<u>CONCERN: 34</u> – STATE SECRETARY OF STATE (SPLC connected/influenced?), removes U.S. citizen from ballot:

Maine Secretary of State Shenna Bellows stated in a panel discussion with Michigan SOS Jocelyn Benson concerning "the biggest threat to our Democracy":

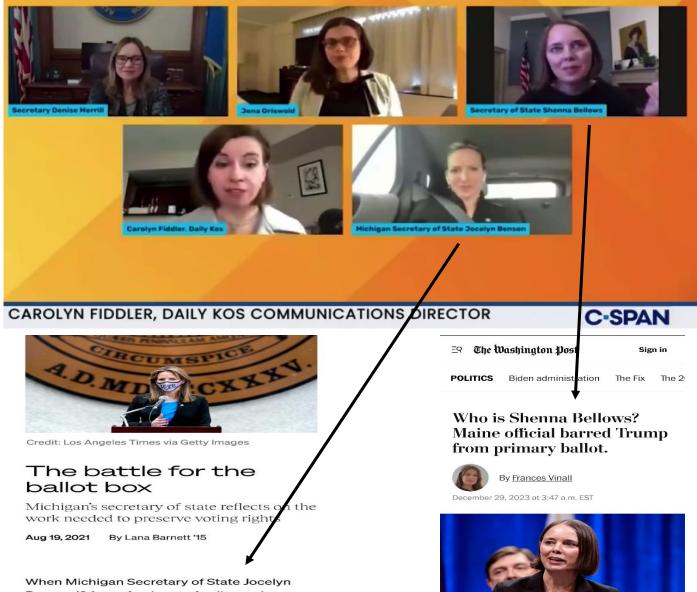
"Election sabotage...we need to organize to make sure we have better leaders in positions of power to fight back against...voter suppression...that is something that <u>when we started our careers at SPLC</u>...

...fighting back about systematic structural...rooted in white supremacy...

...rooted in a deliberate and organized campaign to discourage people from participated in our democracy...it is an attack on our very democracy itself.

...when everyone participates, everything we care about: social justice, climate justice, economic justice, we win.

...those on the other side are trying to discourage people from participating – we have to fight back to protect our democracy, to protect everything.



Benson '04 was fresh out of college, she moved from Massachusetts to Alabama to work for the Southern Poverty Law Center, where she investigated hate groups and hate crimes. While there, she visited the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, and was inspired by the individuals who had "faced down

Maine Secretary of State Shenna Bellows speaks at an event Ian 4 in Augusta Maine (Robert F Rukaty/AP)