

1 Marc J. Randazza, #027861  
RANDAZZA LEGAL GROUP, PLLC  
2 2764 Lake Sahara Drive, Suite 109  
Las Vegas, NV 89117  
3 Tel: (702) 420-2001  
ecf@randazza.com

4 David S. Gingras, #021097  
GINGRAS LAW OFFICE, PLLC  
5 4802 E. Ray Road, #23-271  
Phoenix, AZ 85044  
6 Tel.: (480) 264-1400  
7 Fax: (480) 248-3196  
David@GingrasLaw.com

8 John C. Burns, MBE# 66462\*  
Burns Law Firm  
9 P.O. Box 191250  
Saint Louis, MO 63119  
10 Tel: 314-329-5040  
11 Fax: 314-282-8136  
TBLF@pm.me

12 Attorneys for Plaintiffs  
TPG Communications, LLC and Jordan Conradson

13 *\*pro hac vice forthcoming*

14 **UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**  
15 **DISTRICT OF ARIZONA**

16 TGP Communications, LLC, d/b/a The  
17 Gateway Pundit, a Missouri limited liability  
18 company; and Jordan Conradson, an  
individual,

19 Plaintiffs,

20 v.

21 Jack Sellers, Thomas Galvin, Bill Gates,  
22 Clint Hickman, and Steve Gallardo, in their  
23 respective official capacities as members of  
24 the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors;  
Stephen Richer, in his official capacity as

Case No. 2:22-cv-01925-JJT

**CORRECTED<sup>1</sup> EMERGENCY  
EX PARTE MOTION FOR A  
TEMPORARY RESTRAINING  
ORDER**

25 <sup>1</sup> Corrected only as to the caption of this document.

1 the Maricopa County Recorder; Rey  
2 Valenzuela and Scott Jarrett, in their official  
3 capacities as Maricopa County Election  
4 Directors; and Megan Gilbertson and  
5 Marcus Milam, in their official capacities as  
6 Maricopa County Communications  
7 Officers,

8 Defendants.

9 **EMERGENCY EX PARTE**

10 **MOTION FOR A TEMPORARY RESTRAINING ORDER**

11 TGP Communications, LLC, d/b/a The Gateway Pundit (“TGP”) and Jordan  
12 Conradson (“Conradson”) (together, “Plaintiffs”) files this Emergency Ex Parte Motion for  
13 a Temporary Restraining Order, seeking to restrain Defendants Jack Sellers, Thomas  
14 Galvin, Bill Gates, Clint Hickman, and Steve Gallardo, in their respective official  
15 capacities as members of the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors; Stephen Richer, in  
16 his official capacity as the Maricopa County Recorder; Rey Valenzuela and Scott Jarrett,  
17 in their official capacities as Maricopa County Election Directors; and Megan Gilbertson  
18 and Marcus Milam, in their official capacities as Maricopa County Communications  
19 Officers (“Defendants”) from denying the rights guaranteed to Plaintiffs by the First  
20 Amendment of the United States Constitution.

21 **MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND AUTHORITIES**

22 **1.0 Introduction**

23 Open government has been a hallmark of our democracy since our nation's  
24 founding. As James Madison wrote in 1822, “a popular Government, without popular  
25 information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a Prologue to a Farce or a Tragedy; or,  
perhaps both.” *Leigh v. Salazar*, 677 F.3d 892, 897 (9th Cir 2012) (citing 9 Writings of  
James Madison 103 (G. Hunt ed. 1910)).

1 This case presents an urgent emergency. The nation’s eyes are fixed on Maricopa  
2 County due to irregularities in handling the 2022 midterm elections. On election day In  
3 Maricopa County, an estimated 30% of voting locations experienced issues where their  
4 voting machines malfunctioned.<sup>2</sup> And here we are, three days after the election, with votes  
5 still being tallied at a seemingly glacial pace.

6 Understandably, the nation is fixated on this election. This is a matter of great  
7 national importance, and its importance stretches far beyond Arizona’s borders.

8 It is no surprise that there is great skepticism on one side of the political divide and  
9 there is unqualified trust on the other. Society has degraded to the point that many  
10 Americans are skeptical of the good faith, the competence, and the bias of governmental  
11 institutions. However, this skepticism almost always comes down as a “Red” versus “Blue”  
12 issue. If a Republican makes a claim, one can expect “Team Blue” to scream at the top of  
13 their lungs that she must be corrupt, or worse. If a Democrat does the same, the “Red Team”  
14 is not going to take her statement at face value. We then depend on the press, such as it is,  
15 to inform us all so that we can at least hope to know what in tarnation is going on.

