

Tuesday, April 23, 2024 at 13:16:36 Eastern Daylight Time

Subject: RE: RE: RE: GASOS ORR #24-81
Date: Thursday, April 18, 2024 at 12:41:27 PM Eastern Daylight Time
From: ORR Administration
To: Khahilia Shaw, ORR Administration, AO Records
Attachments: image003.png, 24-81.zip

EXTERNAL SENDER

Good afternoon,

Please see the attached records responsive to your request.

Best,

Open Records Staff

From: Khahilia Shaw <khahilia.shaw@americanoversight.org>
Sent: Friday, March 22, 2024 11:04 AM
To: ORR Administration <openrecords@sos.ga.gov>; AO Records <records@americanoversight.org>
Subject: Re: RE: RE: GASOS ORR #24-81

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Thank you for this information. We accept these charges.

Best,

Khahilia Shaw | (she/her)
Counsel | American Oversight
khahilia.shaw@americanoversight.org | 202.539.6507
www.americanoversight.org | @weareoversight

From: ORR Administration <openrecords@sos.ga.gov>
Date: Thursday, March 21, 2024 at 8:07 AM
To: Khahilia Shaw <khahilia.shaw@americanoversight.org>, AO Records <records@americanoversight.org>
Subject: RE: RE: GASOS ORR #24-81

EXTERNAL SENDER

Good morning,

This request generated 1,055 records. Please see below for a breakdown of the cost estimate.

Staff Type	Hourly Rate	Estimated Time	Cost
Open Records Staff	28.37	8.79	249.37
Attorney Review	70	2	140
		Total	389.37

Best,

Open Records Staff

From: Khahilia Shaw <khahilia.shaw@americanoversight.org>

Sent: Wednesday, March 20, 2024 3:43 PM

To: ORR Administration <openrecords@sos.ga.gov>; AO Records <records@americanoversight.org>

Subject: Re: RE: GASOS ORR #24-81

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon,

Thank you for this update. We would appreciate more information on how the fee estimate for this request was calculated. For example, has a search been conducted, and, if so, how many potentially responsive records has this search identified? Is this fee based on the estimated number of hours it would take a salaried employee to review the records?

Thanks,

Khahilia Shaw | (she/her)

Counsel | American Oversight

khahilia.shaw@americanoversight.org | 202.539.6507

www.americanoversight.org | @weareoversight

From: ORR Administration <openrecords@sos.ga.gov>

Date: Thursday, March 14, 2024 at 2:41 PM

To: AO Records <records@americanoversight.org>

Subject: RE: GASOS ORR #24-81

EXTERNAL SENDER

Good afternoon,

We have received your request. Our office can provide responsive records by 4/18/2024, and this request will incur a cost of \$389.37. Please notify us within three business days if you accept these charges.

Best,

Open Records Staff

PASSED ORIGINAL CHAMBER - AWAITING ACTION IN SECOND CHAMBER
Elections - Title 21

SB 189: (Elections) **“Elections; text portions of ballots shall be counted for vote tabulation and recounts purposes; provide”** (Sen. Max Burns, Republican, 23rd) **House Governmental Affairs** - Changes appearance of printed paper ballot to only include the text indicating the voter’s selection. The official tabulation count of scanners shall be based on the text portion of the ballots. Eliminates machine coding that was previously printed on each ballot paper.

SB 212: (Elections) **“Probate Court Judges; relating to elections; end activities and duties”** (Sen. Max Burns, Republican, 23rd) **Senate Governmental Affairs** - Ends activities and duties of probate court judges relating to elections; requires county’s governing authority to create a board of elections and registration in place of previously serving probate court judge no later than December 15, 2024.

SB 227: (Elections) **“Macon-Bibb County; provisions to general law and the consolidation; modernize and conform”** (Sen. John Kennedy, Republican, 18th) **House Intragovernmental Coordination** - Creates Macon-Bibb Board of Elections.

SB 355: (Elections) **“Elections and Primaries; use of ranked-choice voting; prohibit”**, (Senator Randy Robertson, Republican, 29th). **House Governmental Affairs**. Amends chapter 2 of title 21 of the O.C.G.A relating to elections and primaries. This bill would prohibit “rank-choice voting” and define this practice in code.

SB 358: (Elections) **“State Election Board; remove the Secretary of State; authorize the board to investigate”**, (Senator Max Burns, Republican). **House Governmental Affairs**. This proposed bill would amend chapter 2 of title 21 of the O.C.G.A relating to the State Election Board to remove the Secretary of State from the board entirely and authorize the board to investigate the Secretary of State and require total compliance with said investigation.

SB 368: (Elections) **Government Transparency and Campaign Finance; foreign nationals from contributing to candidates or campaign committees; prohibit** (Senator Rick Williams, Republican 25th) **House Judiciary** prohibits foreign nationals from contributing to the finances of any candidate or campaign committee and requires foreign principals to register with the state ethics commissioner. Requires foreign principles to disclose to agencies and the General Assembly when they are advocating on behalf of a foreign principal.

HB 456: (Elections) **“Local government; increase term for municipal court judges from one year to two years; provisions”** (Rep. Stan Gunter, Republican, 8th) **Senate Judiciary** Increases the term for municipal court judges from one year to two. Provides for the ability to remove a judge in cases where they have entered into a written agreement memorializing terms and conditions if they breach such agreement.

[HB 974](#): “**Secretary of State; establish and maintain a state-wide system for the posting of scanned paper ballots; require**” (John LaHood, Republican, 175th) **Senate Ethics** Requires SOS to maintain a statewide program for paper ballots which have a scanning resolution of no less than 1200 dots per inch.

[HB 976](#): “**Elections; ballots used in optical scan voting systems shall use paper with a visible watermark security feature; provide**” (John LaHood, Republican, 175th) **Senate Ethics**. Provides a visible watermark that identifies the ballot as an official Georgia ballot. Requires ballots to be printed on security paper that can be used to authenticate the ballot on the government end but does not make it distinguishable to the elector.

[HB 977](#): (Elections) **Elections; number of contests subject to risk-limiting audits; expand** (Rep. John LaHood, Republican, 175th) **Senate Ethics** Expands the number of risk limiting audits to include the top of ticket and one state-wide office. The statewide office shall be selected by a majority vote of the Governor, Lt. Gov., Speaker, and minority leader of both chambers. If they do not come to a decision by 11:00 am on the Thursday after the election, the decision goes to the Chair of the SEB. Clarifies that this section does not prevent additional RLAs by an election superintendent. Reduces the risk limit over time until it is 2% in 2030.

[HB 986](#): “**Elections; election interference with a deep fake; establish criminal offense**” (Brad Thomas, Republican, 21st District). **Senate Judiciary**. Defines the term “deep fake” as a video recording created through technological means depicting a real person's speech or conduct that did not actually occur. A person that commits a deep fake stream within 90 days of an election with the intent of influencing the election or a candidate is committing election interference. Someone who does this will be convicted of a felony, any investigation of an offense will be released to the public.

[HB 1207](#): (Elections) **Elections; proofing of ballots by local superintendents in certain races; provide** (Rep. Tim Fleming, Republican, 114th) **Senate Ethics** Before printing of official ballots and the final signing of display of official ballot on the BMD, the election superintendent shall check the ballot proof to ensure accuracy. After the ballot proofing procedures, the election superintendent will send the final set of approved ballots to the candidates via email provided when they qualify. Candidates will have 24 hours to verify that their name and other relevant information is properly displayed.

[Professional Licensing - Title 43](#)

[SB 157](#): (PLB) “**Professions and Businesses; preclearance process in the licensing of individuals with criminal records who make an application to or are investigated by certain licensing boards and commissions; create**” (Sen. Brian Strickland, Republican, 17th) **House Judiciary Non-Civil** - This bill creates a pre-clearance process so that individuals with felonies or “covered misdemeanors” (misdemeanor conviction within five years prior of the

preclearance process or DUI / domestic battery or certain offenses of a sexual nature) may petition licensing bodies for predetermination on whether they will be granted licensure given criminal charges. The applicant may begin this process before or after beginning the professional qualifications for licensure (including while incarcerated). The bill creates guidelines for what the board should consider before deciding to approve or deny the petition. These include (but aren't limited to) nature and seriousness of the conviction (and relationship of crime to the profession), age of the individual at the time of the crime, length of time since the crime was committed, evidence of rehabilitation. It allows applicants to provide supporting materials for rehabilitation and present fitness including (but not limited to) completion of criminal sentence, testimonials and recommendations, affidavits which can include character references, education, and current family and community responsibility. The board is required to justify by clear and convincing evidence that the conviction supports denying licensure. The boards shall provide written notice to the applicant of any potential issue with licensure due to criminal conviction, the applicant will have 30 days to respond by correcting any inaccuracy in the criminal record or providing additional evidence of mitigation or rehabilitation. The bill requires all occupational licensing boards to file an annual report with the Secretary of State which contains: number of applicants for a license and the number of licenses granted, number of applicants with a criminal record and number denied or granted, the number of predetermination petitioners, and the number deemed eligible, and the racial and ethnic distribution of applicants with a criminal record who are denied or granted licensure.

[SB 205](#): (PLB) **“Funeral Directors and Embalmers; reinstatement of a lapsed funeral director’s license; change provisions”** **House Reg industries** (Sen. Rick Williams, 25th, Republican) Funeral Director bill - changes “allows” to be “allows or has allowed” so that certain people are grandfathered in who did not get an Embalmer’s License.

[SB 354](#): (PLB) **“Cosmetologists and Barbers; persons performing certain limited responsibilities; exempt from licensure”**, (Senator Larry Walker, Republican). **House Regulated Industries**. Amends chapter 10 of title 43 of the O.C.G.A relating to licensing of cosmetologists and barbers. This bill would repeal the requirement to hold a license for individuals who perform limited services such as hairstyling, with the use of mechanical tools (straighteners, flat irons, etc.), shampooing and washing, drying, and the application of oils/creams/serums/ etc.

