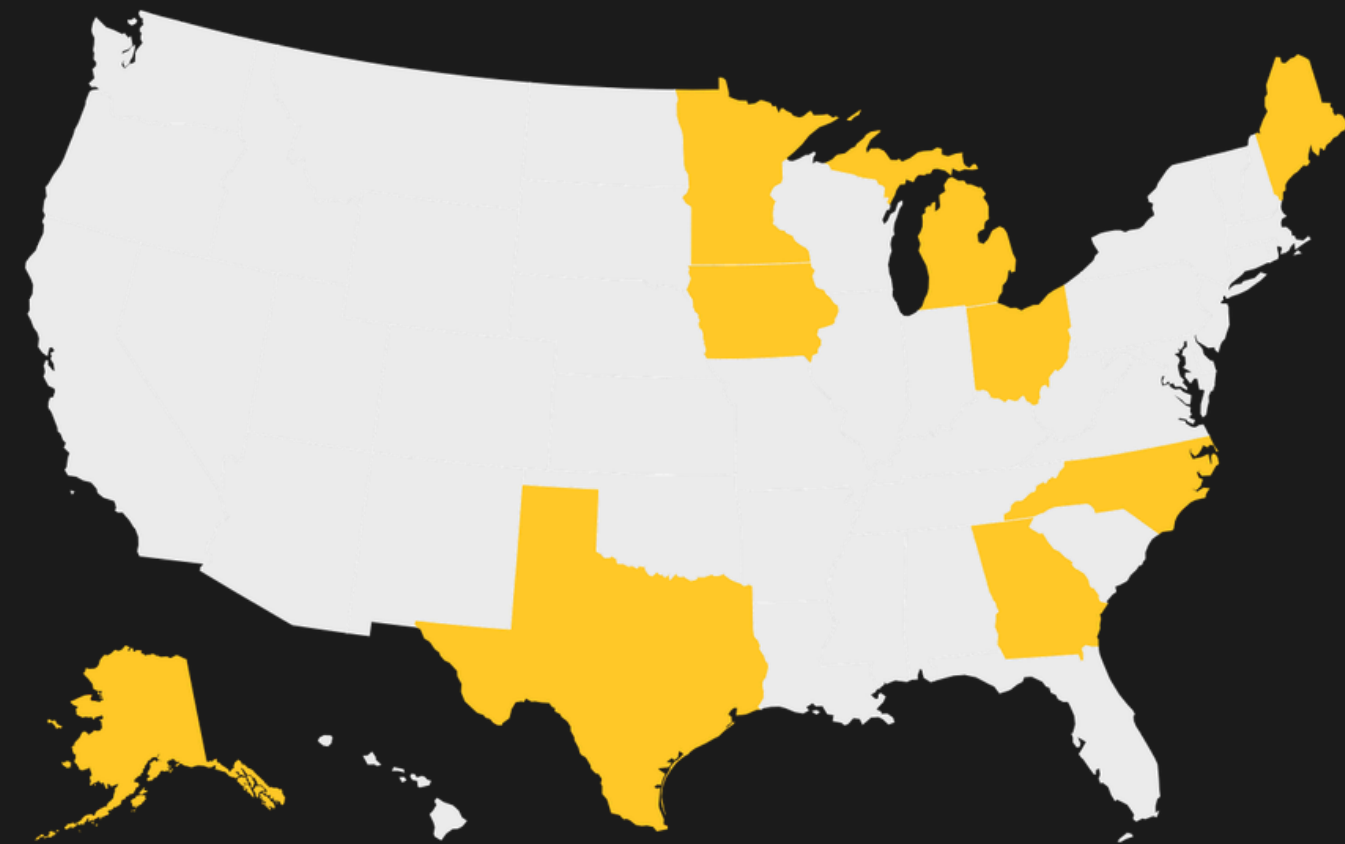
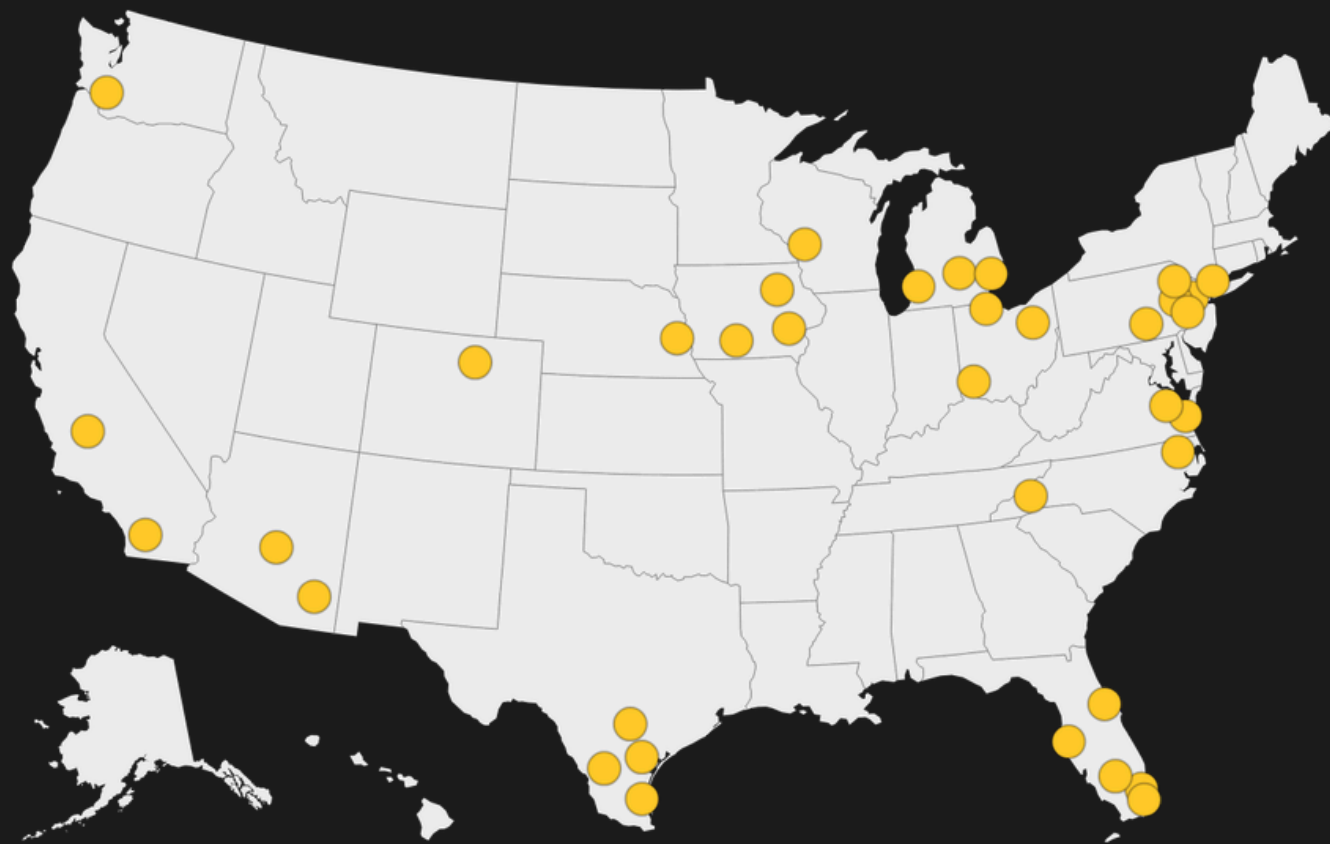
If you don't know a shift like that is possible, it can look alarming — even suspicious. That's often where “rigged election” claims come from. **But a mirage is a common feature of how ballots get processed. It is not evidence of manipulation.**



