




# SOPHE Presidential Address

Amy Thompson. Ph.D., CHES, FESG  
SOPHE National President

Provost & Sr. Vice President of Academic Affairs  
Professor of Public Health  
Wright State University

A background image showing a group of people's hands clasped together in a circle, symbolizing unity and collective action. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

# Speaking Truth to Power: Tactical Advocacy to Ensure the Future of Public Health



Public Health Professionals are Heroes



## FACT 6

# COVID-19 vaccines don't contain microchips or tracking devices

Misinformation that COVID-19 vaccines contain microchips or tracking devices has been proven false. We know exactly what is in each vaccine. The list of ingredients in each vaccine can be found at [coronavirus.utah.gov](https://coronavirus.utah.gov)



KSL HELPS YOU  
**PLAN YOUR  
VACCINE**



# CLAIM:

Drinking bleach will kill the COVID-19 virus in your body.

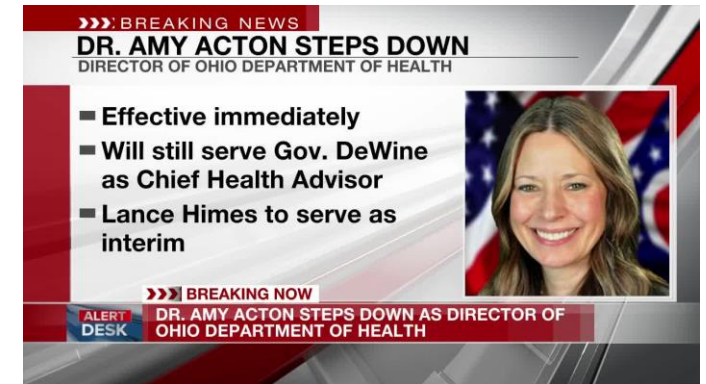
## FACTCHECK: FALSE!

Methanol, ethanol, and bleach are poisons and drinking them is extremely dangerous and may result in death. Cleaning products can kill the virus on surfaces, but they will harm your internal organs if consumed.

