An abstract graphic consisting of several thin, black, overlapping lines that form a complex, geometric pattern. The lines intersect to create various shapes, including triangles and polygons, some of which are nested within others. The overall effect is that of a layered, architectural or structural drawing.

DEALING WITH SOVEREIGN CITIZENS

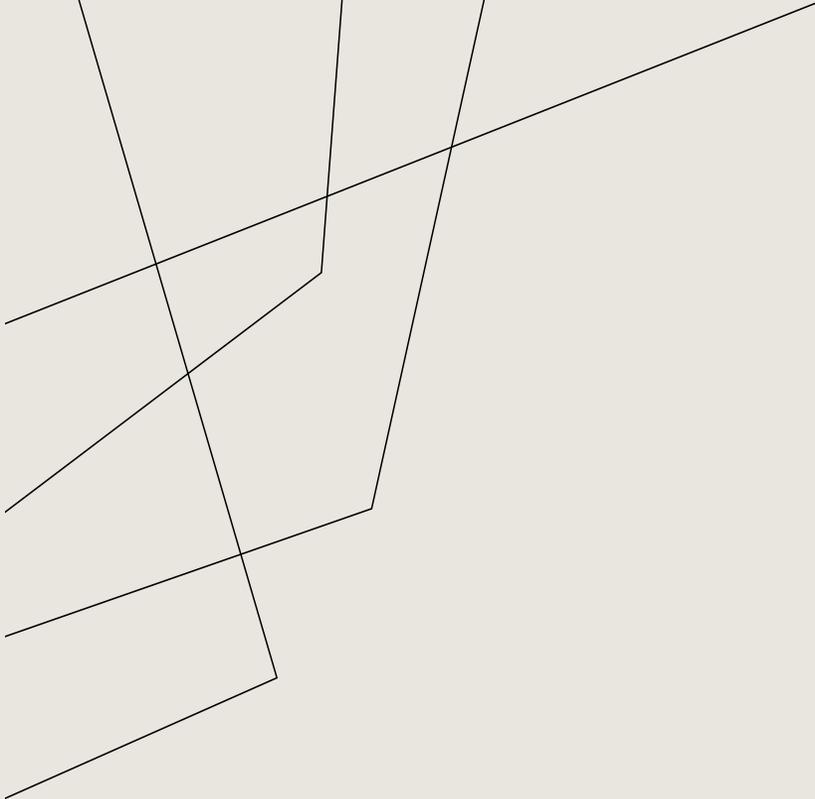
2026 FACT ANNUAL RISK MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

February 5, 2026

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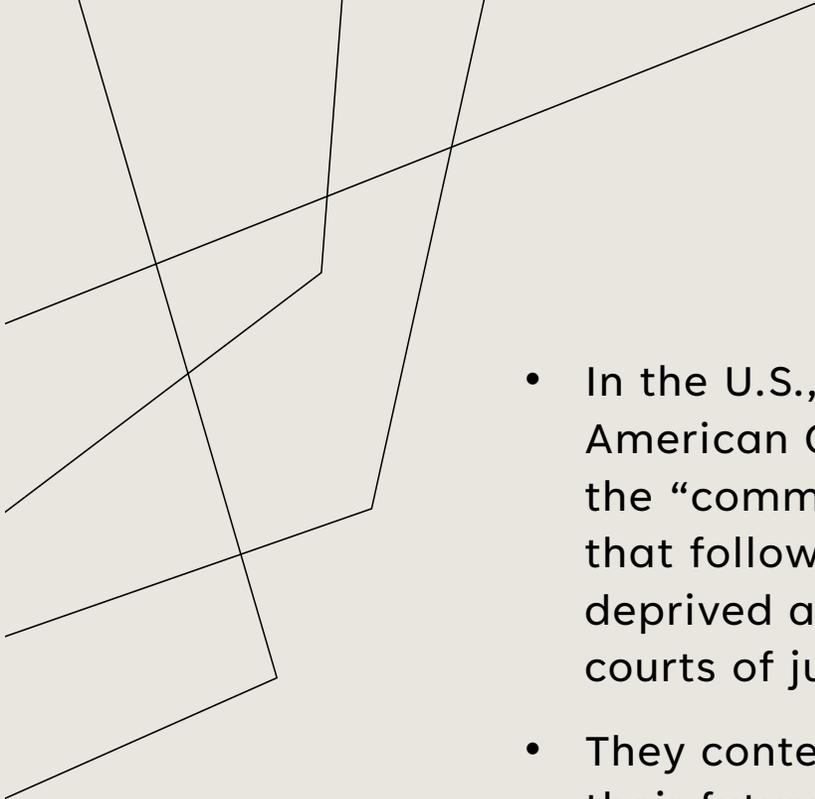


WHO ARE SOVEREIGN CITIZENS?

