



Several recall efforts underway related to leaders' handling of protests and pandemic

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In Seattle, a recall effort is underway against Councilmember Kshama Sawant. Those petitioning for her removal accused Sawant of several wrongdoings, including letting protesters into City Hall and leading protesters to Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan's home.

"We will continue the fight in court against this attempt by the right wing and big business to have a do-over of our election victory last year," Sawant told supporters.

Fellow Councilmember Andrew Lewis took issue with the recall effort.

"We have a process for picking our elected representatives. It's not recalls. It's through elections," Lewis said.

Ernie Lou, who filed the recall complaint, has 180 days to collect the signatures of about 10,800 voters in order for the recall to be decided by voters.

In Wisconsin, a small effort began to recall Democratic Governor Tony Evers over his orders to shut down schools and businesses earlier this year. Wisconsin state law requires petitioners to get about 668,000 signatures to trigger a recall election.

According to a Marquette University Law School poll, Evers has a 57% approval rating on his handling of the pandemic.

Wisconsin has a recent unsuccessful history of gubernatorial recalls. Former Governor Scott Walker, a Republican, survived his recall election in 2012. Walker lost his run for a third term to Evers in 2018.

In Colorado, it's a similar story. An effort began to recall Democratic Governor Jared Polis by some who take issue with his handling of the pandemic. The state requires about 630,000 signatures to legitimize a recall effort.

Last year, a group tried to recall Polis but failed to get enough signatures.

Ilya Shapiro, the director of the Robery A. Levy Center for Constitutional Studies at Cato Institute, points to these unprecedented times as a possible catalyst for these recall efforts.

“Certainly whenever there’s an expansion of executive power, there’s a possibility of abusing it and overreach, and people are responding to that,” Shapiro said.