**Protect Yourself ->**

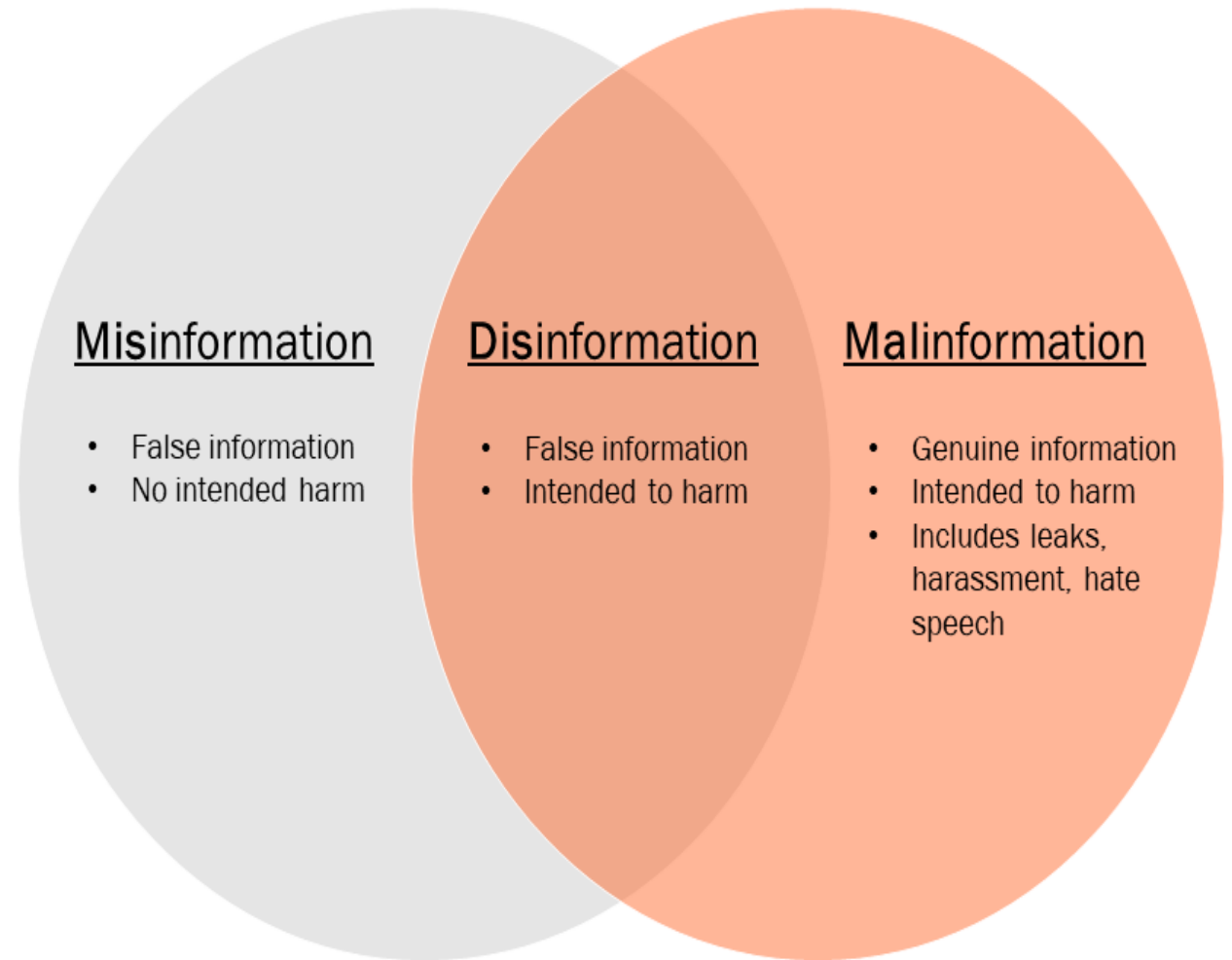


- COLUMBUS, Ohio (WSYX/WTTE) — In a statement to South Carolina's "The State" newspaper, Dr. Joan Duwve said Friday that harassment of Ohio's former health director kept her from pursuing an opportunity to become the state's next director of public health.



- Source: Brookings. “How misinformation spreads on Twitter”

**Figure 4. Different forms of information pollution that typically occur**



# Information Pollution and Political Power

More than 2.4 billion people use social media (about one third of the world's population), with roughly 330 million people using Twitter as of 2019 (Ortiz-Ospina, 2019).



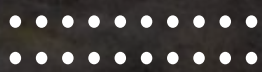
The true extent of the impact that incorrect information has on our decision making is not well known but a study conducted by the National Bureau of Economic Research found that the continuing coverage and rapid spread of information by Twitter bots alone may have contributed to about 3.23% of the vote to be for Donald Trump (Smialek, 2018).

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“Our government rests in public opinion. Whoever can change public opinion, can change the government, practically just so much. Public opinion, on any subject, always has a ‘central idea,’ from which all its minor thoughts radiate.”

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-Abraham Lincoln



Public Health &  
Health Policy is  
Needed Now, More  
Than Ever.....