“Sovereign Citizens” is a catchall phrase describing a variety of anti-government individuals and groups who adhere to a view that the existing American government structure is a fraud...



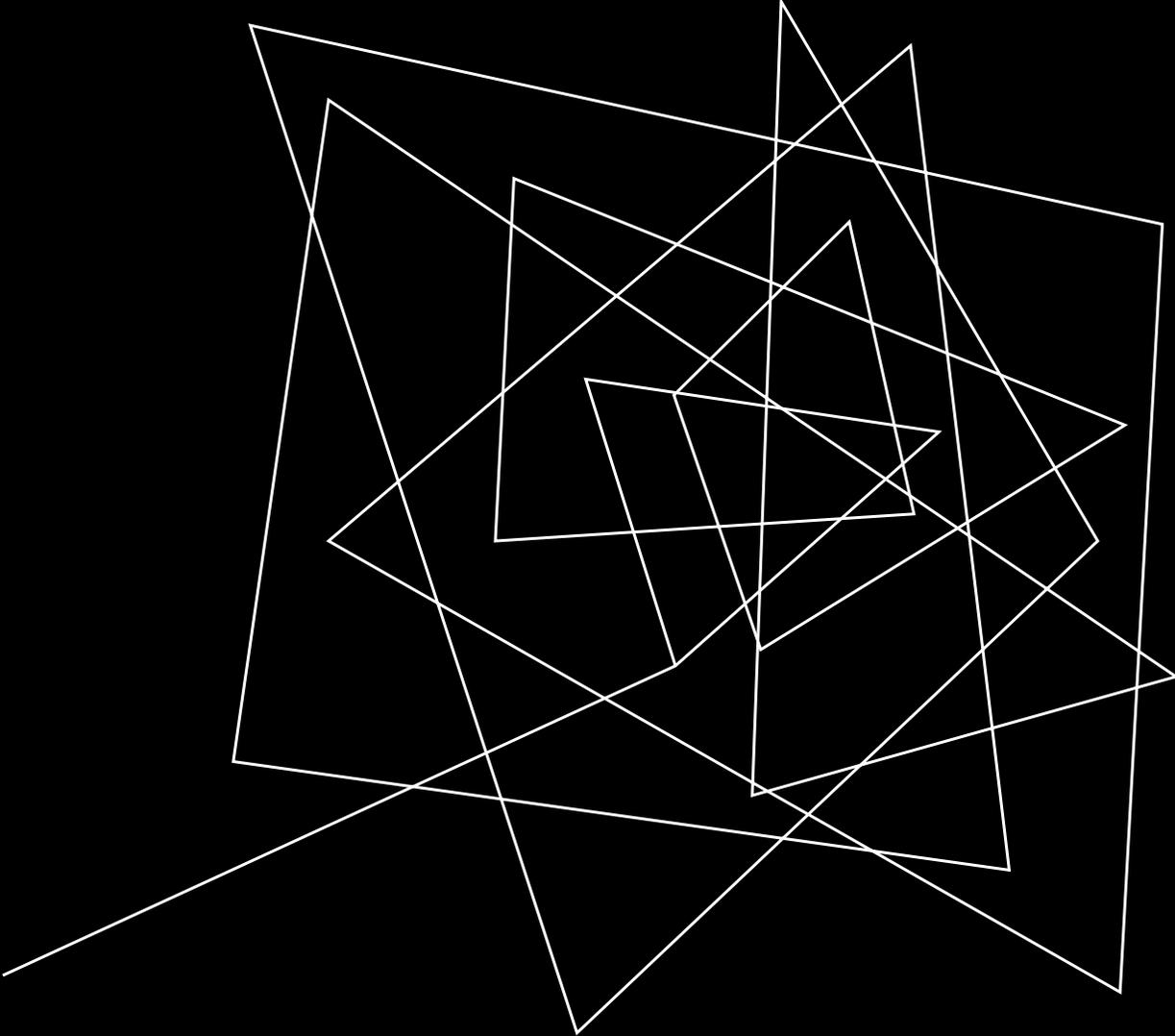
“SOVEREIGN CITIZENS” BELIEVE THAT THEY HAVE AN INDIVIDUAL COMMON LAW IDENTITY, EXEMPTING THEM FROM THE AUTHORITY OF “FRAUDULENT” GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS.