IMPORTANT RACES TO WATCH

There are hundreds of races on the ballot. You can't cover all of them.

We identified 45 House and Senate races that we think are the most competitive and will decide control of Congress.



If you only have bandwidth to cover a handful of races closely, we suggest you start here.



YOUR CHEAT SHEET: THE RECOUNT'S VOTER GUIDE

All 45 races, broken down — who's running, the issues defining the race, and local reporting to go deeper.

It's free, it's nonpartisan, and it's yours to use however fits your audience. Make it your own homework, or point your audience straight to it.



THE RECOUNT

CREATOR VOTER GUIDE · 2026 MIDTERMS · NONPARTISAN

Step 1 of 3

Let's build your midterm coverage kit.

Answer a few questions and we'll generate story angles, fast facts, and shareable graphics about one of 45 competitive races catered to your audience.

What do you want to focus on?

Pick one to start — you can generate more kits later.



A specific race

A candidate or contest you're covering



A specific state

Federal or local contests in one state



A specific issue

The topics your followers care about



A ballot measure

Propositions & referenda on the 2026 ballot

CANDIDATE NAME OR AS MUCH INFO AS YOU HAVE

e.g. 'Ohio Senate — the open seat', or a candidate name

Not sure of the exact name? Give us as much information as possible.



SPEND ELECTION NIGHT WITH US

On November 3, we're turning The Recount's NYC office into a working newsroom for a group of creators. Follow results alongside our newsroom, tap us for information and context, create content, and collaborate with other creators throughout the night.



SCAN TO REQUEST A SPOT