



BATTLEGROUND DEMOCRACY



**VOTE
HERE**

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Briefing Overview

**1 - Democracy
in Georgia:
Overview of
Current
Landscape**

**2 - Far-Right
Groups
Facilitating
Mass
Challenges**

**3 - Impact of
Mass Voter
Challenges on
Election
Administration
& Workers**

The Anti-Voter Playbook

Voter Access

Push access to the ballot as far out of reach as possible through:

- Challenges + purges
- Restrictions on polling locations and hours
- Disproportionately targeting communities of color

Election Administration

- Burdening election workers with unfunded mandates
- Pushing anti-voter conspiracy theorists onto local BOEs
- Attempts to privatize “list maintenance”

Election Subversion

Attempts to undo the will of voters via:

- Attacks on certification
- Sham “audits”
- Takeovers of local BOEs
- Laws stripping power from elected officials (e.g. SB 92)

Georgia = Battleground AND Testing Ground

- Georgia = testing ground for anti-voter tactics
- SB 202 being used as a blueprint for omnibus voter suppression bills in other states
- Attacks on democracy not in a silo; anti-voter extremists adopting a state-by-state, precinct-by-precinct strategy
- Mass challenges core part of strategy

Warnock win makes it official: Georgia is a '24 battleground

(Associated Press - 12/7/22)

Could Challenges to Individual Votes Swing the Outcome in Georgia?

Georgia law allows an individual or political group to scan election rolls and look for "suspicious" data, and challenge votes. And over 65,000 challenges have already been made.

(The Nation - 11/3/22)

Under the Radar, Right-Wing Push to Tighten Voting Laws Persists

The clashes in state capitals have faded, but the Republican push for stricter state election laws is organized and planning for the long term.

(NYT - 5/8/23)



Landscape on Mass Voter Challenges in Georgia

- Over **350,000** voter challenges filed in GA **since the 2020 Presidential Election**
- More than **100,000** (or appx. 1 in 70) Georgia voters have had eligibility **challenged since SB-202 passed**
- SEB has provided **no guidance** on challenges, resulting in **different interpretations** of SB 202 provision on challenges across 159 counties

Georgia Republicans want to make it easier to challenge voters' eligibility

(NBC News - 2/8/23)

Close to 100,000 Voter Registrations Were Challenged in Georgia — Almost All by Just Six Right-Wing Activists

(ProPublica - 7/13/23)

Totals By County

	# Voters Challenged	#Voters Moved To Challenged Status	# Voters Moved to Pending Status	# Voters Removed
TOTAL	100,637	6,061	2,692	2,676
Gwinnett	48,141	162	0	62
Forsyth	33,825	1,100	0	593
Fulton	13,142	4,763	2,692	1,709
DeKalb	1,953	0	0	0
Cobb	1,697	0	0	34
Newton	1,030	0	0	0
Chatham	495	36	0	145
Fayette	194	0	0	0
Spalding	96	0	0	96
Whitfield	25	0	0	19
Richmond	14	0	0	14
Muscogee	12	0	0	0
Cherokee	6	0	0	0
Bartow	5	0	0	3
Clarke	1	0	0	1
Harris	1	0	0	0

Activists Flood Election Offices With Challenges

Groups fueled by right-wing election conspiracy theories are trying to toss tens of thousands of voters from the rolls. "They are just going to beat the system into the ground," said one election official.

(NYT - 9/28/22)

Challenges Filed Post-SB 202*

1. Gwinnett - 48,141 - (7.45% or 1 in 13 registered voters challenged)
2. Forsyth - 33,825 - (19% or 1 in 5)
3. Fulton - 13,142 - (1.53% or 1 in 66)
4. DeKalb - 1,953 - (0.34% or 1 in 295)

*as of 9-19-22

Groups Involved with Anti-Voter Efforts

True The Vote

Worked with local Georgians to submit challenges against 250,783 registered Georgia voters across 65 counties ahead of the 2021 runoff election.

Election Integrity Network (EIN)

Organizes grassroots state coalitions to advocate for restrictions on voting and against protections for election workers. Currently active in 22 states, including Georgia.

VoterGA

One of the groups leading charge on challenges in GA post-SB 202. Played an instrumental role in challenges against 37,000 registered voters in Gwinnett County just weeks before the 2022 midterms.

Greater Georgia

Claims their "Election Integrity Defenders program is actively working to verify voter rolls in 159 counties."

How a Spreader of Voter Fraud Conspiracy Theories Became a Star

For more than a decade, Catherine Engelbrecht, a Texas mom turned election-fraud crusader, has sown doubts about ballots and voting. Her patience has paid off.

