

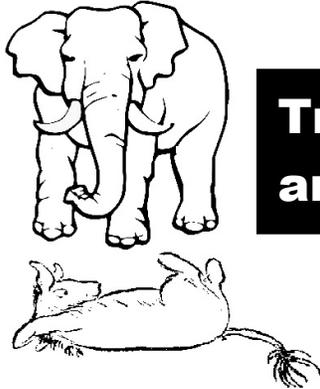


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## LEGISLATIVE ACTION ALERT



**Trampling Democracy - How Low are Politicians Willing to Stoop?**

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## Republicans are stripping power from incoming Democrats in Wisconsin and Michigan

ELIZA RELMAN Dec 3, 2018 Business Insider®

Democrats won upset gubernatorial elections in Wisconsin and Michigan last month, while Republicans managed to hold on to control of both chambers of the states' legislatures.

- During the lame-duck session, Republican state lawmakers introduced legislation that would limit the power of the executive branch in both states.
- Democrats are outraged by the moves, calling them partisan power grabs.

Democrats won upset gubernatorial elections in Wisconsin and Michigan last month, while Republicans managed to hold on to control of both chambers of the states' legislatures. The GOP is now doing its best to strip power from the executive branches in both states before Democrats take office in January.

In Wisconsin, GOP leaders have introduced measures to limit Gov.-elect Tony Evers' control over the appointment of officials and the rule-making process, limit early voting, and move the 2020

presidential primary date in an apparent effort to help a Republican state Supreme Court candidate (which will cost the state \$7 million), among other measures.

Democrats are calling the moves anti-democratic.

"The last election changed the state in a way that apparently the legislature has decided to not accept," Evers [told](#) the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, on Sunday. Days after his victory over Gov. Scott Walker (R), Evers [called](#) the GOP plans "desperate antics to cling to power and violate the checks and balances of Wisconsin government."

The GOP is also pushing [expansive legislation](#) during the lame-duck session that would significantly undermine the power of Wisconsin's incoming Democratic attorney general. The proposal would allow lawmakers to hire a private attorney — at taxpayer expense — rather than relying on the attorney general to litigate certain cases; would give legislators final say in court settlements and how to spend that revenue; and would get rid of the solicitor general's office.

The bill would also take control of state litigation — like Wisconsin's lawsuit challenging Obamacare — away from the governor and give it to lawmakers.

"This is an attempt to undermine the election we had less than a month ago by fundamentally changing the way our state government operates," Josh Kaul, the incoming attorney general, [told](#) the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel on Sunday, adding that the measure is sure to end up in court if it's passed, although he didn't say who would bring the case. ([At least one](#) progressive legal group has already promised to challenge the law if it's passed).

And in [Michigan](#), GOP lawmakers are rewriting laws that would have raised the minimum wage and mandated paid sick leave, and they are introducing measures to dilute the power of the three Democrats — all of them women — elected to statewide office. Democrats are particularly concerned about GOP measures to move oversight of campaign finance laws away from the secretary of state, and to allow state lawmakers authority over state legal matters traditionally left to the attorney general.

Republicans say they're pushing the measures in order to create more balance in government.

"Maybe we made some mistakes giving too much power to Gov. Walker and I'd be open to looking at that to see if there are areas we should change that," Assembly Speaker Robin Vos [told reporters](#) shortly after the midterm elections.

But Democrats are calling the moves clear partisan power grabs and say the GOP never would have pushed for them had their candidates won last month.

Former Attorney General Eric Holder condemned the actions in a Sunday tweet, calling them bad for democracy, and comparing them to Republican efforts to strip power from North Carolina's Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper in 2016.