



TFA post-election roundup from Wisconsin State Supreme Court race, April 2025

Hi all,

We can all breathe a sigh of relief today that Susan Crawford won the race to become the newest Justice on the Wisconsin State Supreme Court by 9+ points. As you know, the Wisconsin State Supreme Court race was crucial and largely seen as a bellwether for what's to come.

TFA spent the last several months doing research in Wisconsin with our partners, Global Strategy Group, building on the research we did in 2024. You can find the [publicly available research here](#). We were able to anticipate the majority of right-wing attacks and developed messages to both inoculate against and respond to these attacks. Further, the research showed that **responding to anti-transgender attacks is essential and regains any votes lost**. When Schimel went up on TV with his attack ad, the campaign responded, using our core message to emphasize that as a mom, Crawford fought like hell for her son and daughter and as a prosecutor and Wisconsin's next justice, would keep all of our kids safe. [Here is that ad](#).

In addition, TFA's independent team (with a firewall in place) worked with the independent expenditure table in Wisconsin and ran a [texting campaign](#) through Wisconsin For All and then created [this ad](#), password TNMF, which A Better Wisconsin Together ran over digital platforms the last week of the campaign. And on the last day of the campaign, we combined these approaches and texted the ad to 380,000 targeted voters. You can see the texted ad below.

While anti-transgender rhetoric was certainly a line of attack from the Schimel camp, it was Elon Musk's heavy handed spending that ultimately drew the most press coverage. In fact, the [headlines already focus](#) on the fact that she won despite [Elon Musk spending over \\$25,000,000](#) to defeat her. A subtext from the earliest days of the campaign was a steady drumbeat of inorganic social media disinformation and digital paid media about transgender issues in Wisconsin. Right-wing influencers (first among them, Elon Musk, Libs of TikTok and Scott Pressler) and to a lesser extent Crawford's opponent, Brad Schimel, tried to paint Democrats in Wisconsin and in particular, Judge Crawford, as ["radical" on issues](#) ranging from transgender girls participating in sports to school policies on forced outings to access to transition-related

care. They even went so far as to accuse Crawford and her out of state billionaire donors of wanting to [turn Wisconsin into Illinois](#).

We are happy to discuss our findings and observations about how the transgender attacks and our responses played out in Wisconsin. We are launching our next phase of research in Virginia and will go from there to New Jersey. We have already seen in both states a high level of inorganic right-wing disinformation around transgender topics and expect those to be salient issues the right tries to use in both races. All of which leads us to reiterate our core conclusion from the 2024 election cycle: when attacked, silence is deadly and Democrats must respond. We continue to explore the most effective ways to do that and look forward to sharing our further insights as the year unfolds.

Best,

Adrienne and David

As a mom, Susan Crawford has always been deeply protective of her son and daughter, and as a prosecutor and judge, she has protected all of our kids. Crawford took on sex offenders and child abusers who preyed on children and, as our next justice, she will always keep all of our kids safe. <https://www.wisconsinforall.com/protect-kids>

Text STOP to opt-out.

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