



## Updated Armed Demonstration Data Released A Year After the 6 January Insurrection Show New Trends

The past two years have brought the dangers of armed political violence in America into stark relief, from the deadly Kyle Rittenhouse shooting at a racial justice demonstration in Kenosha to the attack on the United States Capitol. In the wake of these events, ACLED and Everytown partnered to [begin tracking the presence of armed groups and individuals at demonstrations](#) for the first time. While the total number of armed demonstrations has declined alongside an overall decrease in demonstrations at large since the height of the Black Lives Matter movement and the lead-up to 6 January, armed demonstration activity remains a serious threat. **Over 610 armed demonstrations have been reported around the country since the start of 2020, and they are 6.5 times more likely to turn violent or destructive than demonstrations where no firearms are present.**

A year on from the Capitol riot, our joint analysis of the latest data finds that the threat of armed demonstrations has not abated. Our review of current trends shows that the rate of armed pro-Trump demonstrations, including armed ‘Stop the Steal’ events, increased throughout 2021. Many of these armed demonstrations took place at legislative grounds, like state capitols, as proponents of the ‘Stop the Steal’ movement have mobilized to assert greater control over state election systems around the country ([New York Times, 11 December 2021](#)). That these trends persisted -- and in some cases intensified -- during a non-election year raises the specter of further escalation in armed demonstration activity going into the upcoming midterm elections.

Key findings from ACLED and Everytown analysis of data from January 2020 through November 2021<sup>1</sup> include:

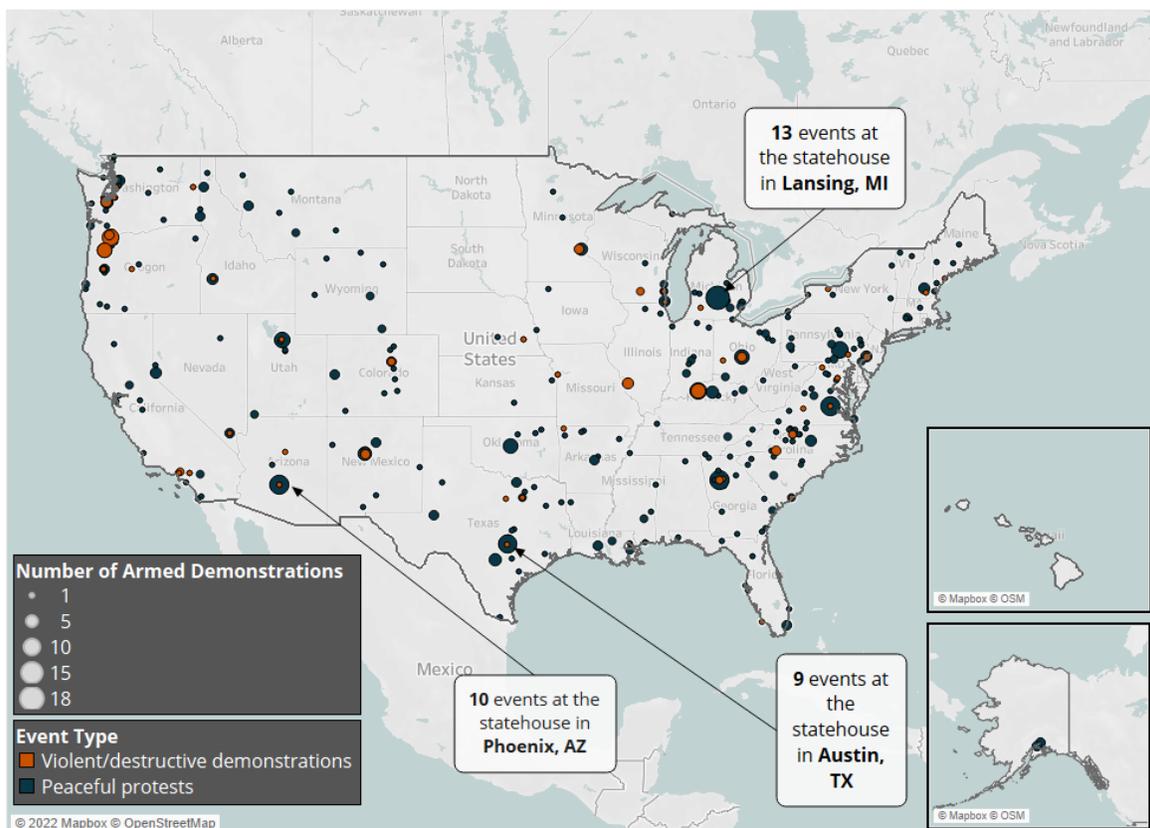
- **Pro-Trump Demonstrations Continue Post-Presidency and Are More Likely to Be Armed:** Pro-Trump demonstrations were reported every month since the start of 2021. These demonstrations were disproportionately armed.
  - 6.8% of pro-Trump demonstrations (112 of 1,646) between January 2020 and November 2021 were armed compared to 1.5% of all other demonstrations (501 of 33,298).
  - The percentage of armed pro-Trump demonstrations *increased* last year. In 2021, 8.8% of pro-Trump demonstrations were armed (32 of 364) compared to 6.2% in 2020 (80 of 1,282).
- **Armed Pro-Trump Demonstrations Disproportionately Come to Legislative Grounds:** Between January 2020 and November 2021, 47.3% of armed pro-Trump demonstrations (53 of 112) took place at legislative grounds, compared to 12.2% of all other armed demonstrations (61 of 501).
  - The percentage of armed pro-Trump demonstrations that took place at legislative grounds *increased* in 2021, with 81.3% (26 of 32) reported at these sites compared to 33.8% (27 of 80) in 2020.