16 Our press is no less divided than our electorate. Our press has descended into a  
17 morass of competing partisan reporting that is no longer something Edward R. Murrow or  
18 Ben Bradlee would respect. Nevertheless, when the Free Press clause was placed in the  
19 Constitution, our national press was possibly even more divided and biased than it is today.

20 By the time the infant United States was taking its first furtive steps as a beacon of  
21 liberty, its press operated in a system of political patronage from the parties. This was  
22 known as “The Party Press Era.” Newspapers publishers would cozy up to politicians,

23 <sup>2</sup> See, e.g., Sasha Hupka, “Early glitches with Maricopa County election machines  
24 frustrate voters,” AZCentral (Nov. 8, 2022), available at:  
25 <<https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/politics/elections/2022/11/08/arizona-election-problems-maricopa-county-tabulator-issues/8302133001/>>.

1 endorse their candidates, promote their agendas, and then receive baksheesh in the form of  
2 financial support, prestige, and power. Anyone with any degree of media literacy today  
3 would be unlikely to say that we have not returned to our roots. The only difference is that  
4 today, the mainstream press operates much like the Party Press of the early Republic, but  
5 they try and perpetrate the fiction that it is not so.

6         Meanwhile, if a tree falls in the forest and there is nobody there to hear it, everyone  
7 will still tell the public what it sounded like and what it means. National Public Radio will  
8 report that it happened because Donald Trump caused it with a post on Truth Social. This  
9 claim would be followed by a two hour exposé on how trees in forests are racist. Fox News  
10 will report the same story, but suggest that the tree fell because Hillary Clinton was trying  
11 to kill a frog who had information about her being on Epstein’s island. Who are we to  
12 believe? We are all free to make that choice, but the greater the diversity of voices in the  
13 marketplace of ideas, the better informed the public.

14         The Gateway Pundit is a news and opinion publication of national renown. Founded  
15 Publisher Jim Hoft in 2004, The Gateway Pundit has grown into one of the largest and  
16 most highly read political blogs in the nation. The Gateway Pundit is ranked as one of the  
17 top 150 websites in the US, with an average of 2.5 million daily readers. *See* Declaration  
18 of James Hoft at ¶ 1. It is considered by many to be a “conservative” publication, as its  
19 editorial staff does tend to the libertarian/conservative side of things. In a national media  
20 landscape where conservatives are an endangered species, this is a relative rarity. However,  
21 the Gateway Pundit is no less a legitimate journalism organization than the New York  
22 Times – which famously lied to the American public, at the behest of those who wanted  
23 war in the Middle East, to push the agenda that there were WMDs in Iraq and that dutifully  
24 reported on Trump’s “Russian Collusion.” CNN lied about the “Covington Kids.” Rolling  
25

1 Stone lied about “A Rape on Campus.” These were knowing lies, not mere mistakes, but  
2 Maricopa would certainly permit a New York Times, CNN, or Rolling Stone reporter to  
3 cover their actions – because these are politically loyal “Party Papers” as it were. However,  
4 the Defendants have decided, using unfettered discretion, to exclude the Gateway Pundit  
5 and its reporters from covering the election debacle. The stated reason was:

6 Thank you for applying for a Maricopa County Press Pass. This email  
7 is to notify you that you have been denied a press credential based on  
8 the following criteria which is listed on Maricopa.gov:

9 \* #4: You (a) do not avoid real or perceived conflicts of interest  
10 and (b) are not free of associations that would compromise  
11 journalistic integrity or damage credibility. Therefore, you are not a  
12 bona fide correspondent of repute in your profession.

13 If you would like to appeal this decision, please reply to this email  
14 stating the reasons it should be reconsidered.

15 Further, any press conference about the 2022 Election will be streamed  
16 to a Maricopa County YouTube channel and you are welcome to view it.

17 Thank you,

18 Elections Command Center

19 See **Exhibit 1**, Emailed Denial & Appeal.

20 These criteria are unconstitutionally vague and reasonable minds could say the same  
21 things about the New York Times or CNN or National Public Radio without stretching a  
22 bit. Maricopa’s decision to exclude the Gateway Pundit is entirely viewpoint based. And  
23 thus, both facially and as applied, this regulation must be struck down. With the exigent  
24 circumstance of a “hot news” situation, the Gateway Pundit must be permitted to attend  
25 press conferences, immediately.

