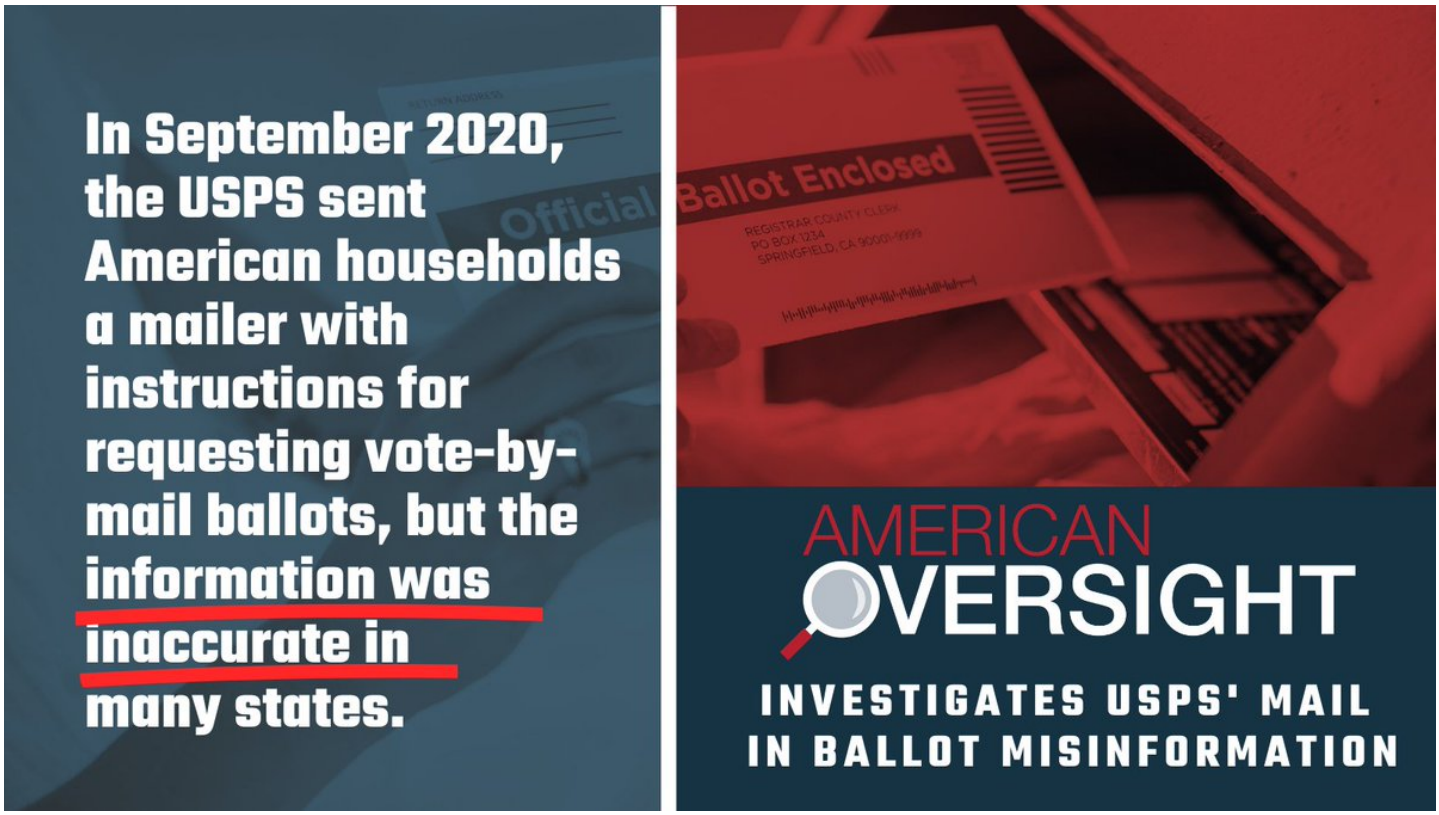
Twitter Thread by American Oversight

American Oversight
@weareoversight

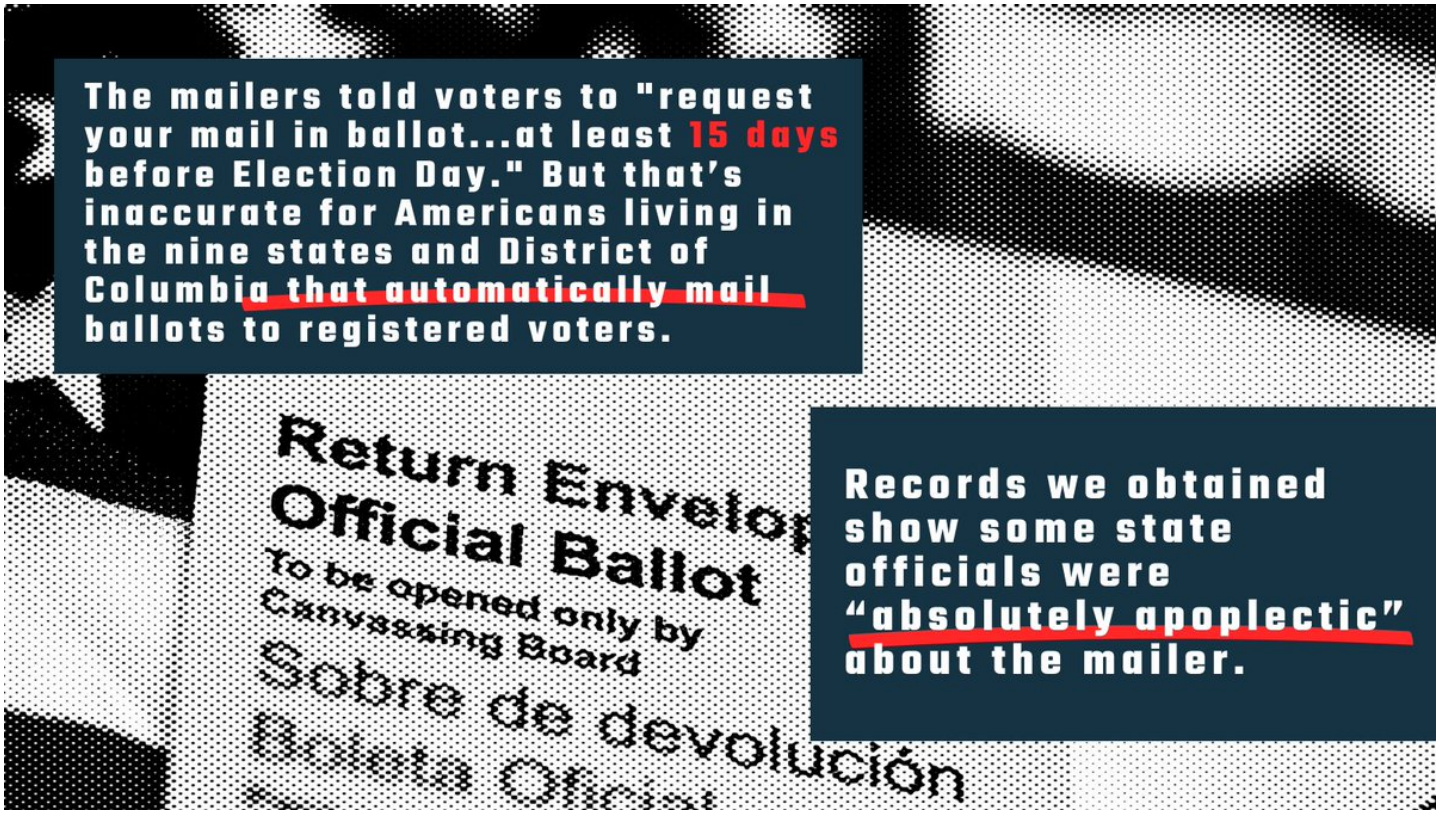
In September 2020, the USPS sent American households a mailer with instructions for requesting vote-by-mail ballots, but the information was inaccurate in many states.

Records we obtained show some state officials were “absolutely apoplectic” about the mailer.

#FOIAFriday



The mailers told voters to "request your mail in ballot... at least 15 days before Election Day." But that’s inaccurate for Americans living in the nine states and District of Columbia that automatically mail ballots to registered voters.
https://t.co/40sz60kgyF



Colorado Sec. of State Jena Griswold sued USPS, arguing the mailer attempted to disenfranchise voters with misleading information. We asked the Colorado State Dept. for emails with USPS in anticipation of widespread use of mail-in ballots in the election. https://t.co/azYr34AljY

Here's what the records we uncovered show:

Colorado's state election director Judd Choate told USPS Director of Election and Political Mail Justin Glass that he was "absolutely apoplectic about the pre-election postcard I just learned about..."

Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] RE: Meeting Request

CAUTION: This email originated from outside USPS. **STOP and CONSIDER** before responding, clicking on links, or opening attachments.

I will ask my boss.

But in the meantime, I am absolutely apoplectic about the pre-election postcard I just learned about. How could this be sent without someone considering that several states don't have absentee voters? How could it be sent without consulting even one election official? Please pass along that this mailing will generate literally thousands of calls, emails, and texts. It will cost my election officials hours of their days convincing their voters that everything is okay. It's embarrassingly amateurish and counterproductive for us and the USPS. I just don't understand how this postcard could be mailed.

Judd

"How could this be sent without someone considering that several states don't have absentee voters? How could it be sent without consulting even one election official? Please pass along that this mailing will generate literally thousands of calls, emails, and texts..."

"It will cost my election officials hours of their days convincing their voters that everything is okay. It's embarrassingly amateurish and counterproductive for us and the USPS. I just don't understand how this postcard could be mailed."

After Glass said USPS was working on a response for state elections directors, Choate responded: "just a heads up that stakeholding is usually more effective when it occurs before you take an action – not after."