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<sup>1</sup> ACLED data covering the entirety of December 2021 will be released on 11 January 2021.

- Overall, Armed Demonstrations Were More Likely To Take Place At Legislative Grounds in 2021 Compared to 2020, and These Demonstrations Were More Likely To Be Violent or Destructive:** While armed demonstrations at legislative grounds represent a subset of all armed demonstrations, events like the 6 January insurrection underscore the dangers of armed activity at these locations.
  - The percentage of armed demonstrations at legislative grounds increased from 14.5% (70 out of 482) in 2020 to 33.6% in 2021 (44 out of 131).
  - These demonstrations turned violent or destructive 13.6% of the time in 2021 (six out of 44), up from 11.4% of the time in 2020 (eight out of 70).
- Armed Demonstrations Continue to Be Driven by Right-Wing Actors, and These Actors Were Even More Likely to Be Involved in 2021:** Members of right-wing groups were present in at least 45.8% of all armed demonstrations in 2021 (60 of 131), up from 35.7% in 2020 (172 of 482).
  - Of all named groups identified at armed demonstrations since 2020, the vast majority (81.9%) are right-wing actors.
  - Overall, the top three named actors present at armed demonstrations since 2020 are the Boogaloo Boys and their affiliates, the Three Percenters and their associated groups, and the Proud Boys.

**Armed Demonstrations  
(1 Jan 2020-30 Nov 2021)**



*This fact sheet is part of an ongoing data collection partnership between ACLED and Everytown. The [dataset](#) is updated regularly and can be downloaded for future projects. To speak with an expert, please [reach out](#). For more information about ACLED methodology, please check the [US Methodology Brief](#) and [Resource Library](#).*

### **ABOUT EVERYTOWN FOR GUN SAFETY SUPPORT FUND**

Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund (the “Everytown Support Fund”) is the education, research and litigation arm of Everytown for Gun Safety, the largest gun violence prevention organization in the country with nearly six million supporters. The Everytown Support Fund seeks to improve our understanding of the causes of gun violence and help to reduce it by conducting groundbreaking original research, developing evidence-based policies, communicating this knowledge to the American public, and advancing gun safety and gun violence prevention in communities and the courts. Learn more at [www.everytownsupportfund.org](http://www.everytownsupportfund.org).

### **ABOUT ACLED**

The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) is the highest quality and most widely used real-time data and analysis source on political violence and protest around the world. ACLED codes the dates, actors, locations, fatalities, and types of all reported political violence and demonstration events in more than 190 countries and territories, with over a million individual events recorded to date. The ACLED team conducts analysis to describe, explore, and test conflict scenarios, and makes all data and research open for free use by the public. Learn more and access the data at [www.acleddata.com](http://www.acleddata.com).