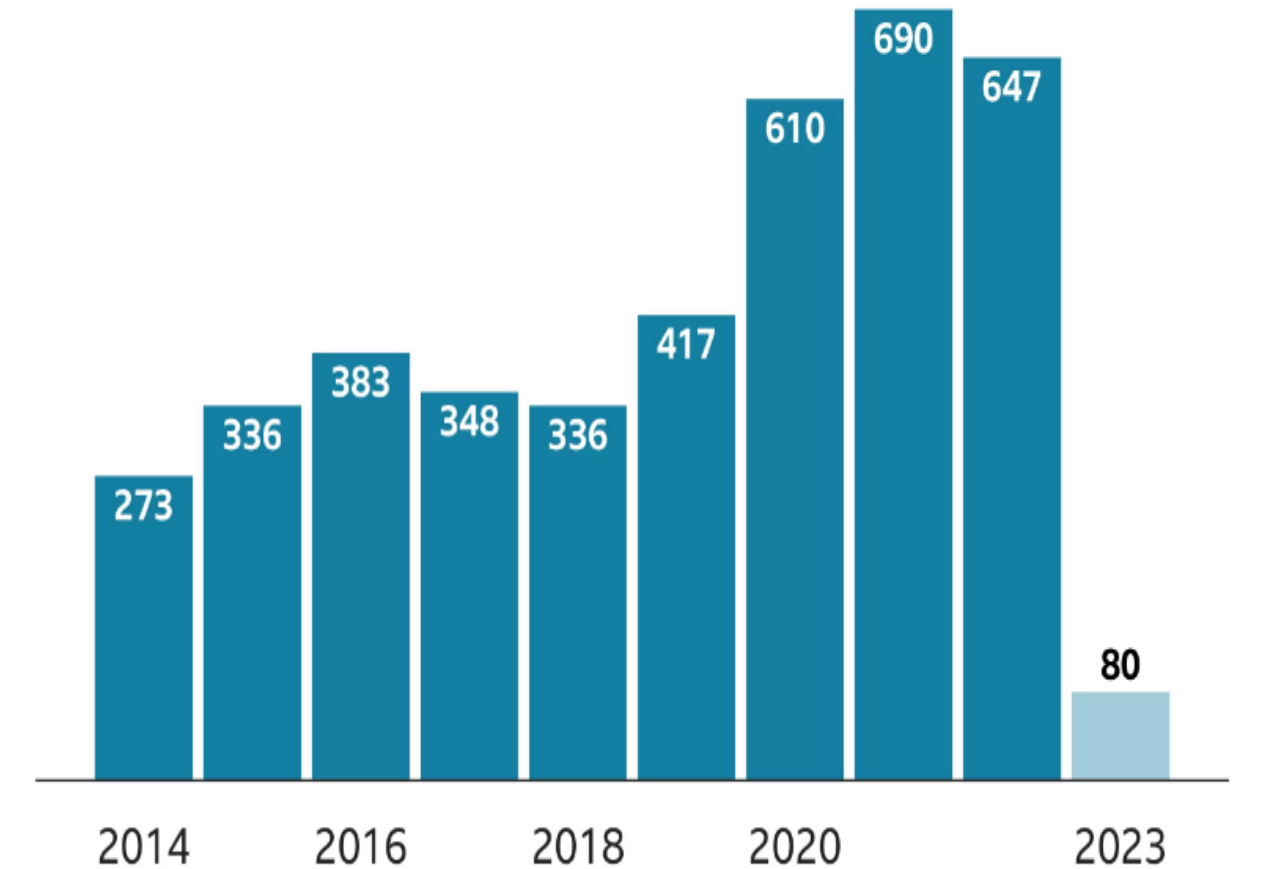
**East Palestine Ohio mayor raises  
concern about air quality after  
derailment, chemical leak**