## 22 **2.0 Legal Standard**

23 A party seeking a preliminary injunction or temporary restraining order must meet  
24 one of two tests: traditional or alternative. See *Stanley v. Univ. of S. Cal.*, 13 F.3d 1313,  
25 1319 (9th Cir. 1994). Under the traditional test, a plaintiff must show: (1) he will probably

1 prevail on the merits; (2) he will suffer irreparable injury if injunctive relief is not granted;  
2 (3) the defendant will not be equitably harmed more than the plaintiff is helped by the  
3 injunction; and (4) granting the injunction is in the public interest. *See id.* Alternatively, a  
4 court may issue a preliminary injunction if the plaintiff shows either (1) a combination of  
5 probable success on the merits and the possibility of irreparable injury, or (2) the existence  
6 of serious questions going to the merits and that the balance of hardships tips sharply in its  
7 favor. *See FDIC v. Garner*, 125 F.3d 1272, 1277 (9th Cir. 1997); *Metro Pub. Ltd. v. San*  
8 *Jose Mercury News*, 987 F.2d 637, 639 (9th Cir. 1993). “The injury or threat of injury must  
9 be both ‘real and immediate,’ not ‘conjectural’ or ‘hypothetical.’” *City of Los Angeles v.*  
10 *Lyons*, 461 U.S. 95, 102 (1983).

11 Under these standards injunctive relief is appropriate when either of these two tests  
12 are met. These are not two separate tests, but “merely extremes of a single continuum.”  
13 *Topanga Press, Inc. v. City of Los Angeles*, 989 F.2d 1524, 1528 (9th Cir. 1993). This means  
14 that if the balance of hardships strongly favors the plaintiff, he does not need to make as  
15 strong a showing of success on the merits, and vice versa. *See Walczak v. EPL Prolong,*  
16 *Inc.*, 198 F.3d 725, 731 (9th Cir. 1999).

17 When there is a violation of a constitutional right, no further showing of irreparable  
18 injury is required. *See Associate General Contractors of California v. Coalition for*  
19 *Economic Equity*, 950 F.2d 1401, 1410 (9th Cir. 1991). In fact, the first prong of the  
20 “traditional” test is generally outcome determinative in First Amendment cases, as a chill  
21 to one’s First Amendment rights is irreparable harm, a governmental entity can have no  
22 legitimate interest in enforcing an unconstitutional regulation, and the public is not helped  
23 by enforcing such a regulation. *See Thoms v. Maricopa Cty. Cmty. Coll. Dist.*, No. CV-21-  
24 01781-PHX-SPL, 2021 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 214822, \*35-39 (D. Ariz. Nov. 5, 2021).

25

### 1 3.0 Argument

2 The government's actions in this case are the government requiring a permit or a  
3 license to gather news. This has never been permissible in America. In fact, such schemes  
4 fell out of favor even before the Revolution. "Licensing of the press was never effective in  
5 the American colonies. The last attempt to enforce this common law right of the crown in  
6 the American colonies failed in 1725." *Chicago v. Tribune Co.*, 307 Ill. 595, 599 (Ill. 1923).  
7 Whether because the colonists would not accept press licensing or by the imposition of our  
8 Constitution after the Revolution, there is not, nor should there ever be, press licensing in  
9 America. If there were and the Courts did not step in, it "would make it easy for dictators  
10 to control their subjects." *Grosjean v. American Press Co.*, 297 U.S. 233, 240 (1936)  
11 (discussing press licensing through taxation). Maricopa County appears to believe that it  
12 has found a loophole – while it may not restrain opposition media from *publishing* by using  
13 a licensing scheme, it has decided that it will impede any opposition media's attempts to  
14 serve as a watchdog on government by licensing *newsgathering*.

15 This court must remind Maricopa County that when Arizona joined the union in  
16 1912, it joined not *despite* this long tradition of embracing the freedom of the press, but  
17 *because* of it. Arizona made certain that even if the Federal Constitution ever changed, its  
18 state constitution would continue to protect freedom of the press. "Every person may freely  
19 speak, write, and publish on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of that right."  
20 Ariz. Const. Art. 2, § 6.