[SB 370](#): (PLB) **Human Trafficking Hotline Information; certain establishments to post human trafficking hotline information; require** (Senator Mike Hodges, Republican 3rd) **House Regulated Industries** Requires businesses to post the human trafficking hotline phone number and requires massage therapy practice board members to complete one-half hour of human trafficking awareness training and to provide such documentation to the chairman of the board. Authorizes onsite inspections of the business and requires a photocopy of the license to be displayed and the specific margins thereof.

[SB 373](#): (PLB) Licensure in Marriage and Family Therapy; issuance of expedited licenses by endorsement for marriage and family therapists; provide (Sen. Larry Walker, Republican, 20th)

House Regulated Industries Provides for expedited licensure by endorsement for people seeking licensure as a marriage and family therapist who completes an application and pays the fees, holds a valid license in another state, is in good standing in that state, does not have a disqualifying criminal record, and has a verified lawful presence. The license must be issued within 30 days of having met and submitted all qualifications. Does not apply to associate therapists.

SB 390: (PLB) **“To amend Titles 20, 36, 43, and 50, related to libraries, education, governmental entities, professions and business; acceptance and use of funds from the American Library Association prohibited under certain circumstances”** (Larry Walker, Republican, 20th district). **Senate Government Oversight** Repeals Librarian licenses. States that the board of regents (BOR) shall not use public funds offered by the American Library Association (ALA). No gifts shall be given to the American Library Association by the BOR. Cities shall not provide any funding to the ALA. No librarians are able to pay for fees for the ALA using public funds. Removes requirement that director of a public library system retain a certification. No county, municipality, school district, authority, division, instrumentality, political subdivision, or public body corporate shall be authorized to use taxpayer or donated funds on any materials / services from the ALA. DOAS shall not accept any bid or proposal made by ALA for a state contract.

SB 410: (PLB) **Licensing of Veterinarians; certain sterilization services performed by out-of-state veterinarians from licensing requirements; exempt** (Senator Kay Kirkpatrick, Republican, 32nd) **House Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Do Pass** Amends current O.C.G.A to allow out of state veterinarians and veterinary technicians to apply for a one-time 6-month license to perform sterilizations and other “shelter veterinarian services” provided that the individuals hold valid and active veterinarian licenses and veterinarian technician licenses of another state and are in good standing in said state. Shall require the licensing board to conduct periodic reviews thereof.

SB 449 (PLB) **Certified Nursing Aid; certain military medical personnel from an examination requirement; exempt** (Sen. Larry Walker, Republican, 20th) **House Regulated Industries** Allows ‘military medical personnel’ who were discharged for any reason other than dishonorable to be certified as a nurse aide, paramedic, cardiac technician, emergency medical technician, and licensed practical nurse without additional training or testing.

HB 53: (PLB) **State Board of Registration for Foresters; independent state agency; provisions** **Senate Agriculture and Consumer Affairs** (Representative John Corbett, Republican, 174th) Removes the Forestry Board from under the SOS to be an administratively attached agency attached to the State Forestry Commission. The board shall be a separate and distinct budget unit, and shall not be under the jurisdiction of the Forestry Commission or the Secretary of State. Requires that the foresters be appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. Limits the term of the board member who is not connected to forestry to 5 years. Requires the board member’s oath of office be kept on file in the Forestry Commission’s office. Allows the Board to issue a cease and desist to those who are unlicensed and engaged in the

practice of forestry. *Amended in committee to codify the license fee to be \$200, and adjustable depending on the Consumer Price Index.*

HB 73: (PLB) **Public utilities: written disclosure statement with any agreement for sale or financing of distributed energy generation systems; provisions** (Rep. Joseph Gullet, Republican, 19th) **Senate Regulated Industries** This bill requires that any person engaged in the installation of a distributed energy generation system shall be licensed as a general / residential contractor or employ an individual who is licensed as an electrical contractor. It also requires any seller of a distributed energy generation system to receive a certificate of authority from the Public Service Commission. As a part of that certificate of authority, they shall be subject to background check, be required to provide contact information, possess adequate capital, and meet any other requirements that the commission deems necessary. They shall also be required to disclose a list of information to the consumer about the product that they are purchasing. Subjects persons who violate this to civil penalties.

HB 215: (PLB) **Professions and businesses; licensure of advanced practice registered nurses; provisions** (Rep. Alan Powell, Republican, 33rd) **Senate Health and Human Services** Changes the definition of APRN to include five roles in which an APRN falls into: certified nurse midwife, certified nurse practitioner, certified registered nurse anesthetist, or clinical nurse specialist or clinical nurse specialist in psychiatric/ mental health. Revises APRN licensure requirements by adding a new Code section that includes the following requirements:

- Completed written application and fee
- Must be currently licensed by the board as a registered professional nurse or hold a multistate license
- Completed a graduate or post graduate level APRN nursing program
- Must be certified by national certifying body recognized by the board
- Have satisfactory fingerprint record check report and criminal background check results by Georgia Crime Information Center (GCIC) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)

Those applying for a reinstated license must meet the following requirements:

- Meet continuing competency requirements as established by board
- Have satisfactory fingerprint record check report and criminal background check results by Georgia Crime Information Center (GCIC) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)

Additionally, this adds APRN's to those who would be charged with a misdemeanor if practicing without a license. Qualifies APRN's to certify affidavits for disabled individuals requiring temporary or permanent permits. Includes DOR in a list of state agencies that issue documents relating to physical examination forms, verification and evaluation forms.

HB 349: (PLB) **Barbers and cosmetologists; repeal Chapter 10 and enact a new chapter that reorganizes, modernizes, and clarifies current regulation** (Rep. Barry Fleming, Republican, 125th) **House Regulated Industries** - Reorganizes, modernizes, and clarifies current language. Maintains current compensation of board members. Maintains current regulation surrounding application but removes vague / outdated language and clarifies certain

rules (such as allowing unlicensed individuals to braid hair). Creates a process by which inmates can acquire licensure by participating in programs accredited by the Department of Corrections.

[SB 374](#): "Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors Act of 2021"; land surveyor interns and professional land surveyors; change provisions (Senator Larry Walker, Republican, 20th) **House Regulated Industries**. Adds a minimum education requirement that must be met. Eliminates the need for two or four combined years of field experience along with a respective associate's degree or high school diploma. If not included in the study, an applicant must complete one of the education requirements in the code section. After completing these requirements, an applicant must complete 18 hours of land surveying classes in adherence with code section 2. They also must pass a surveyor exam approved by the Board. They must have no less than three years of land surveying experience, including completion, with two of those years spent in an apprenticeship. The examination must be passed during or subsequent to the two-year internship. Up to 50% of credit completed prior to education can be counted at the board's discretion. To acquire an intern and surveyor license, an individual must pass a written exam and have no less than eight years of experience with a two-year apprenticeship.

[HB 434](#): (PLB) **Georgia Composite Medical Board; licensing for radiologist assistants; provide**. (Representative Lee Hawkins, 27th, Republican). **Senate Regulated Industries** Under the Georgia Composite Medical Board, creates a standard practice for licensing radiologist assistants by vesting the As to provide for the licensing of radiologist assistants; to provide for definitions; to provide for powers and responsibilities of the board; to provide that radiologists may use the services of licensed radiologist assistants; to prohibit certain practices by radiologist assistants; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

[HB 441](#): (PLB) **Professions; authorize and regulate teledentistry by licensed dentists pursuant to permits issued by Georgia Board of Dentistry**. (Representative Katie Dempsey, 13th, Republican). **House Health** To allow dentists, dental hygienists, and dental assistants, to practice teledentistry in the state by licensed dentists pursuant to permits issued by the Georgia Board of Dentistry.

[HB 498](#): (PLB) **"Funeral directors and embalmers; reinstatement of lapsed license; change certain provisions"** **Senate Regulated Industries Do Pass** (Rep. Danny Mathis, Republican, 149th) adds "has allowed" to the code so that someone who has let their license lapse within a ten year period may get it reinstated upon reapplication.

[HB 502](#): (PLB) **"Georgia Cosmetic Laser Services Act; revise a definition; revise a provision"** (Rep. Deborah Silcox, Republican, 53rd) **Senate Health and Human Services** Clarifies the definition of cosmetic laser services. Removes the requirement that an assistant laser must be under the supervision of a senior laser remover.

[HB 520](#): (PLB) “**Buildings and housing; tenant selection; revise provisions**” (Rep. Todd Jones, Republican, 25th) **Senate Health and Human Services** Mandates that the Georgia Data Analytic Center conducts a study regarding licensing requirements of the licensing boards which license behavioral healthcare professionals. The focus of this will be locating barriers to entry or licensure. This will include:

- Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers, Marriage & Family Therapists
- State Board of Examiners of Psychologists
- Georgia Board of Nursing

This study will attempt to identify ways to modernize the licensing practices by: (1) reviewing systems used by licensing analysts to receive and review licensure applications and renewals (2) creating a pathway for foreign trained professionals to gain licensure in Georgia, including a temporary license or licensure via endorsement and (3) by reviewing and updating practicum and supervision requirements to bring Georgia closer to the requirements mandated by our surrounding states. The bill mandates that the office of Secretary of State and PLB will work in full cooperation with this study and provide all data and information relevant to the study. This study has a sunset clause on December 1st, 2023 and the Georgia Data Analytic Center will present its study to the General Assembly, Governor’s Office, Secretary of State’s office, and the Behavioral Health and Reform and Innovation Commission.

This bill grants authorization to the Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers, Marriage & Family Therapists to waive all (or parts) of experience requirements for any applicant who is licensed in another jurisdiction who has maintained a full licensure in good standing in that jurisdiction for at least two years.