ORIGINS OF THE MOVEMENT

- In the U.S., the Sovereign Citizen Movement was initiated on the belief that the American Government, created by the Founding Fathers, originally referred to as the “common law” system, was replaced with a false, illegitimate government that follows admiralty law and international commerce. This, they say, has deprived all Americans of the common law court system, therefore depriving the courts of jurisdiction over them unless they give their express consent.
- They contend that the fake government uses its citizens as collateral by selling their future earning capacities to foreign investors. They claim that this citizen collateral occurs at birth when citizens are forced by the government to obtain birth certificates and social security cards. The belief is that a corporate shell account for each child is created. Furthermore, they believe that the capitalization of letters of the names on the certificates represents straw man identities for each child.
- Followers do not pay taxes, register vehicles, use postal codes, or maintain driver’s licenses.

The Sovereign Citizen movement is an anti-government extremist movement whose members believe they can ignore laws, regulations, court orders, and taxes because they have divorced themselves from the allegedly illegitimate government.

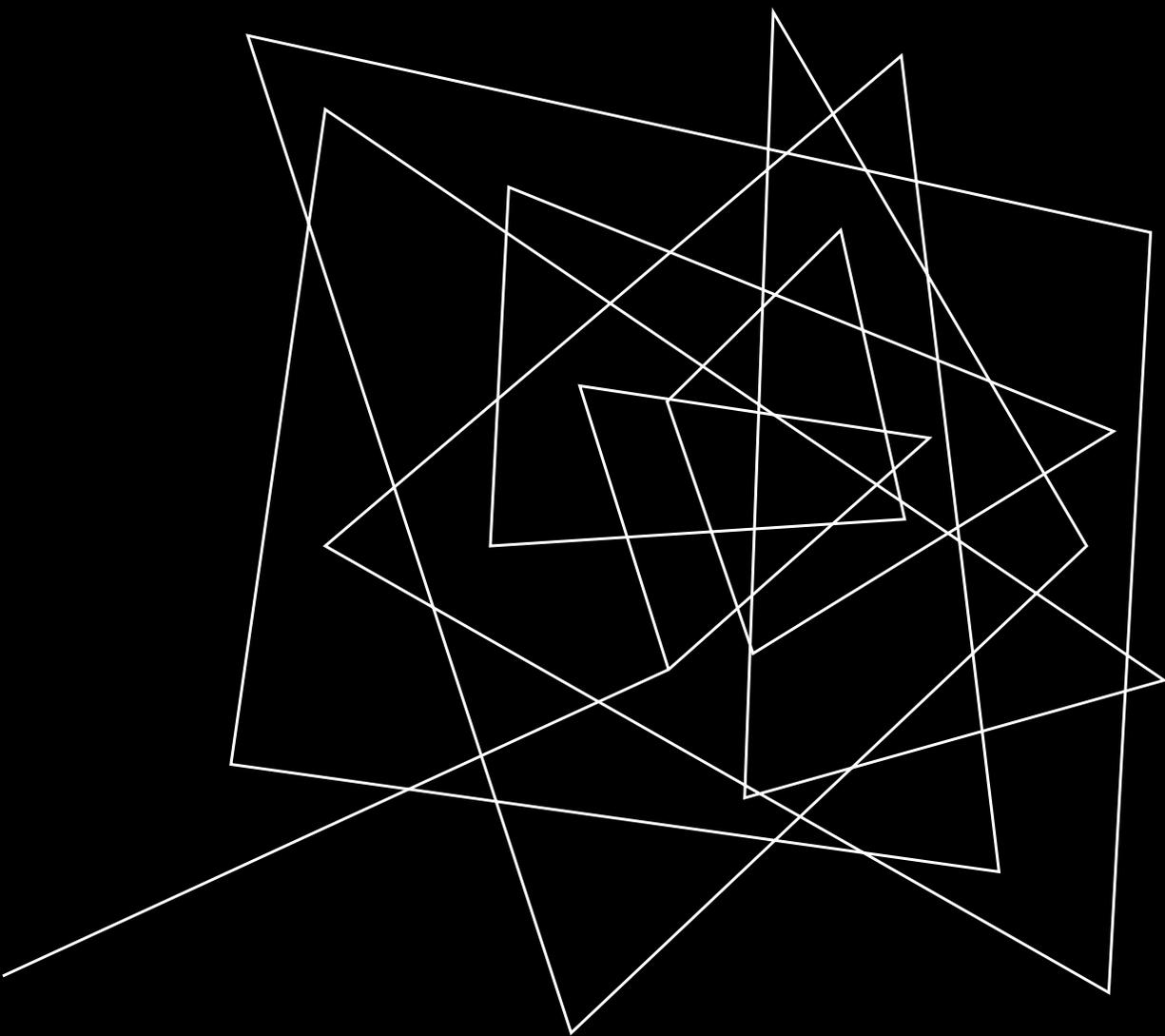


OTHER SELF-DESCRIPTIONS

1. AMERICAN STATE NATIONAL
2. STATE CITIZEN
3. CONSTITUTIONALIST
4. FREE MAN/WOMAN OF THE LAND
5. MOORISH NATIONAL

KEY POINTS

- Adherents of this movement believe the government is the illegitimate product of a conspiracy that subverted the original, lawful government from which they can divorce themselves.
- They are known to use pseudo-legal arguments and use gratuitous punctuation marks in their names. They flout motor vehicle regulations by claiming they are “travelers,” not “drivers”-they may issue their own driver’s licenses and vehicle tags.
- They believe that by not capitalizing names and by writing in red and using certain catchphrases, they can avoid legal liability and lay claim to sums of money that the U.S. Government has secretly pledged to them as security for the country’s debts.
