



Zuckerbucks in Oklahoma

1. Nearly \$2.8 million in Zuckerbucks poured into Oklahoma counties.

During the pandemic-induced election chaos of 2020, the Center for Tech and Civic Life (CTCL) broke precedent by distributing grants to nearly 2,500 election offices.¹ These Mark Zuckerberg-funded, “COVID-19 response grants”—or Zuckerbucks—found their way into nearly every state—including Oklahoma.² More than half of Sooner State counties received these grants, pulling in a combined \$2.8 million.³

2. Zuckerbucks flow more generously to Democrat-heavy areas.

In neighboring states, Zuckerbucks disproportionately went to counties that voted for Joe Biden for president.⁴ This was not the case in Oklahoma, where Donald Trump carried every county, but the tendency for these grants to follow Democrats shows up again when looking at party affiliation of registered voters.⁵ Counties with more registered Democrats than Republicans received on average \$5.80 per registered voter.⁶ By contrast, counties where the number of registered Republicans exceed the number of registered Democrats received only \$1.42 per registered voter.⁷

3. Zuckerbucks grants were not about protecting voters and poll workers.

Zuckerbucks grants were purportedly about providing adequate funding to protect poll workers and voters.⁸ But only about 10 percent of spending was categorized as being spent on personal protective equipment (PPE) in grant reports.⁹ The amount spent on PPE specifically for the 2020 election is even lower since most of the reported spending for PPE occurred during the grant extension period—January 2021 to June 2021—for counties that did not use all of the grant on the election for which it was intended.¹⁰⁻¹¹ Instead, grant spending was largely split between three categories—paying poll workers, absentee voting, and equipment purchases.¹²

4. Oklahoma can follow the lead of neighboring states that have taken action to protect their elections.

Some of Oklahoma’s neighbors—Arkansas, Kansas, and Texas—have already stepped up to protect the integrity of their elections. Oklahoma should follow suit so that Sooner State voters can have faith that their elections are being administered without outside influence.

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County	Zuckerbucks Grant Awarded	Zuckerbucks per Registered Voter
Adair	\$40,000	\$3.64
Atoka	\$10,051	\$1.31
Beaver	\$5,000	\$1.66
Beckham	\$13,560	\$1.16
Blaine	\$5,784	\$1.07
Caddo	\$271,210	\$19.18
Canadian	\$64,831	\$0.72
Cherokee	\$259,268	\$9.94
Cimarron	\$5,000	\$3.23
Cleveland	\$162,340	\$0.95
Coal	\$5,000	\$1.30
Comanche	\$91,496	\$1.53
Cotton	\$5,000	\$1.33
Craig	\$10,157	\$1.23
Delaware	\$29,016	\$1.18
Garfield	\$31,153	\$0.97
Grant	\$5,000	\$1.71
Greer	\$5,000	\$1.73
Harmon	\$5,000	\$3.42
Harper	\$5,000	\$2.58
Haskell	\$7,648	\$1.08
Hughes	\$11,282	\$1.61
Jackson	\$16,416	\$1.31
Jefferson	\$5,000	\$1.42
Kingfisher	\$8,360	\$0.97
Kiowa	\$6,622	\$1.33

Le Flore	\$34,777	\$1.22
Lincoln	\$18,179	\$0.89
Logan	\$27,156	\$0.91
McClain	\$12,163	\$0.47
McCurtain	\$25,379	\$1.54
Marshall	\$10,332	\$1.16
Murray	\$8,328	\$1.03
Noble	\$5,915	\$0.90
Okfuskee	\$9,734	\$1.63
Oklahoma	\$517,475	\$1.17
Pottawatmie	\$42,804	\$1.05
Pushmahata	\$6,884	\$0.99
Roger Mills	\$5,000	\$2.09
Rogers	\$46,774	\$0.79
Sequoyah	\$32,608	\$1.41
Tulsa	\$892,324	\$2.38
Woodward	\$10,556	\$0.95
Total Awarded	\$2,790,582	\$1.70

Sources: Foundation for Government Accountability, Center for Tech and Civic Life, and Oklahoma State Election Board¹³

¹ Center for Tech and Civic Life, "Election officials made democracy happen in 2020," Center for Tech and Civic Life (2021), <https://www.techandcivicle.org/election-officials-made-democracy-happen-in-2020/>.

² Carlie Porterfield, "Zuckerberg donates additional \$100 million to support election efforts while Facebook accused of spreading more misinformation," Forbes, (2020), <https://www.forbes.com/sites/carlieporterfield/2020/10/13/zuckerberg-donates-additional-100-million-to-support-election-efforts-while-facebook-accused-of-spreading-more-misinformation/>.

³ Author's calculation based on grant amounts disclosed through Oklahoma Open Records Act requests and the Center for Tech and Civic Life. See, for example, <https://www.techandcivicle.org/2020covidsupport/>.

⁴ Trevor Carlsen, "Show me the Zuckerbucks: Outside money infiltrated Missouri's 2020 election," Foundation for Government Accountability (2021), <https://thefga.org/briefs/show-me-the-zuckerbucks-outside-money-infiltrated-missouris-2020-election/>.

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- ⁵ Oklahoma State Election Board, "Official results: General Election – November 3, 2020," Oklahoma State Election Board (2020), <https://www.oklahoma.gov/elections/elections-results/election-results/2020-election-results/2020-november-general-election.html>.
- ⁶ Author's calculation based on grant amounts disclosed through Oklahoma Open Records Act requests and the Center for Tech and Civic Life and voter registration statistics as reported by the Oklahoma State Election Board.
- ⁷ Ibid.
- ⁸ Centers for Tech and Civic Life, "Final report on 2020 COVID-19 Response Grant Program and CTCL 990s," Center for Tech and Civic Life (2021), <https://www.techandcivicliflife.org/2020covidsupport/>.
- ⁹ Author's calculation based on 17 grant reports disclosed through Oklahoma Open Records Act requests.
- ¹⁰ Author's calculation based on 17 grant reports disclosed through Oklahoma Open Records Act requests, taking into account that over \$100,000 of the total calculation was from the extension period, according to reporting made available by Tulsa County.
- ¹¹ Center for Tech and Civic Life, "A first look at CTCL grant program impact," Center for Tech and Civic Life (2020), <https://www.techandcivicliflife.org/grant-update-november/>.
- ¹² Author's calculation based on 17 grant reports disclosed through Oklahoma Open Records Act requests.
- ¹³ Oklahoma State Election Board, "Voter registration statistic archives – Voter registration as of November 1, 2020 by county," Oklahoma State Election Board (2020), <https://www.oklahoma.gov/elections/voter-registration/voter-registration-statistics/voter-registration-statistics-archive.html>.