HB 520 authorizes the Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers, Marriage & Family Therapists and the Board of Nursing to conduct a professional health program to monitor and rehabilitate of impaired healthcare professionals within the state. The board shall be authorized to enter into a contract with an entity to establish and perform these professional health programs. These entities will be allowed to monitor and rehabilitate impaired healthcare professionals, authorizing them to require an applicant or licensee to submit to a mental, physical, or both physical if they believe the applicant or licensee is impaired, and performing other such duties as determined by the board. The board is further authorized to provide pertinent information regarding healthcare professionals determined by the board and at the sole discretion of the board to the contractor entity for conducting the professional health program. All communications / statements / interviews / documents furnished to the entity or produced by the entity, or any findings resulting from the monitoring and rehabilitation of impaired healthcare professionals will be exempt from open records. These records will not be available for court subpoenas or discovery proceedings. The entity contracting with the board will not be liable for civil or criminal the performance of functions or duties under the contract if performed in accordance with the contract. All costs associated with the professional health program will be the responsibility of the impaired healthcare professional.

Bill states that the GDAC is an agent of all executive state agencies and is an authorized receiver of government information under administrative / statutory law which governs such government information.

Section 17 requires that the Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce (GBHCW) will create and maintain a Georgia Health Care Professionals Data System in collaboration with the following boards (only including boards under our purview):

- Chiropractic Examiners
- Optometry
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Speech-Language Pathology / Audiology
- Psychologists
- Nursing
- Dietitians
- Professional Counselors, Social Workers, Marriage & Family Therapists

This data system will collect and provide non-identifying existing information on licensed healthcare professionals to the public. It shall provide demographic and geographical distribution of licensed healthcare professionals. The licensing boards will provide the data upon request by GBHCW upon request, or two times annually. The GBHCW will work with our licensing boards to determine the manner / content of the reporting. The licensing boards shall provide the following type of information to the GBHCW: age, race, gender, ethnicity, location of practice, and license type.

[HB 598](#): (Athletic Commission) **Professions and businesses; certain boxing, wrestling, and martial art associations and federations; change certain provisions** (Rep. Brent Cox, Republican, 28th) **Senate Economic Development** Strikes a list of organizations from exemption of the overview of the Georgia Athletic and Entertainment Commission.

[HB 793](#): (PLB) **“Professional counselors; authorize applicants enrolled in a master’s degree program to take the master’s social work licensing exam”** (Representative Matt Barton, 5th, Republican) **Senate Regulated Industries** Allows applicants for a license in social work currently enrolled in a master’s degree to sit for the master’s social work licensing examination in their final semester of a program. Authorizes the board to adopt rules / regs to administer.

[HB 809](#): (PLB) **“Occupational therapists; perform dry needling as a physical agent modality if certain training and education requirements are met; authorize”** (Rep. Alan Powell, 33rd, Republican) **Senate Regulated Industries** Authorizes occupational therapists to perform dry needling. Requires minimum hours of course load in order to be able to practice. Requires informed consent for dry needling to be performed.

[HB 839](#): (PLB) **“Social Work Licensure Compact Act; enact”** (Rep. Katie Dempsey, 13th, Republican) **House Interstate Cooperation** Enters Georgia into an interstate compact, creating a compact license which allows cross-state mobility. Provides significant definitions for their administration.

[HB 844](#): (PLB) **“Practice of Nutrition and Dietetics Act; enact”** (Rep. Ginny Ehrhart, Republican, 36th) **House Public Health Committee** Establishes many definitions for the new licensure types. Reforms of the Dietetics board. Creates a valid reason for existing per the Supreme Court ruling.

[HB 880](#): (PLB) **“Professions and businesses; military spouses to use an existing license in good standing from another state; allow”** (Rep. Bethany Ballard, Republican, 147th) **Senate Veterans, Military, and Homeland Security** The spouse of a service member, while the service member is stationed in Georgia, may practice in their profession without being licensed when the spouse holds a license to practice issued by another State, that license is in good standing, and the spouse is hired. The in-state employer must verify that the spouse maintains the out-of-state license. The relevant PLB may investigate any person exempted under this code section.

[HB 904](#): **“Professions and businesses; contractors; change certain provisions”** (Ken Vance, Republican, 133) **Senate Regulated Industries** Changes the qualifications that previously allowed any individual with a plumbers license or a utility contractor license to be permitted to construct or alter plumbing systems that extends from the property line to five feet from the building. Changes the requirements of the board to consist of one professional engineer. Eliminates the requirement for a chief electrical inspector and replaces the requirement with an inspector that has electrical inspection duties. Requires a third party inspector that performs duties regularly. Adds the requirement that in order to fix medical gas piping, an individual must be a Master Plumber Class III or Journeyman Plumber. The continuing education requirement will be altered so it does not apply to any licensed conditioned air contractor who is a professional engineer. Continued education will be, to the best effort of the state, made available online or through home study courses. Nobody will engage in low voltage contracting without a valid and specific license. An individual’s license is still valid for 90 days after its official termination, one additional 90 day period may be granted at the board’s discretion. Applicants who have failed the examination two times in a row must show evidence that they have taken a board approved review course before being admitted to take the test again. Each affidavit for low voltage licensure must contain three examples of that individual performing three low voltage writing jobs at least one year prior to the time of application. Gets rid of the requirement that all applicants must disclose what entity they work and that agency’s details. The division would no longer have to notify local governments pertaining to licensure.

[HB 1046](#): (PLB) **Health; advanced practice registered nurses and physician assistants to order home healthcare services; authorize** (Representative David Clark, Republican, 100th) **Senate Regulated Industries** Allows RPNs to administer certain intravenous drugs in a home health agency under the direction of an APRN or licensed physician. Expands their scope of care to include respiratory therapy and skilled nursing care. Allows APRNs to sign death certificates. Authorizes the professional counselors, social workers, and marriage and family therapists board to conduct a professional health program to impaired healthcare professionals.

[HB 1096](#): (PLB) **Professional licensing boards; continuing education tracking solution to monitor compliance of licensees with applicable continuing education requirements; establish** (Representative Dale Washburn, Republican, 144th) **Senate Regulated Industries** Establishes a tracking solution for continuing education as part of the state licensing board and to require compliance with continuing education requirements for certain licenses.

[HB 1190](#): (PLB) **Secretary of State; division director to issue licenses in certain instances** **Senate Regulated Industries** (Rep. J. Collins, Republican, 71st) The division director of the PLB is authorized to issue licenses if a professional licensing board has not made a determination to grant a license within 60 days of receipt of an application and the materials verifying that the requirements for licensure have been met.

[HB 1264](#): (PLB) **Professions and businesses; establish a professional health program to provide for monitoring and rehabilitation of impaired healthcare professionals; authorize** (Representative Ron Stephens, Republican, 164th) **Senate Regulated Industries** Allows the Marriage and Family Counselors Board to establish a professional health program for monitoring an rehabilitating impaired healthcare professionals.

[Securities / Cemeteries / Charities - Title 10](#)

[SB 412](#): (PLB) **Professions and Businesses; administrative and civil sanctions against charitable organizations, paid solicitors, and solicitor agents for certain violations; change provisions** (Senator John Kennedy, Republican, 18th) **House Regulated Industries** Relating to professions and businesses, changes particular provisions pertaining to administrative and civil sanctions against charitable organizations, paid solicitors, and solicitor agents for certain violations; provides for suspension of registrations and increases the amount of civil penalty fines.

[HB 84](#): (Securities / Title 10) **“Commerce and trade; provide for commercial financing disclosures”** (Rep. Trey Rhodes, Republican, 124th) **Senate Banking and Financial Institutions** This bill does not deal with our office, however, it is in Title 10.

[HB 1138](#) (Securities) **Invest Georgia Fund; provide additional factor that the fund administrator shall consider in the selection of venture capital funds** (Darshun Kendrick, Democrat) **Senate Economic Development and Tourism** Adds “to Promote and reflect the demographic makeup of Georgia” to the list of venture capital funds commitments to factors in making investors.

[Corporations - Title 14](#)

NONE

[Administration - Title 45 and others](#)

[SB 324](#) "State Printing and Documents; a victim centered address confidentiality program; provide" [House Governmental Affairs](#) (Sen Kim Jackson, Dem, 41st)- Creates a responsibility for the Secretary of State's office that implements a victim centered address confidentiality program. Any individual above the age of 18 or an emancipated minor, with or without the help of a victim's advocate, may apply for the address confidentiality program if the individual can demonstrate that disclosure of their real address will put them in increased danger of physical or other harm.

[HB 364](#): (Claims Advisory) "**Wrongful Conviction Compensation Act; enact**" (Rep. Scott Holcomb, 81st, Democrat) [Senate Appropriations](#) Cleans up some of the language regarding the Claims Advisory Board. Adds a new section titled the "Wrongful Conviction Compensation Act" which allows for a process for exonerated individuals to file claims against the state and for the Claims Advisory Board to recommend compensation to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia. Establishes the Wrongful Conviction Review Panel, which is formed under the Claims Advisory Board. The panel will consist of five members, including a judge who presides over felony criminal matters and who is appointed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia, a prosecutor appointed by the Governor, a criminal defense attorney appointed by the Governor, either an attorney, forensic science expert, or law professor appointed by the Speaker of the House, and either an attorney, forensic science expert, or law professor appointed by the President of the Senate. The panel will be able to designate one member as the chairperson. The panel shall be able to create their own rules and regulations. Requires that claimants establish by a preponderance of evidence to the panel that they were convicted of one or more felonies and were subsequently incarcerated, that they are innocent, that they did not commit perjury or intend to bring about the conviction, and that they were exonerated of the crime. Also requires that the claimant received a pardon based on innocence of the conviction, or the claimant was exonerated based on the ground of innocence, or the claimant did not commit the crime for which the claimant was convicted, and did not commit any lesser offenses. The panel will be able to determine if the claimant is qualified for compensation and recommend the amount of compensation. Requires that a claim for compensation be made within three years of the date of their exoneration, or three years after July 1, 2022, whichever is later. The panel shall provide forms to be used in filing a notice of claim, and determine what information will be required of the claimants. The panel may conduct a hearing, if it determines a hearing is necessary, or may make a provisional judgment, which the claimant can request a hearing for further review. If a hearing takes place, the claimant, the district attorney for the circuit in which the conviction occurred, and the Attorney General shall be notified. The panel shall make a recommendation to the board, which may include between \$50,000 - \$100,000 per year of wrongful incarceration (prorated for any partial years) and incurred attorney's fees and other expenses associated with the criminal and habeas corpus proceedings. Claimants will not be entitled to compensation for any portion of their sentence in which they were serving a concurrent sentence. The panel shall provide a recommendation to the board within six months if there was no hearing, and a year if a hearing was held. The recommendation shall include a

statement of findings, a statement explaining the panel's calculation of compensable time, and a statement detailing the amount and forms of compensation.

PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS - AWAITING AGREE/DISAGREE

SB 195: (PLB) **“Freedom to Work Act”** (Sen. Larry Walker, Republican, 20th) **Crossed Over (Passed by substitute, awaiting Senate agree/ disagree)** - Creates a process for expedited license by endorsement for service members and their spouses. Includes expedited license by endorsement based on work experience in another state if that license-type is not regulated in the state they are moving from. if that applicant worked in that profession for at least three years, and meets requirements including: they may not have a complaint/ allegation/ investigation open in another state, does not have a disqualifying criminal record, passes any examination to demonstrate knowledge of the rules and regulations specific to the practice, and pays all applicable fees. Requires that an expedited license by endorsement to be issued no later than 30 days from the date of receipt of an application and information and documents that shall all the requirements have been met. Limits the application to the information required in this section. Prevents an applicant who was denied a license under this section from applying again on an expedited basis. Makes any license created via this process to only be valid in this state, and prevents these licensees from eligibility under any interstate licensure compact unless otherwise provided. Removes a reference to temporary license for transitioning service members in the Veterinary Medical Board section.

PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS - AWAITING GOVERNOR’S SIGNATURE

HB 557: (PLB) **“Professions and businesses; authority to certain nurses and physician assistants to prescribe Schedule II controlled substances; authorize”** **Conference Committee Appointed** Grants authority for an advanced practice registered nurse to enter into a nurse protocol agreement to prescribe Schedule II drugs under certain regulation. The nurse may only prescribe 5 days worth of medication, the order must be for an over-18 year old patient, with exceptions for hydrocodone, hydrocodone compounds, or ADHD medication. Any further prescriptions must be done under the supervision of a physician. The nurse will complete one hour of CE for appropriate ordering and use of Schedule II drugs. Creates an automatic acceptance for substantially similar nurse protocol agreements.

HB 455: (PLB) **“Professions and businesses; professional programs to address career fatigue and wellness in healthcare professionals; provisions”** (Rep. John LaHood, Republican, 175th) **Senate passed/adopted** Provides that there is no obligation to report a healthcare professional who is a participant in a “professional program” to their related board barring them posing danger to themselves or others. These professional programs must be contracted by a state-wide organization and meant to address career fatigue and wellness. Provides that there can be no civil liability arising from performance of duties in the professional program. No participant can have a financial ownership stake within it. Nothing from the

professional program shall be subject to discovery barring extraordinary circumstances and no one involved in the work of the professional program may be questioned as a witness in a civil suit.

[HB 166](#): (Elections) **Courts; provide for qualification of constables** (Representative Karen Mathiak, Republican, 47th) **Senate Adopted** Changes the requirement to be a constable to be at least 21 years of age, a citizen of the United States, be a registered voter, have obtained a high school diploma or equivalent, and allows for additional qualifications to be imposed by local law.

[SIGNED BY GOVERNOR](#)

[SB 277](#): (Elections) **“Screven County; board of elections and registration; create”** (Sen. Max Burns, 23rd, Republican) **effective 1.1.24** - Creates Board of Elections in Screven County.

[SB 338](#): (Redistricting) **“Board of Education of Cobb County; education districts; change the description”**, (Senator Ed Setzler, Republican). **Senate Health and Human Services**. This bill addresses the Cobb County School Board redistricting.

From: [Haisty, Maggie <mhaisty@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:mhaisty@sos.ga.gov)
 To: [Fuchs, Jordan <jfuchs@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:jfuchs@sos.ga.gov)
 Date: 1/24/2024 8:25:31 AM
 Subject: Legislative Update - Day 7

Good afternoon Jordan,

Please see the legislative update for 1/23 below.

Upcoming Session Schedule

- Wednesday, January 24th Legislative Day 8
 - [House Appropriations Gen. Gov. Subcommittee](#), 1:00 pm, CLOB 515
 - Georgia Technology Authority
 - Department of Administrative Services
 - State Accounting Office
 - Department of Labor
 - **Secretary of State's Office**
 - Georgia Access to Medical Cannabis Commission
 - [House Governmental Affairs](#), 3:00 pm, CLOB 606
 - **HB 976:** (Elections) **Elections; ballots used in optical scan voting systems shall use paper with a visible watermark security feature; provide** (Rep. John LaHood, Republican, 175th) Requires all ballots to use a visible watermark security feature.
 - **HB 974:** (Elections) **Secretary of State; establish and maintain a state-wide system for the posting of scanned paper ballots; require** (Rep. John LaHood, Republican, 175th) Codifies the ballot scan library.
- Thursday, January 25th Legislative Day 9
 - [Senate Ethics](#), 8:00 am, CLOB 307
 - [Senate Children & Families](#), 1:00 pm, CLOB 307
 - [Senate Regulated Industries](#), 2:00 pm, CAP 450
 - [House Regulated Industries - Lottery Oversight Subcommittee](#), 3:00 pm, CLOB 406
 - **HB 398:** (Athletic Entertainment Commission) **Professions and businesses; ticket brokers; remove an exception permitting certain resale restrictions** (Rep. Scott Hilton, Republican, 48th) **House Regulated Industries** - Sets new restrictions on ticket resales.
 - **HB 473:** (Bingo) **“Crimes and offenses; local governments operate bingo based games to offset reduced tax collections resulting from state-owned forest lands; authorize”** (Rep. Buddy DeLoach, 167th) **House Regulated Industries** - Allows counties with over 50,000 acres of state-owned land (only McIntosh county, currently) to apply for and receive a bingo license from the Secretary of State's office. This would be an electric bingo game, which can only be played within three feet of a bingo machine. The Secretary of State's office is allowed to promulgate rules and regulations about the operation of the machine. The bill additionally only allows for the county to profit the amount that would have been granted through the proper taxation of the land if it was not publicly owned. Once they have exceeded this number, 5% of proceeds will be returned to the State.
- Friday, January 26th Legislative Day 10

Highlights

1. Passed out of Committee

Elections

SB 355: (Elections) **“Elections and Primaries; use of ranked-choice voting; prohibit”**, (Senator Randy Robertson, Republican, 29th). **Senate Ethics Do Pass.** Amends chapter 2 of title 21 of the O.C.G.A relating to elections and primaries. This bill would prohibit “rank-choice voting” and define this practice in code.

SB 358: (Elections) **“State Election Board; remove the Secretary of State; authorize the board**

to investigate", (Senator Max Burns, Republican). **Senate Ethics Do Pass**. This proposed bill would amend chapter 2 of title 21 of the O.C.G.A relating to the State Election Board to remove the Secretary of State from the board entirely and authorize the board to investigate the Secretary of State and require total compliance with said investigation.

PLB

HB 498: (PLB) **"Funeral directors and embalmers; reinstatement of lapsed license; change certain provisions"** **Senate Regulated Industries Do Pass** - (Rep. Danny Mathis, Republican, 149th) adds "has allowed" to the code so that someone who has let their license lapse within a ten year period may get it reinstated upon reapplication.

SB 354: (PLB) **"Cosmetologists and Barbers; persons performing certain limited responsibilities; exempt from licensure"**, (Senator Larry Walker, Republican). **Senate Regulated Industries Do Pass**. Amends chapter 10 of title 43 of the O.C.G.A relating to licensing of cosmetologists and barbers. This bill would repeal the requirement to hold a license for individuals who perform limited services such as hairstyling, with the use of mechanical tools (straighteners, flat irons, etc.), shampooing and washing, drying, and the application of oils/creams/serums/ etc.

2. New Legislation

Elections

SB 368: (Elections) **Government Transparency and Campaign Finance; foreign nationals from contributing to candidates or campaign committees; prohibit** (Senator Rick Williams, Republican 25th) **Senate Hopper** prohibits foreign nationals from contributing to the finances of any candidate or campaign committee and requires foreign principals to register with the state ethics commissioner. Requires foreign principles to disclose to agencies and the General Assembly when they are advocating on behalf of a foreign principal.

SB 367: (Elections) **Elections; use of ballot drop boxes; eliminate authorization** (Senator Rick Williams, Republican 25th) **Senate Hopper** Eliminates all references to drop boxes in code.

SR 454: (Elections) **Right to Register and Vote; clarify (CA)** (Senator Rick Williams, Republican 25th) **Senate Hopper** Clarifies the proposed constitutional amendment which will establish that to vote a person MUST be a citizen of the United States and a resident of the state of Georgia.