21 This Honorable Court should grant the Plaintiff the right to gather the news, no  
22 matter whether the Maricopa County government likes their viewpoint or their politics or  
23 not. The regulations are unconstitutional, both facially and as applied.  
24  
25

### 3.1 Newsgathering and the First Amendment

The First Amendment protects newsgathering. *United States v. Sherman*, 581 F.2d 1358, 1361 (9th Cir. 1978); *see also Branzburg v. Hayes*, 408 U.S. 665, 681, 6 (1972) (“[W]ithout some protection for seeking out the news, freedom of the press could be eviscerated.”); *Cable News Network, Inc. v. Am. Broad. Cos.*, 518 F. Supp. 1238, 1244 (N.D. Ga. 1981) (“[T]he rights guaranteed and protected by the First Amendment include a right of access to news or information concerning the operations and activities of government.”)

The media serves an essential role as “surrogates for the public” when it reports on government affairs. *Richmond Newspapers v. Virginia*, 448 U.S. 555, 573 (1980); *see also Cox Broad. Corp. v. Cohn*, 420 U.S. 469, 490-91 (1975) (“[I]n a society in which each individual has but limited time and resources with which to observe at first hand the operations of his government, he relies necessarily upon the press to bring to him in convenient form the facts of those operations.”). “[A]rbitrary or content-based criteria for press pass issuance are prohibited under the first amendment.” *Sherrill v. Knight*, 569 F.2d 124, 129 (D.C. Cir. 1977).

In *Consumers Union v. Periodical Correspondents' Assoc.*, 365 F. Supp. 18, 22-23 (D.D.C. 1973), *rev'd on other grounds*, 169 U.S. App. D.C. 370, 515 F.2d 1341 (D.C. Cir. 1975), *cert. denied*, 423 U.S. 1051 (1976), the court held it was unconstitutional for the government to discriminate against Consumer Reports on grounds that it was “owned and operated” by a “self-proclaimed advocate of consumer interests.” The court further stated: “A free press is undermined if the access of certain reporters to facts relating to the public's business is limited merely because they advocate a particular viewpoint. This is a dangerous and self-defeating doctrine.” *Consumers Union*, 365 F. Supp. at 25.



1 The government may not exclude a publication because of their viewpoint or  
2 because their readership consists mainly of people who vote differently than they do. *See*  
3 *Quad-City Cmty News Serv. v. Jebens*, 334 F. Supp. 8, 17 (S.D. Iowa 1971) (stating “any  
4 classification which serves to penalize or restrain the exercise of a First Amendment right,  
5 unless shown to be necessary to promote a compelling governmental interest, is  
6 unconstitutional”). “[O]nce there is a public function, public comment, and participation  
7 by some of the media, the First Amendment requires equal access to all of the media, or  
8 the rights of the First Amendment would no longer be tenable.” *Am. Broad. Cos. v. Cuomo*,  
9 570 F.2d 1080, 1083 (2d Cir. 1977). “[A]rbitrary or content-based criteria for press pass  
10 issuance are prohibited under the first amendment.” *Sherrill v. Knight*, 186 U.S. App. D.C.  
11 293, 569 F.2d 124, 129 (1977) (citing *Branzburg v. Hayes*, 408 U.S. 665, 681, 707 (1972)).

12 The government, in this case, appears to try and save its decision by offering the  
13 Plaintiffs to watch streaming video of press conferences. However, this does not purge  
14 their actions of their unconstitutional sins. The court in *Consumers Union* stated:

15 While it is perfectly true that reporters do not have an unrestricted right to go  
16 where they please in search of news, ... the elimination of some reporters  
17 from an area which has been voluntarily opened to other reporters for the  
18 purpose of news gathering presents a wholly different situation. Access to  
19 news, if unreasonably or arbitrarily denied ..., constitutes a direct limitation  
20 upon the content of news.

21 *Consumers Union*, 365 F. Supp. at 25-26 (citations omitted)

22 “[A]ll representatives of news organizations must not only be given equal access,  
23 but within reasonable limits, access with equal convenience to official news sources.”  
24 *Westinghouse Broad. Co. Inc. v. Dukakis*, 409 F. Supp. 895, 896 (D. Mass. 1976). In a  
25 similar case, the government sought to segregate media into different areas. But even that  
was not permissible. *See United Teachers of Dade v. Stierheim*, 213 F. Supp. 2d 1368,  
1374 (S.D. Fla. 2002) “[T]o the extent that entry into the ‘general-circulation media’ press

1 room provides media representatives with additional access to information, Plaintiffs' First  
2 Amendment rights are being violated.” *Id.*

