

*CBS Mornings*

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7:00:46 a.m. [TEASE]

26 seconds

GAYLE KING: President Biden warns against dark forces in our democracy as former President Obama hits the trail in the battleground state of Arizona.

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Battle for Congress]

BLAKE MASTERS: I think Obama's presence here is a distraction for who's not here: Joe Biden. Right, where is Joe Biden?

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Election Deniers]

TONY DOKOUPIL: CBS News looks at the role of election deniers in several crucial midterm contests.

PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN: Lies repeated over and over that generate a cycle of anger.

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7:03:37 a.m.

5 minutes and 10 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: America Decides Campaign '22; Biden's Election Warning; President Says "Democracy Is at Risk" in Midterms Closing Argument]

DOKOUPIL: But we're going to begin with the news, as we always do, and the debate over what's at stake in Tuesday's midterms as many GOP candidates refuse to promise that they will accept the results of the election if they lose. Last night in a speech at Washington's Union Station, President Biden argued that democracy itself is at risk.

BIDEN: We, the people, must decide whether the rule of law will prevail or whether we'll allow the dark forces to thirst — thirst for power put ahead of the principles that have long guided us.

DOKOUPIL: Former President Barack Obama had a similar message at a rally in Arizona. But our polling shows that, right now, the economy is the number-one issue for voters amid worries about high inflation. Kris van Cleave has made his way to Phoenix, Arizona, for us. Kris, good morning.

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: America Decides Campaign '22; Battleground Arizona; Barack Obama Joins Dem Candidates Trying to Hold Off GOP Challengers]

KRIS VAN CLEAVE: Good morning. Inflation here in the Phoenix metro area has grown at the

highest rate in the country over the last year, so the economy is on every voter's minds. Republicans are putting the economy, border security, and crime at the center of their message to voters. Democrats, including President Obama, are arguing that democracy itself is at stake. Former President Barack Obama laid out Wednesday night what's at stake for Arizonans come election day.

OBAMA: One thing is clear, and that is this — this increasing habit of demonizing political opponents. [SCREEN WIPE] So I get why people are anxious. [SCREEN WIPE] But Phoenix, I am here to tell you that tuning out is not an option.

VAN CLEAVE: Rallying support for Democrats, including Secretary of State Katie Hobbs, who is in a deadlocked race with Republican candidate Kari Lake for governor.

OBAMA: Turns out being president or governor is about more than snappy lines and good lighting.

MASTERS: I don't think anybody — I mean, Elvis could come back to life and campaign for Katie Hobbs, and it wouldn't help her.

VAN CLEAVE: Lake, a former longtime TV news anchor, has embraced former President Donald Trump's false accusations about the 2020 election.

LAKE: We are going to restore faith, honesty, and integrity in our elections in Arizona.

MASTERS: Isn't it interesting that Barack Obama's here in town today to rally for Katie Hobbs and Mark Kelly? I think they're hoping that the former President can reinvigorate their flailing campaigns.

VAN CLEAVE: Republican Senate candidate Blake Masters has also raised doubts about the 2020 election results. He's hoping for a come-from-behind win against Democrat incumbent senator Mark Kelly.

SENATOR MARK KELLY (D-AZ): Families are struggling with the high cost of gas, groceries, and housing.

VAN CLEAVE: The economy is largely driving Republicans like Roy Nilsen.

ROY NILSEN: The last two years have been a disaster in so many ways, and we know that. Disaster from the economy, from my 401(k).

VAN CLEAVE: But former lifelong Republican Monica Villalobos is voting Democrat this year. [TO VILLALOBOS] What changed?

MONICA VILLALOBOS: Everything. Everything changed. And some of those tactics that are being proposed by the Republican Party hurt business, and they hurt the brand of Arizona.

VAN CLEAVE: The sense is that all of the races here in Arizona are very, very close. A federal judge has issued an order aimed at halting reports of voter suppression, prohibiting armed people — people wearing body armor, from monitoring ballot drop boxes here in Arizona. The tensions around the vote itself remain very high, Gayle.

KING: Alright, Kris, thank you so much. Many of those suspicions about the democratic process stem from former President Trump's false claims about the 2020 election. Scott MacFarlane is still here. He stayed another day to talk about the effect on this year's races. Scott, always good to have you in the studio. Good morning to you.

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: America Decides Campaign '22; "Election Deniers" on the Ballot; CBS News Review Finds 308 GOP Candidates Who Question 2020 Results]

SCOTT MACFARLANE: Good to be here, Gayle. Our CBS News review of every federal and statewide race shows, of the nearly 590 Republican candidates, there are 308 who we categorize as election deniers. Look at this. In the U.S. House, it's 238 of 436, it's a majority. In the U.S. Senate, again, it's a majority. In gubernatorial races, same number. In secretary of state races nationwide, it's nearly half, and secretaries of state would help administer future elections. What do we mean by election denier? CBS News has a lengthy and formal definition. It includes those who have "questioned the legitimacy of Biden's election," who don't acknowledge he's the duly elected president. Those who say the "election was stolen" and those who have "repeated disproven claims of fraud." Among the 308 are candidates from 48 different states across the country, and it includes Republican incumbents who are questioning the validity of the very ballots upon which they were elected to.

DOKOUPIL: Boy, look at those numbers.

KING: Yeah.

DOKOUPIL: It's pretty remarkable stuff there.

KING: Five days and counting. Thank you so much, Scott. And a reminder for you — Election Day is just five days away. Five days. We'll have full coverage for you here on CBS starting at 8:00 Eastern on November 8th.

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8:01:13 a.m.  
34 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Biden's Midterm Message]

BIDEN: We the people must decide whether the rule of law will prevail.

KING: President Biden says our democracy is on the line with just five days until the midterms.

LAKE: I mean, Elvis could come back to life and campaign for Katie Hobbs, and it wouldn't help her.

OBAMA: Turns out being president or governor is about more than snappy lines and good lighting.

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Election Deniers]

DOKOUPIL: CBS News finds candidates in 48 states who question the 2020 election results.

MACFARLANE: Of the nearly 590 Republican candidates, there are 308 who we categorize as election deniers.