PLB

HB 904: **"Professions and businesses; contractors; change certain provisions"** (Ken Vance, Republican, 133) **House Regulated Industries**. Changes the qualifications that previously allowed any individual with a plumbers license or a utility contractor license to be permitted to construct or alter plumbing systems that extends from the property line to five feet from the building. Changes the requirements of the board to consist of one professional engineer. Eliminates the requirement for a chief electrical inspector and replaces the requirement with an inspector that has electrical inspection duties. Requires a third party inspector that performs duties regularly. Adds the requirement that in order to fix medical gas piping, an individual must be a Master Plumber Class III or Journeyman Plumber. The continuing education requirement will be altered so it does not apply to any licensed conditioned air contractor who is a professional engineer. Continued education will be, to the best effort of the state, made available online or through home study courses. Nobody will engage in low voltage contracting without a valid and specific license. An individual's license is still valid for 90 days after its official termination, one additional 90 day period may be granted at the board's discretion. Applicants who have failed the examination two times in a row must show evidence that they have taken a board approved review course before being admitted to take the test again. Each affidavit for low voltage licensure must contain three examples of that individual performing three low voltage writing jobs at least one year prior to the time of application. Gets rid of the requirement that all applicants must disclose what entity they work and that agency's details. The division would no longer have to notify local governments pertaining to licensure.

SB 370: (PLB) **Human Trafficking Hotline Information; certain establishments to post human trafficking hotline information; require** (Senator Mike Hodges, Republican 3rd) **Senate Hopper** Requires businesses to post the human trafficking hotline phone number and requires massage therapy practice board members to complete one-half hour of human trafficking awareness training and to provide such documentation to the chairman of the board. Authorizes onsite inspections of the business and requires a photocopy of the license to be displayed and the specific margins thereof.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you,

Maggie Haisty
Legislative Director
Georgia Secretary of State
Phone: 404-805-8528
mhaisty@sos.ga.gov



From: [Haisty, Maggie <mhaisty@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:mhaisty@sos.ga.gov)

To: [Fuchs, Jordan <jfuchs@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:jfuchs@sos.ga.gov)

Date: 3/4/2024 2:24:24 PM

Subject: Legislative Update - Day 28

Attachments: [2024 Crossed Over.pdf](#)

Good afternoon Jordan,

Please see the legislative update for 2/29 below. Attached is a document that contains all the crossed-over legislation that affects our office.

Upcoming Session Schedule

- Monday, March 4..... Legislative Day 29
- Tuesday, March 5..... Legislative Day 30
 - House Governmental Affairs - Elections Subcommittee, 2:00 pm, CLOB 415
 - TBD
- Wednesday, March 6..... Committee Work Day
 - **PRESENTING - Senate Appropriations, 9:00 am, CAP 125**
 - FY 25 Budget Presentation
 - Senate Ethics, 1:00 pm, CLOB 307
 - TBD
- Thursday, March 7..... Legislative Day 31
 - House Governmental Affairs, 2:00 pm, CLOB 406
 - TBD
- Friday, March 8..... Legislative Day 32

Highlights

1. Passed Original Chamber

House

HB 839: (PLB) **“Social Work Licensure Compact Act; enact”** (Rep. Katie Dempsey, 13th, Republican) **House Interstate Cooperation** Enters Georgia into an interstate compact, creating a compact license which allows cross-state mobility. Provides significant definitions for their administration. **Amended in committee to include a massage therapy compact.**

HB 1096: (PLB) **Professional licensing boards; continuing education tracking solution to monitor compliance of licensees with applicable continuing education requirements; establish** (Representative Dale Washburn, Republican, 144th) **House Regulated Industries** Establishes a tracking solution for continuing education as part of the state licensing board and to require compliance with continuing education requirements for certain licenses.

HB 1190: (PLB) **Secretary of State; division director to issue licenses in certain instances** **House Regulated Industries** (Rep. J. Collins, Republican, 71st) The division director of the PLB is authorized to issue licenses if a professional licensing board has not made a determination to grant a license within 60 days of receipt of an application and the materials verifying that the requirements for licensure have been met.

Senate

HB 502: (PLB) **“Georgia Cosmetic Laser Services Act; revise a definition; revise a provision”** (Rep. Deborah Silcox, Republican, 53rd) **House Health** Clarifies the definition of cosmetic laser services. Removes the requirement that an assistant laser must be under the supervision of a senior laser remover.

SB 543 (Bingo) **“Bingo; certain provisions relating to bingo games operated by nonprofit, tax-exempt organizations; change”** (Matt Brass, Republican, 28th). **Senate Economic Development and Tourism** Reduces restrictions on bingo. Allows for bingo machines in McIntosh County.

SB 390: (PLB) **“To amend Titles 20, 36, 43, and 50, related to libraries, education, governmental entities, professions and business; acceptance and use of funds from the American Library Association prohibited under certain circumstances”** (Larry Walker, Republican, 20th district). **Senate Government Oversight** Repeals Librarian licenses. States that the Board of Regents (BOR)

shall not use public funds offered by the American Library Association (ALA). No gifts shall be given to the American Library Association by the BOR. Cities shall not provide any funding to the ALA. No librarians are able to pay for fees for the ALA using public funds. Removes requirement that director of a public library system retain a certification. No county, municipality, school district, authority, division, instrumentality, political subdivision, or public body corporate shall be authorized to use taxpayer or donated funds on any materials / services from the ALA. DOAS shall not accept any bid or proposal made by ALA for a state contract.

Thank you,

Maggie Haisty
Legislative Director
Georgia Secretary of State
Phone: 404-805-8528
mhaisty@sos.ga.gov



From: [SharePoint-DoNotReply <SharePoint-DoNotReply@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:SharePoint-DoNotReply@sos.ga.gov)

To: [donotreply <donotreply@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:donotreply@sos.ga.gov)

Date: 2/5/2024 11:26:20 AM

Subject: The Buzz Post - Legislative Update February 5, 2024

A [new discussion](#) has been posted in The Buzz by Tonnie Adams on 2/5/2024 11:15 AM

Legislative Update February 5, 2024

The legislature is not in session today. Here is an update on the legislature during the month of January:

First of all, please remember GAVREO Day at the Capitol this Wednesday February 7. We have a room reserved from 10:00 – 11:00 AM. Please invite your legislator to come by.

House bills:

HB 976 Elections; ballots used in optical scan voting systems shall use paper with a visible watermark security feature; provide

This bill will require a visible watermark on all official ballots on the BMD and absentee by mail ballots. The only cost will be the purchase of the hardware to implement the new watermark, which will be paid by the Secretary of State. This bill has passed the House and is awaiting action by the Senate Ethics Committee. Expect this bill to pass at some point or be included in an omnibus bill.

HB 974 Secretary of State; establish and maintain a state-wide system for the posting of scanned paper ballots; require

This bill requires the images of all ballots to be posted online. After discussion with the Secretary of State, the resolution required for all images was set at 200 DPI for BMD ballots (which is what our current scanners are capable of), and 600 DPI for the absentee by mail ballots (which will require a software upgrade). This bill has passed the Governmental Affairs Committee and is waiting to be sent to the floor for a full House vote.

HB 977 Elections; number of contests subject to risk-limiting audits; expand

After discussion on the number of races required to be audited, the bill was changed to require the top race to be audited (President, US Senate, or Governor), in addition to a second race to be determined by a five person panel (Governor, Lt. Governor, Speaker of the House, Minority Leader of the House, Minority Leader of the Senate). This bill has passed the Governmental Affairs Committee

and is waiting to be sent to the floor for a full House vote.

HB 975 Elections; prohibit bar codes, QR codes, and other machine codes on ballots printed by electronic ballot markers

This bill has been discussed in the Elections Subcommittee of Governmental Affairs, but no further action has been taken

Senate Bills

SB 355 Elections and Primaries; use of ranked-choice voting; prohibit

This bill restricts ranked-choice voting, except for UOCAVA ballots. This bill has passed the Senate and is awaiting action by the House.

SB 358 State Election Board; remove the Secretary of State; authorize the board to investigate

Removes the Secretary of State as an ex-officio member of the State Election Board and allows the SEB to investigate the Secretary of State. This bill has passed the Senate and is awaiting action by the House.

SB 189 Elections; text portions of ballots shall be counted for vote tabulation and recounts purposes; provide

This bill is similar to HB 975. This bill has passed the Senate Ethics Committee and is waiting to be sent to the full Senate for a vote.

SB 212 Probate Court Judges; relating to elections; end activities and duties

Passed by the Ethics Committee and is waiting to be sent to the full Senate for a floor vote.

Note that there are additional bills that have been filed in the House and Senate. As these bills are heard in the Governmental Affairs Committee and the Ethics Committee, there will be further updates.

New State Election Board Members:

John Fervier was elected Chairman of the State Election Board by the House and Senate.

Rick Jeffares was appointed by the Senate. He is the Senate appointee and is not voted on by the House.

Budget Update:

The supplemental budgets will be sent to the House this week. We have not heard if the funds for the UPS replacement was included in the amended budget for 2024.

If you would like to opt out of receiving email notifications for this discussion, click [here](#).

From: [Sinners, Robert <RSinners@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:RSinners@sos.ga.gov)
To: [Front Office <FrontOffice@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:FrontOffice@sos.ga.gov)
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[Zaharis, Noula <NZaharis@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:NZaharis@sos.ga.gov)
Date: 2/2/2024 11:12:03 AM
Subject: Morning Reads - 2/2/24

SOS | ELECTION NEWS

[New RCV bans on the table, but bills supporting ranked-choice outnumber opposition legislation in 2024 sessions](#)

(Ballotpedia)

2/2/24

Republican legislators have introduced new ranked-choice voting (RCV) prohibitions in five states so far this year. These efforts come after three states approved Republican-sponsored bans last year.

The number of active bills *supporting* RCV continues to outnumber those banning or repealing its use.

Of the 75 RCV bills currently active in state legislatures:

- 55 would allow or require a new use of ranked-choice voting, including two bills in Florida that would repeal a statewide ban.
- Nine would ban or otherwise prohibit its use.
- Three, all in Alaska, would repeal an existing use of RCV.
- Eight would make changes to existing uses of RCV or authorize studies on the use of the electoral system.

Twenty-three of the 75 active bills were introduced this year. The remaining 52 were introduced in 2023 and carried over to current legislative sessions.