### 3 **3.2 The Regulations are Unconstitutionally Vague**

4 A Policy is impermissibly vague if (1) “it fails to provide people of ordinary  
5 intelligence a reasonable opportunity to understand what conduct it prohibits” or (2) “it  
6 authorizes or even encourages arbitrary and discriminatory enforcement.” *Hill v. Colorado*,  
7 530 U.S. 703, 732 (2000). Out of concern or arbitrary suppression of free speech, “the  
8 Constitution requires a ‘greater degree of specificity’ in cases involving First Amendment  
9 rights.” *Nat’l Org. for Marriage v. McKee*, 649 F.3d 34, 62 (1st Cir. 2011). “The vagueness  
10 of such a regulation raises special First Amendment concerns because of the obvious  
11 chilling effect on speech.” *Reno v. ACLU*, 521 U.S. 844, 872 (1997).

12 Defendants denied Plaintiffs’ press credentials using two unconstitutionally vague  
13 criteria. First, the requirement that journalists “avoid real or perceived conflicts of interest,”  
14 and second, that the journalists be “free of associations that would compromise journalistic  
15 integrity or damage credibility.” See **Exhibit 1**, Denial Email.

16 As to the first criteria, conflicts of interests, it is unclear what exactly is prohibited.  
17 Assuming one can suitably define what Defendants mean by a journalist having a “conflict  
18 of interest,” it is impossible to determine how a journalist may avoid being *perceived* to  
19 have a conflict of interest. Does giving positive coverage to one candidate or party cause a  
20 journalist to be perceived as having a conflict of interest, even if none exists? Can reporting  
21 critically on an elected official be perceived as having a conflict of interest in favor of their  
22 opponent? Moreover, it is not even clear what an actual conflict of interest could be for a  
23 journalist. Is appearing to favor a political party a conflict of interest? If that is the case,  
24 and the rule were applied evenly, Maricopa’s press conferences would likely be given to  
25

1 an empty room, or one where only a few high school journalists, still untainted, would be  
2 permitted to participate. A person of “ordinary intelligence” would not be able to determine  
3 what conduct is actually prohibited by Defendants’ conflict of interest criteria. This  
4 unconstitutional vagueness lends itself to arbitrary enforcement, as has happened here.

5 Second, as to Defendants’ “free of associations” requirement, it is likewise unclear  
6 what conduct is prohibited. What does that even mean? What sort of associations would  
7 “compromise journalistic integrity or damage credibility?” Would being a member of a  
8 political party do so? Would voting for a certain candidate do so? Attending a candidate  
9 rally? Making a political donation? This regulation feels a lot like “Constitutional Violation  
10 Inception.” To violate the Free Press clause, they have chosen to use the exercise of the  
11 Free Association clause.

### 12 **3.3 The Process is void of Due Process**

13 Not only are the standards employed by Maricopa County vague and unworkable,  
14 the decision made in a star chamber, with no opportunity to be heard, no articulated  
15 standards, and no opportunity for meaningful appeal or review.

16 In a very closely analogous case, a court ruled that plaintiff had a likelihood of  
17 success on the merits for a due process claim because the government failed “to  
18 memorialize an explicit and meaningful standard governing its denial of press conference  
19 access.” *Alaska Landmine, LLC v. Dunleavy*, 514 F. Supp. 3d 1123, 1134 (D. Alaska 2021).  
20 The court further noted that an “absence of any formal process, policy, or procedure  
21 mak[ing] judicial review [of a First Amendment claim] difficult ... [] highlights the  
22 importance of due process as the vehicle by which First Amendment rights are protected.”  
23 *Id.* To bring a claim under the Due Process Clause, a plaintiff must show: “(1) a violation  
24 of rights protected by the Constitution or created by federal statute, (2) proximately caused  
25

1 (3) by conduct of a person (4) acting under color of state law.” *Crompton v. Gates*, 947  
2 F.2d 1418, 1420 (9th Cir. 1991) (citation omitted).

3 Here, the government deprived Plaintiff of the right to gather the news without any  
4 due process. There is a protected interest in press access to government press conferences.  
5 In *Sherrill*, 569 F.2d at 130 the D.C. Cir. held that this access, for a news correspondent  
6 and his parent publication, “*undoubtedly* qualifies as liberty which may not be denied  
7 without due process of law under the [Fifth Amendment].” (emphasis added). Further, this  
8 is not just a right that benefits the particular plaintiffs – but the public at large. “Not only  
9 newsmen and the publications for which they write, but also the public at large have an  
10 interest protected by the [First Amendment] in assuring that ... individual newsmen not be  
11 arbitrarily excluded from sources of information”). *Id* at 129.