## Mass shootings in the US are on the rise

Incidents in which four or more people were killed or injured



Source: Gun Violence Archive, 20 Feb 2023

BBC



**ARIELLE  
ANDERSON**



**BRIAN  
FRASER**

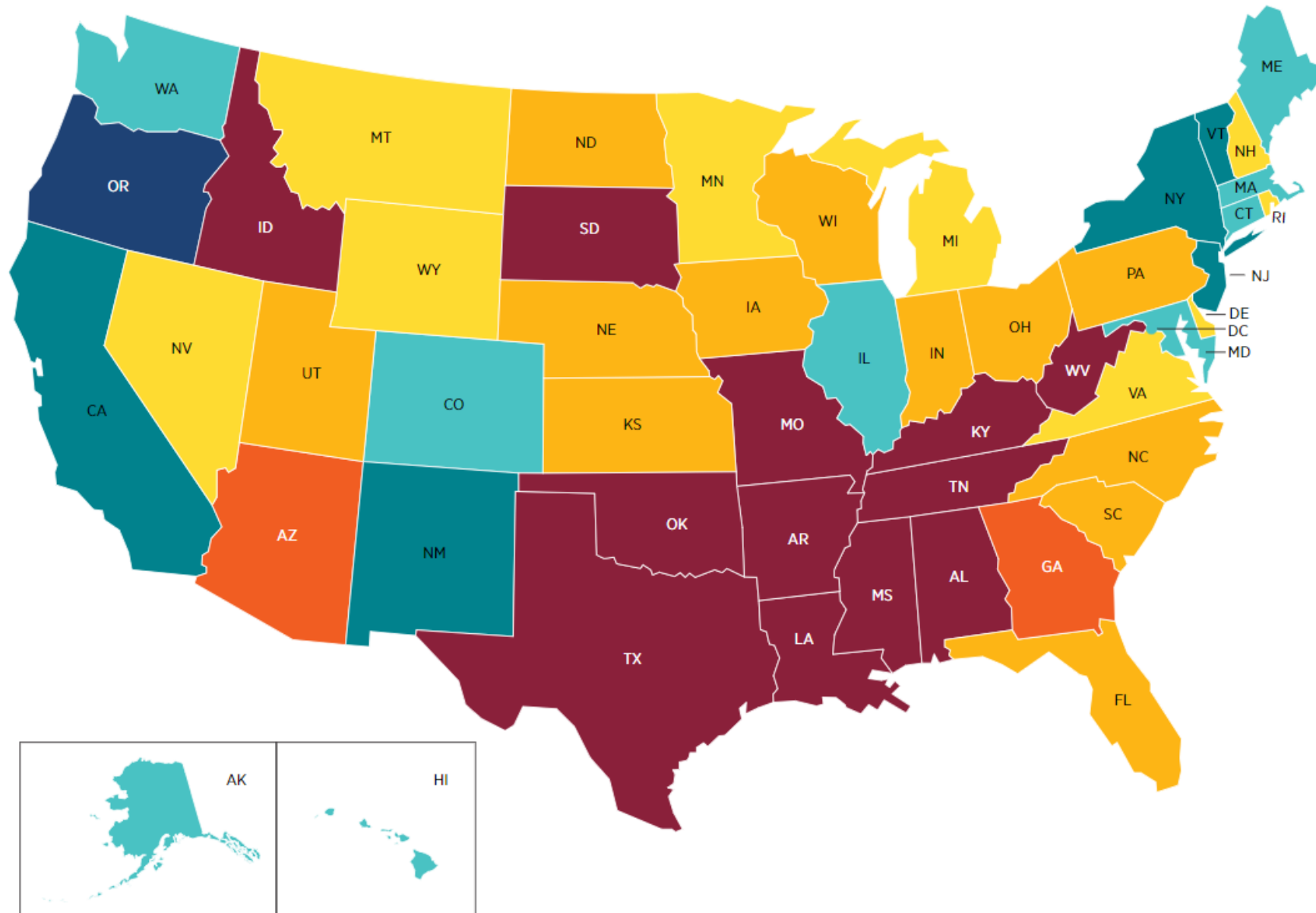


**ALEXANDRIA  
VERNER**



# Women's Reproductive Rights





- Most restrictive
- Very restrictive
- Restrictive
- Some restrictions/protectations
- Protective
- Very protective
- Most protective

# 'State-Mandated Censorship': Florida Faculty Worry About Bill That Would Ban Certain Majors

By *Julian Roberts-Grmela* | MARCH 3, 2023



# Lawmakers Expand Their Assault on Colleges' DEI Efforts

By *Adrienne Lu* | MARCH 9, 2023



ILLUSTRATION BY THE CHRONICLE; GETTY IMAGES

State lawmakers in 13 states have introduced at least 21 bills since December that aim to restrict colleges' efforts to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion, a *Chronicle* analysis has found.



**RACISM** IS A  
PUBLIC HEALTH  
**CRISIS**

A person's hands are visible holding a white rectangular sign. The word 'RACISM' is written in red, bold, sans-serif capital letters and is highlighted by a yellow rectangular background. To its right, the word 'IS' is written in black, bold, sans-serif capital letters with a horizontal line underneath it. Below 'RACISM' and 'IS', the words 'PUBLIC HEALTH' are written in black, bold, sans-serif capital letters. At the bottom of the sign, the word 'CRISIS' is written in red, bold, sans-serif capital letters. The background is a blurred view of a brick building with windows.