One of the 23 bills introduced this year has advanced beyond the initial stage: Republican-sponsored [SB355](#) in Georgia. The bill, which prohibits the use of ranked-choice voting in the state, passed the Georgia Senate 31-19 on Jan. 26. No jurisdiction in Georgia, which has a Republican trifecta, currently uses RCV. Military and overseas voters use ranked ballots when voting in runoff elections. The legislation makes an exception for these voters...

[Fate of Georgia's Dominion voting machines rests with federal judge](#)

(AJC)

2/1/24

A 17-day [trial](#) questioning the security of Georgia's Dominion voting machines ended Thursday with claims that tampering would cause chaos countered by assurances that this year's presidential election will be safe.

The case over whether voting touchscreens are vulnerable is now in the hands of U.S. District Judge Amy Totenberg, who didn't immediately rule on whether the election equipment creates an unconstitutional danger to voting rights.

Five hours of closing arguments focused on the [potential for subverting the voting system](#) Georgia [bought](#) for \$107 million in 2019.

A packed courtroom watched the drama that has the potential to change how in-person voters cast their ballots, depending on how Totenberg rules.

The light of the train is coming at us in the November 2024 election. The question is whether we're going to be ready," said Robert McGuire, an attorney for the Coalition for Good Governance, an election advocacy group and a plaintiff in the case. "What makes this decision a hard one is the political moment."

Attorneys for Georgia election officials said the case failed to show any actual violation of voting rights because voting machines haven't been hacked or altered during an election.

The possibility of election hacking doesn't justify changing the voting system used by 94% of Georgia voters who cast ballots either during early voting or on election day in the 2022 midterms, lawyers representing the state said. About 6% of voters used absentee ballots filled out by hand.

"This is the most battle-tested and stress-tested voting system in the country, without a doubt," said Carey Miller, an attorney for the state. "The outlandish nature of the claims have taken on a life of their own."

The trial included testimony about whether paper ballots printed by touchscreens are trustworthy, the accuracy of computer-generated ballots and the [breach in Coffee County](#) in January 2021, when tech experts hired by supporters of former President Donald Trump [copied the state's voting software](#)...

[Georgia politicians look to protect elections from AI, foreign interference](#)

(Atlanta News First)**1/30/24**

Georgia lawmakers are trying to keep up with artificial intelligence by working on state-specific legislation to try to ward off anyone trying to mess with voters before the next election.

HB 986 would make it a criminal offense if someone creates a deep fake.

HB 988 to create annual reports detailing how state agencies are using AI.

Business professor David Schweidel showed Atlanta News First believable AI images of political figures using different software. He said that the technology is not far from being able to make realistic videos.

The images are called deep fakes which can range from a cartoon image to something more realistic.

"If we want to police this, this is something that needs to happen now," said Schweidel.

Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger said AI and foreign interference are two of the greatest risks to Georgia's November elections. He wants the state to make sure anyone voting would have to identify their ties to foreign governments.

"If you go back to some of the elections, we've had recently some of the misinformation you've seen on the internet and social media was coming from Iran, China, Russia, in fact that's even coming right now," said Raffensperger...

STATE | NATION | WORLD**[State confirms 1st known outbreak of potentially deadly fungus](#)****(ABC)****2/2/24**

Washington state is experiencing its first known outbreak of a potentially deadly fungus, according to public health officials.

Four patients in the last month have tested positive for *Candida auris*, or *C. auris*, Public Health - Seattle & King County said in a [release](#).

The first case occurred in a patient who had recently been admitted to Kindred Hospital Seattle, which was identified through a proactive screening program.

Additional screenings found two new cases, as well as a case with links to Kindred, who had originally tested negative for *C. auris* when first admitted, the health department said.

It's currently unclear what the initial source of the infection is and officials said the investigation is ongoing.

A case of *C. auris* was identified in July in a patient who was transferred to Kindred from St. Joseph's Hospital in Pierce County. It's believed to be the first locally acquired case in Washington state, according to the department.

Health officials said they have been working with the hospital for many months "with the expectation that *C. auris* would eventually be found in Washington State."

"Public Health continues to work together with Kindred to help limit spread," the release said. "This includes keeping patients who test positive for *C. auris* away from other patients to reduce risk of spread and using specific disinfecting cleaning products effective for *C. auris*..."

[What Biden *really* says about Trump behind closed doors](#)**(Politico)****2/2/24**

President **JOE BIDEN** has a reputation for salty language behind closed doors. But it nearly slipped out in public during his speech at Valley Forge last month to mark the third anniversary of the Jan. 6 insurrection.

Animated and angry, he derided **DONALD TRUMP** and his followers for drawing glee from political violence. "At his rally, he jokes about an intruder, whipped up by the Big Trump Lie, taking a hammer to Paul Pelosi's skull," Biden said.

"And he thinks that's funny," the president continued. "He laughed about it. What a sick ..."

Biden let his voice trail off as the crowd cheered and chuckled.

In private, he doesn't stop short.

The president has described Trump to longtime friends and close aides as a "sick f*ck" who delights in others' misfortunes, according to three people who have heard the president use the profane description. According to one of the people who has spoken with the president, Biden recently said of Trump: "What a fucking asshole the guy is."

The White House declined to comment.

The epithets may cut against the image Biden often projects as someone eager to take down the level of incivility and acrimony in politics. But they also illustrate a core anger he has developed toward the man he ousted from office and may very well face again....

[Rep. Jim Jordan subpoenas Fulton DA to produce documents tied to alleged relationship](#)**(WSB)****2/2/24**

Rep. Jim Jordan is once again going after Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis.

Jordan, who is the chair of the House Judiciary Committee, **has subpoenaed Willis** for documents related to

the Committee's oversight of the Fulton County D.A. Office's alleged misuse of federal grant funds." The move comes after a codefendant in the Georgia election interference case accused Willis in a court filing of having an "improper relationship" with the special prosecutor, Nathan, whom she brought in to head the case against former President Donald Trump and several of his allies...

[Planned private port sparks controversy in Savannah](#)

(AJC)

2/2/24

A privately owned marine shipping terminal is planned along the Savannah River at a [once-polluted site](#) downstream from [Georgia Ports Authority](#) facilities, a multibillion-dollar project that has drawn objections and suspicion from state officials at the nation's third-busiest port complex.

The [SeaPoint Industrial Marine Terminal](#) features more than a half-mile of riverfront and sits more than 5 miles closer to the Atlantic Ocean than the sprawling Ports Authority terminals located west of downtown Savannah. Engineers are designing a dock wall to serve a facility fit to handle a "broad range of maritime transported goods and materials," with construction expected to begin later this year.

SeaPoint's owner, Savannah businessman Reed Dulany, is seeking a tenant for the 226-acre site and is building the berth infrastructure to make the property more attractive.

SeaPoint's cargo mix could include containers, which has drawn the Ports Authority's ire.

The Ports Authority is currently expanding capacity by [converting one multiuse property](#), Ocean Terminal, into a container-only site and [building another container-specific facility](#) on land nearby. President and CEO Griff Lynch told the authority board this week about plans to invest \$4.2 billion on expansion over the next decade..

From: [Sinners, Robert <RSinners@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:RSinners@sos.ga.gov)
 To: [Front Office <FrontOffice@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:FrontOffice@sos.ga.gov)
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 Subject: Morning Reads - 2/27/24

SOS | ELECTION NEWS

[Pretty, pretty bad: Curb Your Enthusiasm takes on voter suppression](#)

(The Guardian)

2/27/24

A few weeks ago, Cliff Albright, the co-founder of Black Voters Matter, brought up an unlikely topic during a weekly staff meeting: the HBO comedy [Curb Your Enthusiasm](#).

The first episode of the show's 12th and final season had just premiered. At the end of the episode, Larry David, the co-creator of Seinfeld and the show's curmudgeonly, faux-pas-prone protagonist, gets arrested for giving a bottle of water to another character as she stands in the sweltering Georgia heat. "That's barbaric – what kind of law? Are you serious?," David says as he's led away in handcuffs by two police officers. He winds up [getting a mugshot taken](#) in the style of Donald Trump in Fulton county.

In the next two episodes, David basks in adulation as he goes on to become a national hero, earning plaudits from Stacey Abrams and the flirty attention of Sienna Miller.

As Albright knew well, the show was referring to a real law. In 2021, [Georgia](#) Republicans enacted SB202, a bill with sweeping voting restrictions, including a ban on giving out food or water within 150ft of a polling place or within 25ft of any voter standing in a line – which could extend well beyond the 150ft radius. Violating it is a misdemeanor punishable by up to a year in prison and a \$1,000 fine.

Georgia had recently seen egregiously long lines to vote and many saw the measure as an obvious attempt to make it harder for Black voters to cast a ballot.

Voting rights advocates noted that the law passed after Black voters powered Joe Biden to victory in Georgia in 2020. Biden himself called the law "[Jim Crow in the 21st century](#)". Major League Baseball pulled the All-Star Game from Atlanta [in 2021](#) and activists increased pressure on companies such as Coca-Cola to take a stand against it.

Albright was very familiar with efforts to make it harder to hand out food and water to people waiting to vote. In 2023, Black Voters Matter faced a complaint it was running afoul of electioneering rules after it handed out food and water to people [standing in polling lines](#) in Albany, Georgia. The state board of elections dismissed the complaint. The board has not had any recent complaints about groups giving out food or water, said Sara Tindall Ghazal, a Democrat on the board.

Albright said he was happy David had chosen to focus on the issue.

"I loved it. He was clearly trying to point out how ridiculous the law is, especially when you have folks waiting on unnecessarily long lines," he said in a text message. He added that some staff had seen the episode and thought it was a good way to raise awareness about the law.

The Georgia secretary of state, Brad Raffensperger, a Republican who has staunchly defended the law, was less enthusiastic.

"While Curb Your Enthusiasm is usually hilarious, this one distorted the facts beyond anything funny," he said in a statement. "But it's tough to make a joke out of Georgia's two minute wait times – or our number one ranking for election security."