12 Usually in cases where there has been a deprivation of due process, there is an  
13 examination of the adequacy of the process. However, here the analysis is easier, since  
14 there was no process at all. A bureaucrat decided that The Gateway Pundit was not to their  
15 liking and evicted them from the Fourth Estate. Then, to make matters worse, they even  
16 continued to push them away from anywhere that they could meaningfully participate in  
17 news gathering at all. *See* Complaint at ¶ 33.

### 18 **3.4 Defendants’ Regulations and Actions are Content-Based and Viewpoint-** 19 **Based and act as an Impermissible Licensing of Newsgathering**

20 Content-based and viewpoint-based restrictions “are presumptively unconstitutional  
21 and may be justified only if the government proves that they are narrowly tailored to serve  
22 compelling state interests.” *Reed v. Town of Gilbert, Ariz.*, 135 S. Ct. 2218, 2226 (2015).  
23 Our Constitutional alloy was forged in the fires of mistrust of government power.  
24 Therefore, the First Amendment is designed as a shield against government actors who  
25 would burden disfavored viewpoints. *Citizens United v. Fed. Election Comm’n*, 558 U.S.

1 310, 340 (2010). The point of the First Amendment is to deprive the government of the  
2 power to disfavor a particular message, ideas, subject matter, or content. *Consol. Edison*  
3 *Co. v. Pub. Serv. Comm’n*, 447 U.S. 530, 538 (1980). To weaken this protection would be  
4 to allow the government to control the “search for political truth.” *Id.* Content based  
5 restrictions “completely undercut the profound national commitment to the principle that  
6 debate on public issues should be uninhibited, robust, and [wide]-open.” *Police Dep’t of*  
7 *City of Chicago v. Mosley*, 408 U.S. 92, 96 (1972) (citation and quotation marks omitted).

8 The government may not condition the exercise of First Amendment protected  
9 rights on “obtaining a license or permit from a government official in that official’s  
10 boundless discretion.” *Forsyth Cty. v. Nationalist Movement*, 505 U.S. 123, 131 (1992)  
11 (deciding whether an official has unbridled discretion in setting permit fee for public  
12 speaking events, parades, or assemblies); *Se. Promotions v. Conrad*, 420 U.S. 546 (1975)  
13 (addressing whether municipal board charged with leasing city auditorium had unbridled  
14 discretion); *Saia v. People of N.Y.*, 334 U.S. 558, 559-60 (1948) (addressing whether  
15 licensing use of amplifiers gave police chief unfettered discretion); *Am. Entert. v. City of*  
16 *Rocky Mount*, 888 F.3d 707, 720 (4th Cir. 2018) (deciding licensing scheme for sexually  
17 oriented businesses gave licensing official unfettered discretion). Even Nazis marching,  
18 theatrical entertainment, or even nude dancing can not be subject to unfettered government  
19 discretion. Certainly the Freedom of the Press deserves at least as much respect as the  
20 freedom to perform lap dances.

21 In this case, the government created a limited public forum where the press may  
22 gather to question and observe government officials. *See Pleasant Grove City v. Sumnum*,  
23 555 U.S. 460, 470 (2009) (defining a limited public forum as one “that is limited to use by  
24 certain groups or dedicated solely to the discussion of certain subjects”). However, the  
25

1 government limited access to that forum using a vague and unworkable standard, which  
2 they employ using unfettered discretion. In a public forum, “there is broad agreement that  
3 ... investing governmental officials with boundless discretion over access to the forum  
4 violates the First Amendment.” *Child Evangelism Fellowship of Md., Inc. v. Montgomery*  
5 *Cnty. Pub. Sch.*, 457 F.3d 376, 386 (4th Cir. 2006)); *Kaahumanu v. Hawaii*, 682 F.3d 789,  
6 806 (9th Cir. 2012).