# South Dakota becomes the 6th state to restrict gender-affirming care for minors

Gov. Kristi Noem said the bill seeks to protect minors from “harmful” medical procedures.



## The future is uncertain for trans kids' medical care

- Florida is one of a growing number of states to prohibit gender-affirming care for transgender minors. It is the only state to do so not through legislative action, but through a vote of its medical boards.
- With the encouragement of Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, the state's Board of Medicine and Board of Osteopathic Medicine both passed rules that will ban gender-affirming care such as puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones, as well as surgical procedures, for new patients under age 18.
- Dozens of leading U.S. medical groups, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Medical Association and the Endocrine Society, endorse gender-affirming care as time-tested, effective, medically necessary, and potentially life-saving.

## Current COVID-19 Related Legislation

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Several bills in MS would require state health officer's orders to be approved by the governor.

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Legislation in Iowa could prohibit health officials from doing contact tracing.

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Proposed legislation in Wyoming would prohibit the use of CDC & WHO requirements, mandates and recommendations.

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Idaho introduced a bill to criminalize the administration of mRNA vaccines

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Several states have introduced legislation that takes away the power of health officials to set school-based immunizations and gives it to the legislature.

## Montana rep files bill to ban blood donations from people vaccinated against COVID-19



HELENA, Mont. (TND) — A Republican lawmaker in Montana is worried about blood transfusions from people who've been vaccinated against COVID-19, so he filed a bill to end donations from people who got the shot.

State Rep. Greg Kmetz's bill has the short title "Prohibit donations of certain blood and blood products," and the long and short of it is,

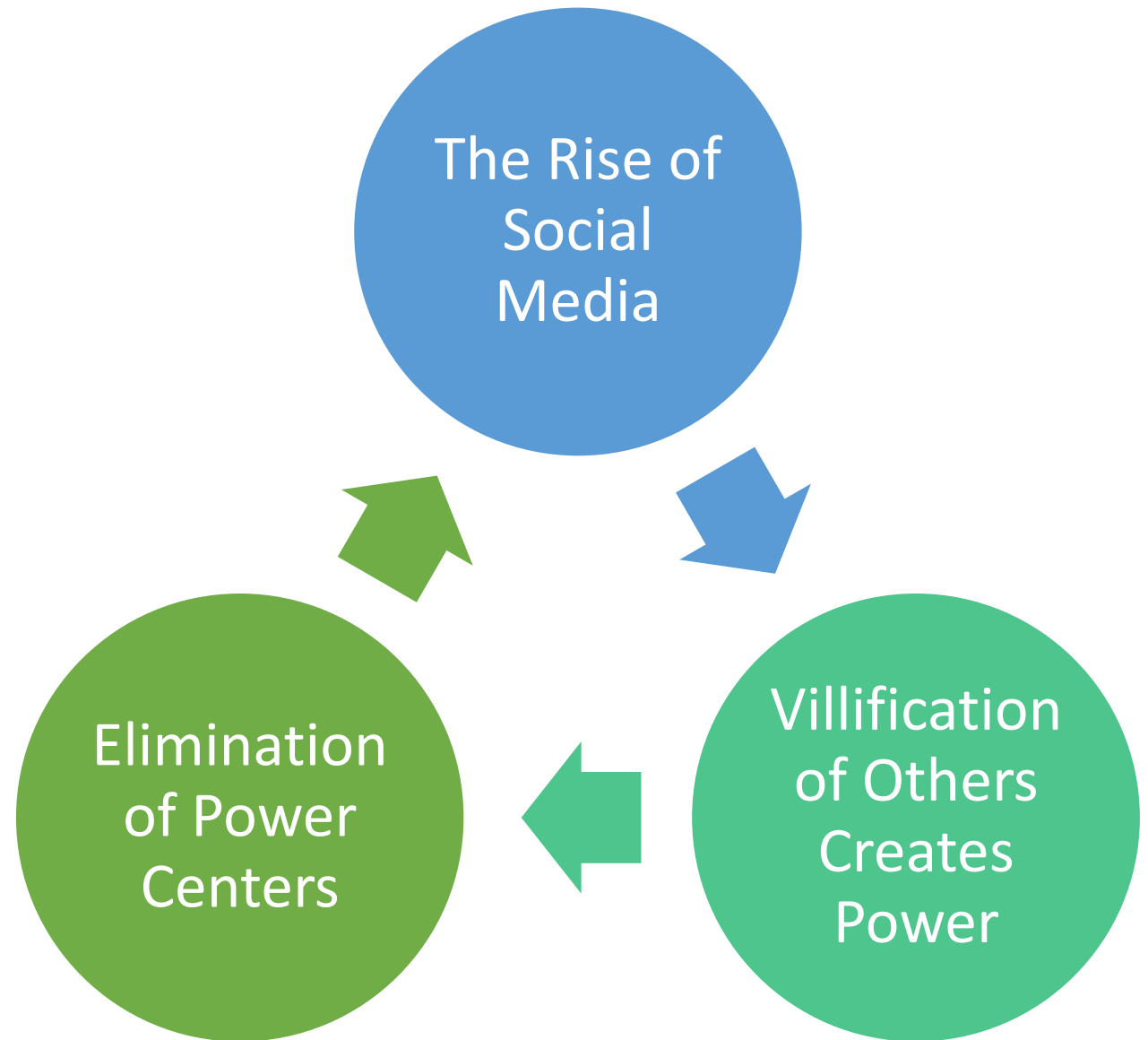
*“A person may not knowingly donate whole blood containing gene-altering proteins, nanoparticles, high-count spike proteins from long COVID-19, or other isolates introduced by mRNA or DNA vaccines, mRNA or DNA chemotherapies, or other novel mRNA or DNA pharmaceutical biotechnologies.*

