Rigging the Rules: The Four Strategies of the Anti-Democracy Movement

1. Open the doors wider to Big-Money Influence in Our Political System
   - With DeVos money pushing the legal cases forward, Supreme Court rulings Citizens United and SpeechNow.Org made it vastly easier for corporations and wealthy individuals to influence elections, all while keeping their identities secret.
   - In 2016, the total cost of federal elections hit nearly $6.5 billion with only 1/2% of the population responsible for more than two-thirds of campaign contributions.
   - In 2012, congressional candidates with a fund-raising advantage were 9 times more likely to win their race AND Republicans outspent Democrats in the last 10 election cycles.
   - From 2010 to 2016, excluding party committees, sources of about 1/4 of the $3.3 billion in outside spending in federal elections were not disclosed.

2. Expand the Army of Anti-Democracy Lobbyists
   - In just over a decade after Powell’s memo, firms with lobbyists in Washington increased 14-fold.
   - On lobbying, corporations outspend union and public-interest groups by 34 to 1.
   - Public-interest groups make up only 1% of lobbying spending, while business makes up more than 75%.
   - In 2012, about half of retiring members of Congress became lobbyists—a dramatic increase from 3% in the early 1970’s.

3. Reduce the Voting Power of Those Most Likely to be Hurt By—and Therefore Opposed to—the Anti-Democracy Agenda
   - 32 states—representing more than half the nation’s population—have voter ID laws, proven to disproportionately affect minority voters.
   - Because of felony conviction, Florida denies voting rights to about 1.5 million people, even after completed prison time. That’s 3,000 times the margin deciding the 2000 Presidential election.
   - After gerrymandering state districts in 2010, Democrats won almost 1.6 million more votes than Republicans in 2012 House races but still lost the majority of seats.
   - If low-income people voted—or could vote—at the same rate as those earning over $100,000 a year, the electorate would grow by 11.5 million voters.

4. Where Possible, Wipe Out Local Democracy Altogether
   - Since the 1970s, government has increasingly failed to enforce labor law protecting workers against union-busting tactics.
   - Under so-called pre-emption laws, managers have replaced elected leaders in some cities and municipalities, often harming low-income communities of color, as in Flint, Michigan.

So what is the impact? And what can I do?