



ELECTION MEDIA CONTACTS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Statement from the DeKalb County Board of Registration and Elections

As the body entrusted to oversee elections at the county level, the DeKalb County Board of Registration & Elections has a vested interest in the legislation being advanced by the Special Elections Integrity Committee and others during the 2021 legislative session. We have volunteered our time and energy to be accountable for ensuring equitable access to the vote by all eligible voters and for ensuring that elections in DeKalb County are conducted efficiently and in accordance with all applicable laws.

In keeping with this responsibility, we oversaw an unprecedented 2020 elections cycle with 7 elections, brand-new technology, and record-breaking turnout—all amid a worldwide pandemic. In order to meet the needs of DeKalb voters, we expanded early voting access by opening 12 advance voting precincts with extended hours for the November General Election and January Senate Runoffs. We greatly enhanced our outreach and communications, including voluntarily making materials available in other languages. Finally, we augmented our staffing, facilities, and equipment in order to timely process the 129,000 absentee ballots submitted just in November. This would have been difficult or impossible without the availability of absentee drop boxes, a substantial nongovernmental grant, and the support of nationally-recognized nonpartisan elections experts to help us adapt to the many challenges we and other county elections offices faced in 2020.

Every credible authority on elections, including the federal Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), declared the November General Election to be “the most secure in American history.” Georgia’s own Secretary of State, after ordering a hand audit, a recount of the Presidential contest, and a signature audit in Cobb, refuted allegations of fraud with respect to voting machines and absentee voting and declared Georgia’s elections process and outcomes to be secure and accurate. These assurances from the highest levels of elections authority make the ongoing efforts of the Special Elections Integrity Committee even more cynical and undemocratic.

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In response to unparalleled voter enthusiasm and a largely effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the General Assembly could have undertaken legislation to further streamline voter access and enshrine into law the policies that enabled the most secure election in American history. Instead, the General Assembly has chosen to hastily advance measures that restrict and complicate voting access and hamper the ability of counties to effectively administer elections.

The DeKalb County Board of Registration & Elections calls upon the General Assembly and the Special Elections Integrity Committee to withdraw the harmful legislation in HB 531 and work in concert with county elections offices and nonpartisan elections authorities to ensure the continued accessibility, effectiveness, and credibility of the elections process. The integrity of our democratic republic demands it.

DeKalb County Board of Voter Registration and Elections

Samuel Tillman, *Chairman*

Baoky Vu, *Vice-Chairman*

Dele Lowman Smith

Susan Motter

DeKalb County VRE Board Member Anthony Lewis is not included in this joint statement.

ADDITIONAL ATTACHMENT: National Vote at Home Coalition Analysis of Georgia Election Policy for 2021