- “Sovereign Citizens” create and file their own fictitious liens against government officials who challenge them.
- Despite disputing the legitimacy of courts, they burden the courts by filing hundreds of pages of nonsensical documents.



CLERKS OF COURT
WHO ARE
RESPONSIBLE FOR
RECORDING DEEDS
AND INSTRUMENTS
ARE FREQUENT
TARGETS OF
FRAUDULENT FILINGS.



COMMON INSTANCES OF CLERK'S INTERACTIONS WITH "SOVEREIGN CITIZENS"

- Attempts to have the Clerk of Court Certify bogus judgments.
- Attempts to have the Clerk record bogus property liens or judgments.
- Attempts to file documents in a court file in which they are not a litigant.
- Filing voluminous, nonsensical, often AI-generated documents in a file in which they are a litigant.



APPLICABLE STATUTES

- §28.222, Fla. Stat. provides that the Clerk is the County Recorder.
- §695.26, Fla. Stat. sets forth requirements for recording instruments affecting real property.

TIPS FOR DEALING WITH SOVEREIGN CITIZENS



- Establish clear office procedures.
- Train staff to follow established office procedures.
- Avoid confrontation.
- Explain why you are doing what you are doing, but do not engage in arguments over “legalities” (“I understand and appreciate your position, but I am required to handle things this way.”)
- Defuse and de-escalate through calm demeanor.

In the event of threats of violence, disengage and immediately contact law enforcement.

QUESTIONS



RESOURCES

A Quick Guide To Sovereign Citizens, Michael Crowell, UNC School of Government, August 2012

[Sov citizens quick guide Nov 13.pdf](#)

Sovereign Citizens Movement, Southern Poverty Law Center

[Sovereign Citizens Movement](#)

The Sovereign Citizen Movement in the United States,

[The Sovereign Citizen Movement in the United States | ADL](#)

The Sovereign Citizen Movement: A Comparative Analysis with Similar foreign Movements and Takeaways for the United States Judicial System, Mellie Ligon, 35 Emory Int'l Law Rev. 297 (2021)



THANK YOU

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