7 “For this reason, even in cases involving nonpublic or limited public forums, a  
8 policy ... that permits officials to deny access for any reason, or that does not provide  
9 sufficient criteria to prevent viewpoint discrimination, generally will not survive  
10 constitutional scrutiny.” *Id.* at 387. For time, place, and manner restrictions, “[a]s an  
11 application of the requirement that restrictions be narrowly tailored, a law cannot condition  
12 the free exercise of First Amendment rights on the ‘unbridled discretion’ of government  
13 officials.” *Gaudiya Vaishnava Soc. v. San Francisco*, 952 F.2d 1059, 1065-67 (9th Cir.  
14 1991) (finding unconstitutional ordinance requiring individuals to obtain a “peddling  
15 permit” to sell merchandise that was “inextricably intertwined” with fully protected speech  
16 when the chief of police had discretion to deny issuance of a permit and the ordinance  
17 provided no specific grounds for granting or denying the permit and placed no explicit  
18 limits on the chief’s discretion). And in a case involving a parade ordinance that allowed  
19 the chief of police to move marchers onto sidewalks “in the interest of vehicular or  
20 pedestrian safety,” the Ninth Circuit found that this gave an unconstitutional degree of  
21 discretion to the government because of its breadth and the fact that it did not require  
22 officials to articulate their reasons for denying permission to march in the streets, as well  
23 as an absence of any mechanism for direct administrative or judicial review. *Seattle*

1 *Affiliate of the October 22<sup>nd</sup> Coalition To Stop Police Brutality, Repression & the*  
2 *Criminalization of a Generation v. City of Seattle*, 550 F.3d 788, 799-802 (9th Cir. 2008).

3 “Without standards governing the exercise of discretion, a government official may  
4 decide who may speak and who may not based upon the content of the speech or view-  
5 point of the speaker.” *City of Lakewood v. Plain Dealer Publ’g Co.*, 486 U.S. 750, 763-64  
6 (1988). A government regulation violates the First Amendment “[w]here the licensing  
7 official enjoys unduly broad discretion in determining whether to grant or deny a permit.”  
8 *World Wide Rush, LLC v. City of L.A.*, No. CV 07-238 ABC (JWJx), 2007 U.S. Dist.  
9 LEXIS 105249, \*35 (C.D. Cal. July 23, 2007) (quoting *G.K. Ltd. Travel v. City of Lake*  
10 *Oswego*, 436 F.3d 1064, 1082 (9th Cir. 2006). The court in *World Wide Rush* enumerated  
11 “three considerations ... to determine whether an ordinance confers discretion in violation  
12 of the First Amendment”:

13 (1) whether the ordinance contains “reasonably specific” criteria on which a  
14 denial may rest; (2) whether the ordinance outlines objective factors to  
15 consider in denying an application under the “reasonably specific” criteria;  
16 and (3) whether the ordinance requires officials to “state the reasons for his  
17 or her decision to either grant or deny a permit so as to facilitate effective  
18 review of the official’s determination,” which allows the determination to be  
19 “enforceable on review.”

20 *Id.* at 35-36.

21 There is no reasonably specific criterion, nor are there objective factors, nor has the  
22 Defendant in any way stated the reasons for the decision to allow for effective review. This  
23 is unfettered discretion, and the government used this unfettered discretion to discriminate  
24 against the Gateway Pundit because they do not want to be challenged by the Gateway  
25 Pundit’s style of journalism – a style that does not uncritically act as a stenographer for the  
government narrative.

### 3.5 Equal Protection

The Equal Protection Clause provides that no state shall deny to any person within its jurisdiction equal protection of the laws. *See* U.S. Const. *amend. XIV*, § 1. In other words, “[p]ursuant to the Equal Protection Clause, the government must treat all similarly situated persons alike.” *Martinez v. Clark County*, 846 F. Supp. 2d 1131, 1135 (D. Nev. 2012). A plaintiff asserts a valid equal protection argument if it demonstrates that “a group was singled out for unequal treatment on the basis of religion.” *Carey v. Piphus*, 435 U.S. 247, 248 (1978). If the law that the plaintiff challenges burdens a fundamental right or makes a distinction based on a suspect classification, the Court should employ strict scrutiny review. *See OSU Student Alliance v. Ray*, 699 F.3d 1053, 1067 (9th Cir. 2012). Alternatively, if the law does not burden a fundamental right or target a suspect classification, it is subject to rational basis review. *See id.*

“[U]nder the Equal Protection Clause, not to mention the First Amendment itself, government may not grant the use of a forum to people whose views it finds acceptable, but deny use to those wishing to express less favored or more controversial views.” *Police Dep’t of Chicago v. Mosley*, 408 U.S. 92, 96 (1972). When brought together with claims for violation of one’s First Amendment freedom of speech, an equal protection claim typically shares the same analysis as the First Amendment claim. *Ray*, 699 F.3d at 1067.