Last summer, a federal judge limited the scope of the food-and-water ban. While handing out food and water to votes within 150 feet of a polling place is still banned, providing aid outside of that radius is allowed (it wasn't clear how close David was to the polling place when his alleged offense occurred).

While the food and water ban has gotten significant attention, other provisions in the law have caused headaches. One allows any voter to file an unlimited number of challenges to another voter's eligibility. Ahead of the 2022 election, local elections boards were overwhelmed by people filing election challenges.

In an [interview with TheWrap](#), Schaffer said the show had long planned to use the law as a storyline.

"We were always going to Atlanta because of the barbaric law that you can't give anybody water or food when they're in line for voting," he told the site. "When we were talking about stories, Larry said, 'This law is insane. I

think it'd be funny if I got arrested for that..."

[Georgia House panel backs ballot inspections and fewer voting machines](#)

(AJC)

2/27/24

Bills to allow public ballot inspections and fewer voting machines on Election Day passed a Georgia House committee Monday.

The bills add to a long list of changes to election laws under consideration by state legislators, along with proposals to [eliminate computer codes](#) from ballots, [investigate Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger](#) when there are election problems, and [end automatic voter registration](#).

Under one of the bills that advanced Monday, paper ballots would be [accessible by the public](#) after elections are certified, subject to regulations that would be crafted by the State Election Board. Current law keeps ballots sealed after elections unless a judge orders otherwise.

"It really further ensures that we have citizen-run elections, that we have maximum transparency, and we have public verification," said state Rep. [Shaw Blackmon](#), a Republican from Bonaire.

No one spoke against House Bill 426 before it passed the House Governmental Affairs Committee. The bill also cleared the committee last year but didn't receive a vote in the House.

The effort to allow ballot inspections is a goal of Republican supporters of Donald Trump and activists who [sued](#) because they want to search for counterfeit ballots in the 2020 election, which Trump lost. Election investigators told a judge they [couldn't find any fake ballots](#), but Trump and his followers have spent more than three years saying the 2020 election was stolen without providing proof.

The committee also approved legislation that would ease the number of voting booths required in each election day precinct in statewide general elections. House Bill 1370 would allow fewer than one voting booth for every 250 voters.

Lines [haven't been a problem](#) on election days in recent years, and county election directors told legislators they want more flexibility to deploy the appropriate amount of voting touchscreens and printers. The worst lines in past Georgia elections occurred during [high-traffic days of early voting](#) and the [2020 primary](#), when some precincts closed during the coronavirus.

Several other election-related bills under consideration by the General Assembly would criminalize [deepfakes](#) that impersonate candidates to deceive voters, add [watermarks](#) to ballots, increase the number of [election audits](#), [post ballot pictures online](#) and [ban ranked-choice voting](#).

[Judge: Law partner must testify about Wade's relationship with Willis](#)

(AJC)

2/27/24

A judge has determined that Nathan Wade's former law partner and divorce lawyer must tell the court what he knows about the special prosecutor's relationship with District Attorney Fani Willis – a decision that could produce more bombshell testimony as defense attorneys seek to disqualify the DA from prosecuting the Fulton County election interference case.

Superior Court Judge Scott McAfee's chambers notified attorneys in the case by email late Monday that certain communications Terrence Bradley had with Wade are not protected by attorney-client privilege, according to numerous people who read the email. Bradley could be compelled to testify as soon as Tuesday afternoon. McAfee's decision followed a closed-door meeting between the judge and Bradley on Monday that lasted nearly an hour and 20 minutes...

[How a Right-Wing Controversy Could Sabotage US Election Security](#)

(Wired)

2/27/24

The meeting between top US election officials and their cybersecurity partners from the federal government almost went off without a hitch. Then Mac Warner spoke up.

Warner, West Virginia's Republican secretary of state, didn't have a mundane logistical question for the government representatives, who were speaking at the winter meeting of the National Association of Secretaries of State in Washington, DC, on February 8. Instead, Warner lambasted the officials for what he said was their agencies' scheme to suppress the truth about US president Joe Biden's son Hunter during the 2020 election and then cover their tracks.

"When we have our own federal agencies lying to the American people, that's the most insidious thing that we can do in elections," Warner told the officials from the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), who watched him impassively from the stage. "You all need to clean up your own houses."

Neither of the officials responded to Warner, and the NASS meeting—a semiannual confab for the nation's election administrators that deals with everything from mail-in voting to cyber threats—quickly moved on to other business. But Warner, who attended an election-denier rally after Biden's 2020 victory and is now [running for governor on a far-right platform](#), isn't a fringe voice in the GOP. His impassioned speech reflected a growing right-wing backlash to the election security work of agencies like CISA and the FBI—one

that now threatens the partnership that the federal government has been painstakingly building with state leaders over the eight years since [Russia interfered in the 2016 election](#)...

[Georgia Senate targets automatic voter registration](#)

(Axios)

2/27/24

Georgia Republican lawmakers are pushing a law that could undo what advocates and election officials call a smart way to register citizens to vote.

Why it matters: The measure, which the Georgia Senate could consider as early as this week, is one of several election-related bills [playing to the GOP's grassroots](#) that could make voting more difficult in the swing state.

Driving the news: Under [SB 221](#), people would have to opt in to register to vote when they renew or obtain a driver's license.

- Georgia's current system automatically enters people into the registration system unless they opt out.
- The bill would also make it easier for people to challenge a voter's registration status.

Zoom in: State Sen. Max Burns (R-Sylvania), the bill's sponsor, says he's concerned voter rolls could clog up with duplicate registrations.

- "There needs to be some conscious decision of the Georgia voter saying, 'I wish to ensure I'm registered in Georgia,'" Burns said last week, [according to the AJC](#).
- Burns is also sponsoring measures to [block](#) QR codes from ballots and give the State Election Board the power to investigate the secretary of state.

The other side: Voting rights advocates consider the current "motor-voter" program a civic engagement success...

STATE | NATION | WORLD

[4 things to watch in Michigan's primary, where cease-fire protesters are boycotting Biden](#)

(Politico)

2/27/24

When Joe Biden moved [Michigan up on the primary calendar](#), he could not have anticipated a protest vote over the Israel-Hamas war.

But now that the president is facing significant political fallout from that conflict, the vote in Michigan has suddenly become a test for him. A coalition of Arab-American and Muslim leaders alongside progressives in the state are urging Democrats to vote "uncommitted" in the primary as a form of protest against Biden.

The outcome could send an important message to Biden: Either convincing the president that he's not paying a price for rejecting an immediate cease-fire or prompting further calls for a course correction.

In the last three weeks, volunteers made tens of thousands of phone calls and organized protests on college campuses, while picking up endorsements from Rep. Rashida Tlaib (D-Mich.) and former Democratic presidential candidate Beto O'Rourke.

"Voting uncommitted isn't just symbolic," Layla Elabed, the "Listen to Michigan" campaign manager, said in a memo. "It represents the electoral margins that could determine President Biden's electoral fate in November 2024..."

[Tourists have returned to North Korea for the first time since the pandemic. Here's what they saw](#)

(CNN)

2/27/24

Lena Bychcova couldn't really believe it when her North Korean tourist visa came through.

Many Russian tourists have found themselves [locked out](#) of [tourism destinations](#). But North Korea — as a key Russian ally — offered a rare opportunity to travel.

The marketing professional was one of about 100 Russian nationals who were allowed to travel to North Korea this month in what is believed to be the hermit kingdom's first international tourist trip since the coronavirus pandemic.

Tourism in North Korea is tightly controlled. Individual travelers are not permitted into the country, and groups are accompanied by minders. Tourism revenue is used to [support the regime of dictator Kim Jong Un](#).

Traveling to the "hermit kingdom" is not without significant risks. American college student Otto Warmbier was detained on a North Korea trip in 2016, allegedly for stealing a propaganda poster. He was returned to the United States 17 months later in a vegetative state [and died soon after](#).

Bychcova and the rest of the group arrived in Pyongyang on February 9, traveling via a North Korean-owned Air Koryo plane from Vladivostok.

While Bychcova admits she was anxious about the trip, she says that curiosity won out and she couldn't pass up the chance to see a country that few tourists have the opportunity to explore.

Travel blogger Ilya Voskresensky, who also joined the tour, felt similarly tense — he listed his part-time job, selling vintage dishes, as his profession rather than revealing he was a content creator. Despite his misgivings, he admits that one reason to go through with the trip was to discover whether modern-day North Korea would compare to the Soviet Russia his family members told him about.

GA-SOS-24-0195-A-000027

3/14/2024

“When you look at North Korea you realize that your grandma and grandpa were living like they do here,” Voskresensky tells CNN. “It’s a teleport into the past. There are absolutely no advertisements in the city. The only thing on display are party slogans, flags and so on...”

[Peachtree Street sinkhole devours restaurant sign, sidewalk, closes lanes](#)

(Fox5)

2/27/24

Several Buckhead restaurants and three lanes of Peachtree Street remain closed during Tuesday morning's commute after a sinkhole swallowed a sign and a section of sidewalk.

The Sufi's Kitchen sign fell about 10 feet into a sinkhole caused by a water leak.

SKYFOX 5 flew over the scene and saw a crater open from the road to the front of the Persian restaurant. Neighboring R. Thomas Deluxe Grill posted photos on its Facebook page that show water gushing into the massive hole...

[Russia-tied hackers threaten to leak Georgia Trump trial docs if ransom isn't paid: report](#)

(Raw Story)

2/27/24

A Russia-based ransomware gang says it will publish pilfered Fulton County data — which includes documents tied to former President Donald Trump's court case — unless it is paid a ransom, according to a new report from [the Register](#).

LockBit's threat could also involve a "total leak" of the Fulton County data that would put various cases and sources at risk, according to the report.

