



Colorado
Secretary of State

CO SOS RESCU

Countering Disinformation

Mitigating Physical Threats



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RESCU TEAM

- Founded July 2020
- Nate Blumenthal, Director
- Aaron Hayman, Senior Election Security Specialist – Disinformation
- Tyler Lycan, Election Security Specialist – Physical Security



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CO SOS Countering Disinformation

- Countering disinformation on the electoral process must be a priority
- Democracy depends on it. Biggest challenge we've faced in decades
- If not addressed, it will be hard to maintain confidence in one of—if not the most—fundamental building block of our country



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Strategic Objective—Build Societal Resilience by:

- Shedding Light on / Increasing Awareness of Disinformation
- Promoting / Directing Folks to Trusted Voices



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- Shedding Light / Increasing Awareness, Promoting / Directing Folks to Trusted Voices is Priority.
 - Research / allies' experience shows these two tactics are critical to building resilience
 - Can counter disinformation themes—and we do—but it is hard
 - Elections are complex. Government is slow. Disinformation is easy. Lies travel halfway around the world while the truth is putting on its shoes
 - Goal is ensuring when Boulder17 or Alimoso14 post on elections—folks ignore it and visit county clerks or secretary of state



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How do we do this?

1. Created PSA campaign

- Sheds light on the threat, pushes folks to trusted voices
- Catchy, plays off local issues. Love it or hate it—you will remember it—that is the goal
 - Could not/not be regular government forget about it communications. Had to stick
- Ran social media and digital (local, rural newspaper) ads, placed in DMVs



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*"I-70 traffic is my
favorite winter activity."*



**OPINIONS ARE FUN.
FACTS ARE BETTER.**



Go to **GoVoteColorado.gov**
for official election information.

*"Flip-flops are
all-season footwear."*



**OPINIONS ARE FUN.
FACTS ARE BETTER.**



Go to **GoVoteColorado.gov** for facts on
registering, voting safely and election information.



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“Climbing Longs Peak is easy.”

A cartoon illustration of a brown ram with large, curved horns, standing on a small white peak of a mountain. In the background, a larger mountain peak is visible under a light blue sky.

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Go to **GoVoteColorado.gov** for facts on registering, voting safely and election information.

“Wild animals are always up for selfies.”

A cartoon illustration of a brown ram with large, curved horns, wearing sunglasses and holding a smartphone up to take a selfie. The ram is positioned in front of a background of green pine trees.

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Visit **GoVoteColorado.gov** to learn why Colorado’s elections are reliable and secure.



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“Coyotes make great pets.”



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Visit [GoVoteColorado.gov](https://www.govotecolorado.gov) to learn why Colorado's elections are reliable and secure.

“The two most important food groups are not barley and hops.”



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*“Pueblo...Hatch...
a chile is a chile.”*

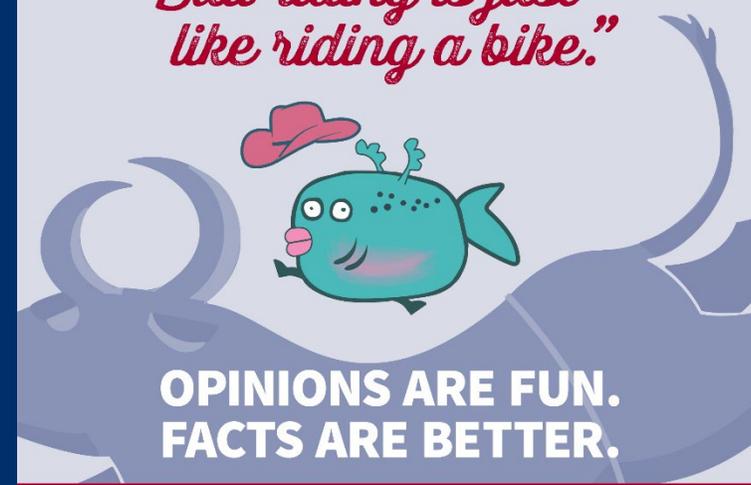


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Colorado's elections are reliable and secure.

*“Bull riding is just
like riding a bike.”*



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2. Developed in house social media campaign – and amplification network

- Free, helps extend reach
- Groups from across the spectrum—unions to chambers to atheists to religious
- Trusted Voice Tuesday

3. Google Ads

- Ran before and after election—still running today
- If folks search for elections they will have the option of visiting our website



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4. Created website to shed light, highlight trusted voices, and more

- [Election Integrity and Security \(state.co.us\)](https://state.co.us/election-integrity-and-security)

5. Blue Check Marks

- Work hard to verify as many county clerk social media handles as possible



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- Many other parts of the problem need to be addressed
 - Whistleblower indicates, for example, social media companies pushing content that increases divisiveness, decreases trust—and harms young women
 - Decline of journalism, particularly local
 - And more



CO SOS Mitigating Physical Threats

- Republican and Democratic election officials in CO—at the local and state levels—are facing threats.
- Mitigating these threats, ensuring election officials feel safe also must be a priority.
- Democracy similarly depends on it.



CO SOS Mitigating Physical Threats

- RESCU Took Multiple Steps, To Include, But Not Limited to:
 - Developed 25 minute required video training for election officials on identifying and reporting threats.
 - Designed lanyards for election officials with guidance on spotting / reporting threats.
 - Constantly, repeatedly, incessantly, promoted awareness of DHS' physical security reviews with 64 clerks, and facilitated visits.
 - Developed grant program for counties to fill security needs.