Here, Plaintiffs were selectively treated – they were singled out for denial of a press pass specifically for the content and viewpoint of their speech. Because, as discussed above, if the standards were equally applied, the Press Conferences would be attended by no more than a Mesa high school reporter and two tumbleweeds.

### 3.6 Irreparable harm

The “loss of First Amendment freedoms, for even minimal periods of time, unquestionably constitutes irreparable injury.” *Elrod v. Burns*, 427 U.S. 347, 373 (1976).



1 The freedom of the press does not only serve the press itself but exists to serve the public.  
2 *Alaska Landmine, LLC v. Dunleavy*, 514 F. Supp. 3d 1123, 1135 (“the foundational  
3 principle of the press clause of the First Amendment is that the media serves the public in  
4 offering both governmental transparency and information to the citizenry.”) Conversely,  
5 there is a public harm in only allowing “approved” press to cover government affairs, and  
6 the way the government has acted has a high probability of undermining confidence that  
7 the election is being tallied in a fair and above-board manner. Permitting the “opposition”  
8 press, press that would be critical of the government, will serve the government as well. If  
9 the press is excluded because the government thinks that its viewpoint is troubling, will  
10 this not stoke conspiracy theories and mistrust? The injunction will not only not burden the  
11 government, but it will also serve the government. “Without an unfettered press, citizens  
12 would be far less able to make informed political, social, and economic choices. But the  
13 press’ function as a vital source of information is weakened whenever the ability of  
14 journalists to gather news is impaired.” *Zerilli v. Smith*, 656 F.2d 705, 711 (D.C. Cir. 1981).

15 Maricopa’s bureau of elections certainly does look good right now. Arizona’s  
16 secretary of state is a gubernatorial candidate. A county that was predicted to lean heavily  
17 toward her opponent had massive failures in its systems on election day. Does this establish  
18 that something dishonest happened? Of course not. But, what would have been different if  
19 there was something dishonest afoot? Perhaps if there were something dishonest going on,  
20 the government would seek to exclude the press.

21 “When wrongdoing is underway, officials have great incentive to blindfold the  
22 watchful eyes of the Fourth Estate.” *Leigh v. Salazar*, 677 F.3d 892, 900 (9th Cir. 2012)  
23 (citing Timothy B. Dyk, *Newsgathering, Press Access, and the First Amendment*, 44 Stan.  
24 L. Rev. 927, 949 (1992) (“[W]hen the government announces it is excluding the press for  
25

1 reasons such as administrative convenience, preservation of evidence, or protection of  
 2 reporters' safety, its real motive may be to prevent the gathering of information about  
 3 government abuses or incompetence.”). And when the government restricts a publication  
 4 because of its viewpoint, the government is trying to blind the critical press while allowing  
 5 in the friendly press.

6 The Defendants will claim they are behaving honestly and unbiasedly in their  
 7 apparent re-enactment of Florida in the 2000 election. However, if they are so honest, they  
 8 should have no fear of any eyes and ears in the room, no matter how unfriendly. As a great  
 9 jurist from neighboring Nevada said, when deciding a press access issue, “What better way  
 10 to demonstrate to the public that its courts are fair and just than to say to the public, ‘come  
 11 and view the proceedings yourself and judge for yourself?’” *Suen v. Las Vegas Sands, Inc.*,  
 12 Case No. A493744-C (Dist. Ct., Apr. 16, 2013). Indeed, if the Defendants have nothing to  
 13 hide, then what better way to show the world that Maricopa County is competent and fair  
 14 than to let everyone, regardless of viewpoint, see for themselves?

15 That is the gravamen of the injunctive relief sought.

#### 16 **4.0 Conclusion**

17 Plaintiffs ask this Court to enter an immediate emergency injunction as requested.

18 Dated: November 14, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Marc J. Randazza

Marc J. Randazza, #027861

RANDAZZA LEGAL GROUP, PLLC

2764 Lake Sahara Drive, Ste. 109

Las Vegas, Nevada 89117

David S. Gingras, #021097

GINGRAS LAW OFFICE, PLLC

4802 E. Ray Road, #23-271

Phoenix, AZ 85044

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John C. Burns, MBE# 66462\*  
Burns Law Firm  
P.O. Box 191250  
Saint Louis, MO 63119  
  
Attorneys for Plaintiffs  
TPG Communications, LLC and  
Jordan Conradson  
  
*\*pro hac vice forthcoming*