How Do We Combat  
These Political and  
Health Policy  
Challenges?????



It's time for  
Tactical  
Advocacy.....

# Recognition of Why Information Pollution is Happening.



Source: Cheatham, Hancher-Rauch, Brookins Fisher, Blavos, & Thompson, (2022) HPP.

Levels of engagement	Explanation	Goal of engagement	Example
Primary	Assumes political system functioning normally. Politicians may not agree with public health, but take it seriously.	Winning conventional public policy battles.	Progress in topical areas such as protecting vulnerable people (seniors, vulnerable adults, front-line workers); letter writing campaigns; community organization.
Secondary	Includes reforms (regulatory, legal, judicial) necessary to make politics work better.	Actions to address social changes described above that have made public health ineffective.	Regulation of social media. Campaign finance reform. Electoral reform (e.g., gerrymandering and voter suppression).
Tertiary	Public engagement is necessitated by continuing deterioration of democratic government.	Apply pressure on, or hold accountable, politicians whose behavior drives disease.	Enforcement of gross negligence standards. Class action suits. Labor action.

Source: Cheatham, Hancher-Rauch, Brookins Fisher, Blavos, & Thompson, (2022) HPP.

# Our Advocacy Tactics Must Evolve.....

- Public Health continues to grapple with Information Pollution that can inhibit our capacity to promote and protect Population Health.
- Public Health Advocacy must be proactive not reactive...this includes our approaches involving social media and use of lobbyists and introducing public health policies.
- We have strength in numbers.....
- Local and state politics are where some of our biggest wins can occur.
- University faculty have the chance to spark the passion for change and advocacy engagement.



## Who is Doing This Work?

There has been an outpouring of advocacy since the pandemic.

- Healthy Democracy Healthy People
- Public Health Awakened
- Marked by COVID
- Act for Public Health

**Groups like these coordinate their work with public health professional associations and funding organizations**



# Closing Thought.....

- "For us to make progress, it is going to take us engaging as we have not done in recent history. For exhausted public health workers, and people in similarly disrupted professions like education and clinical nursing, this type of engagement may seem overwhelming, but the stakes are too high to fail to engage in this work. . .lives can and will be lost due to inaction".

- Source: Cheatham, Hancher-Rauch, Brookins Fisher, Blavos, & Thompson, (2022) HPP.



“Change will not come  
if we wait for some  
other person or some  
other time. We are the  
ones we’ve been  
waiting for. We are the  
change that we seek.”

Barack Obama