



November 12, 2020

Brad Raffensperger, Georgia Secretary of State and
Chair of Georgia State Election Board

Chris Harvey, Elections Director

Georgia State Election Board Members:

Rebecca Sullivan, Vice Chair

David Worley

Matthew Mashburn

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VIA EMAIL

Re: Request for Urgent Action to Address Elections Administration Problems That Threaten the Runoff Elections

We write to you on behalf of voters, voting rights advocates, and community led organizations, who are committed to ensuring fair and equitable voting rights in Georgia. As part of our continuing dialogue with you, we have identified urgent election administration actions that must be implemented to ensure voter turnout remains high for the January 5th runoff election.

As the founders of the #DearGeorgia Campaign, we have over 30 partner organizations who stand with us in the call for a safe, secure, and accessible runoff election. We are urging you to implement the following:

- **Extended early voting period, including at minimum 1 mandated weekend, so that voters can have an adequate opportunity to safely cast their ballot.** Voters need adequate time to cast their ballot just as they did in the November General Election. We saw over 3.9 million voters take advantage of early voting, which included weekends and one mandatory Saturday. This time around, voters need an extended early voting period and, at minimum, one mandatory weekend, to include Saturday and Sunday. Major holidays including Christmas Eve, Christmas, and New Year's Day fall within the current early voting period, and will reduce the time that voters have to cast their ballots, and will likely lead to long lines. In order to ensure that voters can effectively use our early vote period, they must be allotted enough time to do so, while minimizing wait times as much as possible. This can be effectively accomplished by adding at least one mandatory weekend to account for time lost with office closures due to the holidays.
- **Make language access a priority by providing sample ballots in Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, Chinese (traditional and simplified), Bengali, Hindi and Urdu on the Secretary of State website and statewide at polling locations.** This election, we saw history made by one county whose voluntary decision to create language access permitted limited English proficiency (LEP) voters to vote for the very first time, despite being citizens for decades. Providing sample ballots in Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, and

Chinese (traditional and simplified) would assist LEP voters greatly and permit them to more easily cast an informed ballot.

- **Mandate counties have at least one secure dropbox per 15,000 voters.** Vote by mail was a success for the November election and the addition of dropboxes offered voters a safe, secure, and accessible way to ensure their vote counted in a pandemic. Expansion of dropbox availability will continue to ensure Georgians have options for making their vote count. Currently, 23 counties do not offer any dropbox for voters. Each county should be required to provide at least one dropbox that meets the requirement of the current State Election Board rule. Further, counties should be directed to provide at least one dropbox for every 15,000 voters in accordance with Elections Assistance Commission guidelines. At this time, fewer than one dozen counties meet this guideline.

The need for action is urgent, these issues are not complicated to address, and they are within your authority to resolve. Time is of the essence, and the risk that a significant number of Georgia voters may not be able to vote safely or may not have their votes counted, outweighs the burdens of the requested actions. Therefore, we urge you to take immediate action on two critical issues through uniform guidance and the necessary support to all county Boards of Elections, so that Georgians can successfully vote in our upcoming elections.

As we rapidly approach the December special election and January runoff election amidst the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, we again offer the opportunity to partner with you. We want to ensure that all voters, including new Americans and LEP voters, in Georgia can fully exercise their right to vote. During the General Election we saw an extended early voting period, weekend voting and other additional measures to help voters participate in the electoral process. With major holidays on the way and a spike in COVID-19 cases, we have to continue to offer safe, secure, and accessible methods for voting.

Despite the challenges of these times, Georgia voters demand fair, equitable and efficient elections. Providing all active voters with absentee ballot applications and allowing counties to install ballot drop boxes have been a helpful start, but without the additional actions outlined in this letter, the January 5th runoff election is still at risk. Georgia voters need the additional support of time, better information, and enforcement of uniform protocols to reduce the impediments to their absentee ballots being counted and to have safe in-person voting if that is what they choose to or must do.

We ask for your prompt attention and urgent action.

Best,

Stephanie Cho
Executive Director
Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Atlanta

Aklima Khondoker
Georgia State Director
All Voting Is Local



Partner Organizations

9to5
159 Georgia Together
Asian American Advocacy Fund
Asian Americans Advancing Justice Atlanta (AAAJ)
ACLU of GA
Alliance for Black Lives and Reform GA
All Voting Is Local
America Votes GA (Georgia Engaged)
Atlanta Jobs with Justice
Black To The Future Action Fund
Black Male Voter Project
Black Alliance for Just Immigration (BAJI)
Black Voters Matter
CAIR Georgia
Care in Action
Common Cause Georgia
GALEO
Georgia Conservation Voters
Georgia Equality
Georgia Muslim Voter Project
Georgia NAACP
Indivisible Georgia Coalition
Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC)
NAACP Legal Defense Fund
New American Pathways
Planned Parenthood Southeast
Public Wise
RepGA
Standing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ)
Women Watch Afrika
Coalition for the People's Agenda
Color of Change
CPACS (Center for Pan Asian Community Services)
Environment Georgia
Fair Districts GA
Fair Fight Action
Faith in Public Life
Feminist Women's Health Center (FWHC)
FWD.us
Georgia AFL-CIO
Georgia Alliance for Progress
Georgia Alliance for Social Justice
Georgia Budget and Policy Institute (GBPI)
Georgia Rural Urban Summit
Georgia Shift
Georgia Stand-Up
Georgia Sierra Club
Georgia WAND
GLAHR
IMAN (Inner City Muslim Advocacy Network)
Informed Georgians for Justice
Latino Community Foundation
League of Women Voters Georgia
Mijente
NAPAWF
NARAL
National Domestic Workers Alliance - Atlanta
New Georgia Project
Partnership For Southern Equity
Poder Latinx
ProGeorgia
RevUp
Southern Center for Human Rights
Southern Poverty Law Center/SPLC Action Fund (SPLC)*
Southerners on New Ground
Spark Reproductive Justice Now
Stand Up Savannah
Women Engaged
Working Families Party