(NYT - 9/14/22)

How True the Vote Fabricates Claims of Election Fraud, for Fun and Profit

(Texas Monthly - 8/22/22)

Gregg Phillips, a former Texas official who claims that “2,000 mules” stole the 2020 election from Donald Trump, has raised millions of dollars to chase nonexistent fraudulent votes.

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Inside the ‘Election Integrity’ App Built to Purge US Voter Rolls

True the Vote’s IV3 app is meant to catch election cheaters. But it has a fundamental flaw.

TRUE THE VOTE

- **Key Players:** Catherine Engelbrecht & Greg Phillips
- TTV announced plans to **challenge 364,000 Georgia voters ahead of the Jan. 2021 runoff**
- Texas-based TTV collaborated with GA citizens to challenge voters in counties with **large Black and brown voting populations**
- Pushed rejected claim that 67k ineligible voters cast ballots in 2020

Cleta Mitchell Couldn't Overturn the 2020 Election, So Now She's Suppressing Voters

(Democracy Docket - 6/9/23)

How conservative activists worked to kill an effort to protect Florida election workers from harassment

(CNN - 5/24/23)

Top GOP lawyer decries ease of campus voting in private pitch to RNC

A presentation by Cleta Mitchell at a donor retreat urged tougher rules that could make it harder for college students to cast ballots

(Washington Post - 4/2/23)

Meet "Eagle AI," the Cleta Mitchell-Backed MAGA Mass Voter Challenge Program

The former Trump attorney and her network of election conspiracy theorists are backing a dark money effort to generate thinly-sourced voter challenges with a few clicks.

(Documented - 8/17/23)



- **Key Player:** former Trump lawyer Cleta Mitchell
- **EIN organizes grassroots state coalitions to:**
 - Train right wing poll watchers
 - Infiltrate local elections offices
 - Advocate for restrictions on voting and against protections for election workers.
- Expanded from VA to **22 states + DC** in under 2 years

Trump Allies Back Mass Challenge to Voter Eligibility in Georgia

- Flynn, Overstock.com founder fund group targeting key county
- County boards overwhelmed with just weeks until Election Day

(Bloomberg - 9/1/22)

Georgia county validates thousands of voters challenged by Trump allies

(Reuters - 9/22/22)



*Voters Organized for Trusted
Election Results in Georgia*

- **Key Players:** Garland Favorito, Michael Flynn, Patrick Byrne
- Part of EIN's so-called "Georgia Election Integrity Coalition"
- One of the primary groups leading the charge on mass challenges
- Instrumental role in challenging registration of **37,000** Gwinnett voters weeks before '22 midterms



- **Key Player:** Kelly Loeffler
- Publicly supported SB 202
- Group claims to be conducting its own program for challenging voters
- Sponsored a Sept. 2022 Zoom training for appx. a dozen activists on how to file challenges
- Training **emphasized counties in the ATL-metro area w/ highest concentration of Dem voters**

Impacts of Challenges on Georgia Elections

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Disproportionate Impact on Voters

Challenges disproportionately target specific communities

- Zip code used as proxy for race
- Prioritizing voters with names typically associated with specific race/ethnicity
- Students, voters of color, and voters navigating transient housing bearing brunt of impact and burden

No Clear Guidance from State Election Board

Mass Challenges = “Wild West” of election administration

- Lack of guidance from SEB → inconsistent interpretation of SB 202 challenge provisions across 159 counties.
 - ◆ Has led to some counties adhering to strictest possible interpretation out of abundance of caution
- No clear process for helping voters with transient housing
 - ◆ *In conflict with state law permitting registration to a non-residential address*
- Burden of proof must be on the challenger

Cost of Elections in Fulton County

Fulton: Elections will be more expensive, more complicated

(AJC - 4/15/21)

- Cost of elections = skyrocketing
- County BOEs drowning in barrage of unfunded mandates
- Cost per voter now 4x higher than in 2018:
 - \$2 per voter → \$ 6-9 per voter

Takeaway: mass voter challenges + other rising costs of administering elections are costing local taxpayers a phenomenal amount of money

Impact on Election Administration & Workers

Election workers overwhelmed by:

- Mass voter challenges
- Open Records Requests (ORRs)
- Legal challenges
- Endless stream of unfunded mandates

Growing Trend: Attempts to place anti-voter conspiracy theorists onto local BOEs (e.g Jason Frazier)

Emerging threat: private software developed to more easily facilitate mass challenges by far-right activists

Inside the right's effort to build a voter fraud hunting tool

Experts warn that EagleAI, a database that helps voters examine the voter rolls themselves, could drown election workers in unreliable reports of ineligible voters.

(NBC News - 8/17/23)



Questions?

To request a recording of today's briefing or copy of the presentation, please email press@fairfightaction.com.

Thank You!