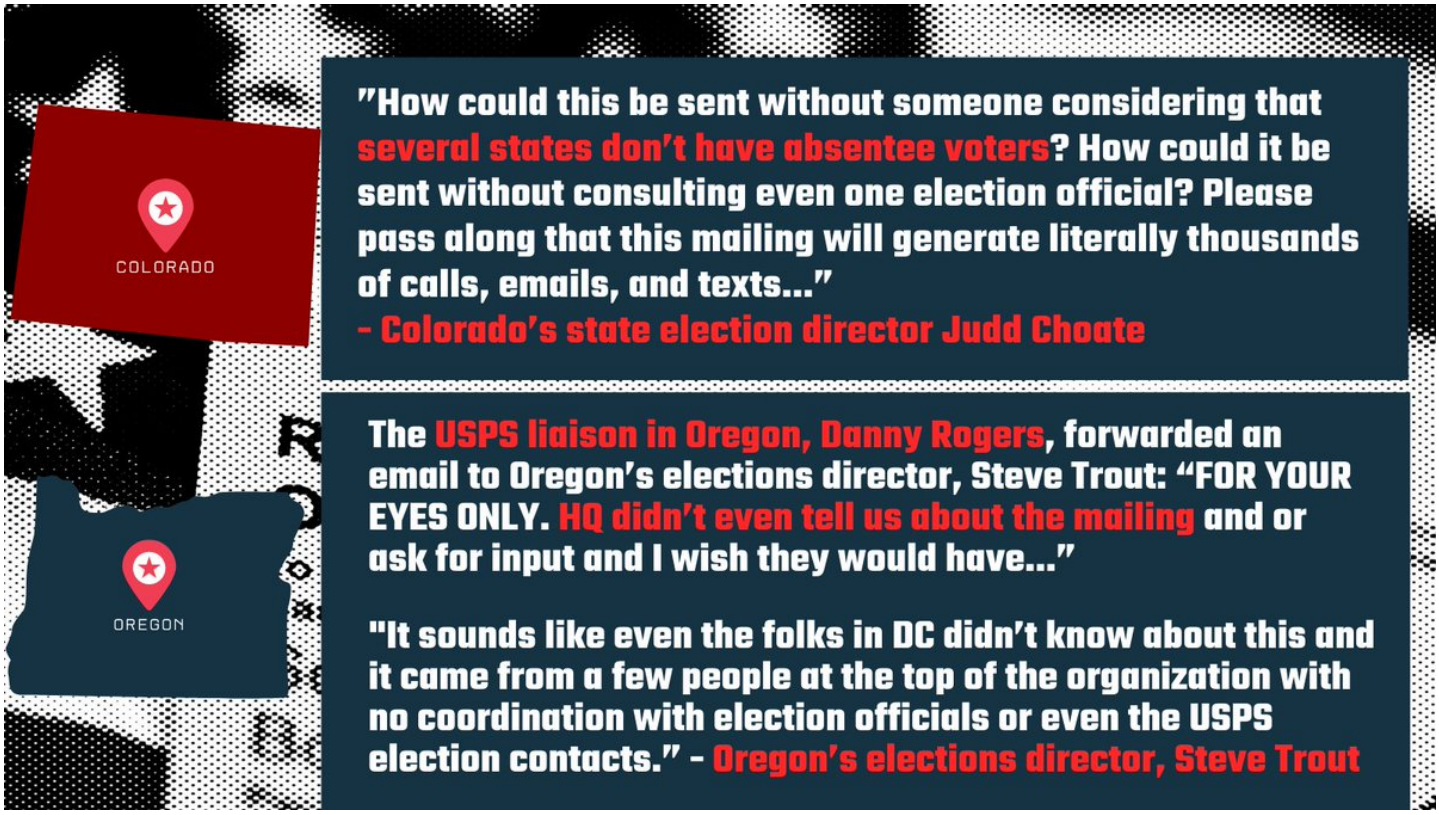
We submitted records requests with the Office of the Secretary of State of Oregon seeking email communications with USPS. Oregon uses mail-in-voting exclusively. Oregon officials were also frustrated about the inaccurate mailers. https://t.co/vOZGi4l9A2

The USPS liaison, Danny Rogers, forwarded an email to Oregon's elections director, Steve Trout: "FOR YOUR EYES ONLY. HQ didn't even tell us about the mailing and or ask for input and I wish they would have…"

Attachment(s): "VBM - Delivery Plan-9.PM 9.9.xlsx"

This e-mail is internal so don't forward. FOR YOUR EYES ONLY. HQ didn't even tell us about the mailing and or ask for input and I wish they would have as they should have included messaging telling people to make sure their Voter Registration was updated so their Ballot would reach them timely.

Trout responded: "It sounds like even the folks in DC didn't know about this and it came from a few people at the top of the organization with no coordination with election officials or even the USPS election contacts."



The lack of coordination with states — and the suggestion that even key USPS staff didn't know about the mailers in advance — raise further concerns about political interference by the Trump-appointed postmaster general Louis DeJoy.

Even with Trump out of power, DeJoy remains in charge of the postal service. We're continuing to investigate the politicization of USPS under the Trump administration and the threat it posed to voting rights.
https://t.co/Czdze7Ndbh