“The stolen data will be published on the blog, there is no chance of destroying the stolen data without payment,” LockBit warned, according to former Washington Post reporter Brian Krebs' blog

Earlier in the month, before an FBI intervention, the hacker collective said they were determined to expose various entities alleged negligence, the report notes.

“We will demonstrate how local structures negligently handled information protection,” their original warning reads. “We will reveal lists of individuals responsible for confidentiality. Documents marked as confidential will be made publicly available. We will show documents related to access to the state citizens' personal data. We aim to give maximum publicity to this situation; the documents will be of interest to many. Conscientious residents will bring order...”

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SOS | ELECTION NEWS

[Trump Recycles Tired 2020 Election Allegations](#)

(National Review)

1/17/24

The former president just won't let his loss go, even if that means returning to long-disproven allegations about the outcome.

As originally conceived by its inventors, the concept of the "big lie" is supposed to be a tale so audacious and captivating that people can't doubt it. Its unbelievability is its power — so impossible that it will change public beliefs. After three years, though, former president Donald Trump and his allies haven't enlarged the lie about the 2020 election being "stolen." Instead, they have resorted to merely repeating the same tired and long-disproven assertions. The once-fantastical lie that the 2020 election was somehow "stolen" from President Trump through voting-machine irregularities, foreign intervention, or out-and-out fraud has become repetitive, boring, and sad.

These fabricated assertions were certainly entertaining at first — like the water fixtures in front of the Bellagio in Las Vegas. Every 15 to 30 minutes, jets of water spray up, down, and rotate in a rhythmic and visually amusing pattern. But one can't watch it for very long before the patterns become predictable and boring. The big lie about the 2020 election, repeated now for more than three years, has brought forward no proof and nothing that hasn't been publicly known since January 2021. The current variations, on display regularly during Trump's 2024 presidential campaign thus far, are merely part of the dancing fountain of lies that have been disproven by the count, the recount, and the audit of the 2020 vote in Georgia. Not one single shred of evidence has been offered in its support, in my state or in any other.

There was plenty of opportunity for Team Trump to back up its wild and audacious assertions with evidence. Courts of law would have been the appropriate forum to do so. Sixteen individual lawsuits were brought to challenge the validity of Georgia's 2020 election results, of which twelve were dismissed, and four of which were withdrawn by Trump's own legal team. Why withdraw? Even if it was too late to decertify the 2020 election, Trump or his allies could have argued before a judge — and potentially a jury — and possibly put some actual proof to any of the wild assertions made in the immediate aftermath of the 2020 election, some of which are still being made to this day. One need not be more than slightly cynical to understand why Team Trump would choose a tactical retreat from the truth. The lie was far more compelling than any sober analysis of election returns. One crucial element to any confidence game is summed up in the 2015 movie *Focus* with Will Smith and Margot Robbie. "Never give up the con," says Smith's character. "You die with the lie." Anyone willing to go that far, the con man's theory goes, must be telling the truth.

It gave me no joy to report to President Trump in January 2021 that he had lost Georgia in the presidential contest. I have been a conservative all my life and a Republican for the entirety of my elected career. I had voted for him twice. But during our phone call on January 2, 2021, President Trump told me he wanted me to find "11,790 votes, which is one more than we have . . ." I looked, and what I found clearly showed why he lost. In Georgia in 2020, there were 33,527 voters who requested a Republican ballot in Georgia's primaries but who also did not participate — at all — in Georgia's general election. Georgia had 14 Republican candidates for the U.S. House of Representatives on the ballot in the 2020 general election. Those 14 candidates' combined vote total was 27,559 more than President Trump's Georgia total. Another 27,967 voters voted for down-ballot Republicans but left the presidential contest blank. There were more than enough Republican votes in Georgia for President Trump to carry the state. Republicans just didn't cast them.

To describe the former president as polarizing is a profound and indisputable understatement. He's a political magnetic pole that either attracts or repels people irresistibly, with nearly no one on the fence or in the much-coveted political "middle." Trump forces people to take a side. In 2020, he pushed voters into a "you're with me or against me" choice that tens of thousands of Georgians flatly refused to make. Many of them stayed home, and some of them left the presidential choice blank.

It's important to emphasize that the key to Trump's loss in Georgia was that the Georgians who didn't vote for Trump were *Republicans*. The thousands of voters who made no choice in the presidential contest in Georgia voted for other Republican candidates on the same ballot. The former president's power of polarization repels

not only all Democrats but also enough independents and Republicans that he couldn't win Georgia. The former president's personality is unprecedented and so off-putting to some that it has created a cottage industry of "Never Trump" Republicans who gladly take millions in donations from angry liberals on the flimsy promise of "fighting Trump." Plenty of people have been angry with other Republican presidents or nominees, but neither "Never Bush" nor "Never Romney" ever existed as significant political movements by the time the general election came around.

Former president Trump has released a "new" document he described as "fully verified . . . by the most highly qualified Election Experts in the Country." Maybe, maybe not. The former president has been known to exaggerate. But the larger problem for this "new" document with its supposedly "definitive" proof is that it fails to deliver anything new or definitive at all. It's nothing but recycled conspiracy theories and repetition of already disproven allegations. The three-ring circus that was once the Trump entertainment spectacle has withered away to a single decrepit pony, desperately performing its one trick, hoping to regain the audience it once held in thrall. Iowa showed that performance can still keep some people entertained. Others can make up their own minds.

[Georgia Sec. of State says 17 cases under investigation for double-voting in 2022](#)

More: [Raffensperger Takes Aim at 'Double' Voters..Georgia secretary of state calls for investigation into possible double voting...Ga. secretary of state refers 17 alleged double voting cases from 2022 to district attorneys...Nearly 20 double-voting cases investigated across Georgia...17 cases of suspected double voting in GA referred to local DAs...Nearly 17 cases of illegal voting being investigated in Georgia: Secretary of State Office...Tift Co. among 17 cases of suspected double voting reported in Georgia...Georgia investigating 17 cases of double voting, including in Forsyth, Barrow counties...Raffensperger: Almost 20 double voting incidents in Georgia under investigation...17 suspected state double-voters referred to district attorneys...](#)

(WSB)

1/16/24

The Georgia Secretary of State's Office said it is referring more than a dozen cases of suspected double-voting to local district attorneys.

According to the office, 17 voters in nine counties may have voted twice in the 2022 midterm elections.

They're accused of voting once in Georgia and again in another state.

The states, and the identities of those with cases under investigation, were not identified by the Secretary of State's Office.

As a result, the DA's office will now evaluate the cases and pursue indictments where and if appropriate.

"One illegal vote cast is too many," Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger said in a statement.

"Georgians deserve to have their voice heard fully, not have it diluted by bad actors..."

[Georgia Republicans want to ban ranked-choice voting](#)

More: [Georgia lieutenant governor proposes banning ranked-choice voting](#)

(Washington Examiner)

1/16/24

A pair of Georgia Republicans have proposed legislation to ban ranked-choice voting in the state.

In a news release, Lt. Governor Burt Jones and state Sen. Randy Robertson, R-Cataula, who announced Senate Bill 355 on Tuesday, called out "those on the Left" as among the proponents who want ranked-choice voting. Such a move would open "the door for voter confusion, political manipulation, and increased polarization."

"Ranked-choice voting is designed to cause confusion and fatigue among voters," Jones, a Republican, said in an announcement. "This type of voting system, pushed by dark money groups, could cause a drastic increase in the number of ballots being thrown out, disenfranchising Georgia voters. Georgians deserve to have the utmost faith in their elections, and those pushing Ranked-choice voting are only hindering that faith. I am proud to ban this electoral disaster and work to make Georgia's elections the safest in the nation." However, Republican Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger has [called](#) on lawmakers to eliminate runoffs.

Raffensperger did not respond to a request for comment on the proposal.

However, on Tuesday, Raffensperger said his office had referred 17 cases of people suspected of voting twice in the 2022 general election. The people suspected of double-voting cast ballots in Georgia and another state during the election, and prosecutors will decide whether to pursue charges, according to a release from Raffensperger.

"One illegal vote cast is too many," Raffensperger said in a statement. "Georgians deserve to have their voice heard fully, not have it diluted by bad actors..."

[Federal judge says DOJ presented no evidence Black Georgia voters would be hurt by shorter early voting](#)

More: [Federal judge allows quick runoffs under Georgia voting law](#)

(Fox News)

1/17/24

A [federal judge](#) in Georgia will not strike down an election law tightening registration dates and mail-in voting for runoff elections.

At the heart of the case was an election law — the Election Integrity Act — championed by state Republicans that seeks to shorten the time frame for [Georgia runoff elections](#) from nine weeks to four weeks and reduce the window for mail-in ballots.

When no candidate wins a majority in Georgia elections, the state transitions to a runoff. This unique system has forced elections to be dragged out for weeks, well after the rest of the nation's results are confirmed. Democratic opponents, joined by the [U.S. Department of Justice](#), tried to claim the stricter voting period unfairly discriminates against Black voters.

The law also closes voter registration 29 days before elections, preventing individuals from registering to vote between the first election and a hypothetical runoff...

STATE | NATION | WORLD

[Scoop: Bill Barr's law firm is adding former Trump White House lawyers Pat Cipollone and others](#)

(Axios)

1/17/24

The Torridon Group — a [law and consulting firm](#) founded by former Attorney General [William Barr](#) and former Facebook general counsel Ted Ulyot — is adding a team of new lawyers, including former White House counsel [Pat Cipollone](#) and former deputy White House counsels Pat Philbin and Kate Todd.

Driving the news: Barr told Axios the firm, based in Virginia, will add a Washington office now that it's equipped to take on "every facet of litigation, regulatory and enforcement proceedings, investigations, crisis management, and strategic counseling."

Why it matters: Barr said Torridon lawyers have the perfect mix of public and private experience for complicated, high-stakes matters. But he said it's still a "smaller boutique firm that can give individual attention at reasonable rates."

What's happening: Also joining Torridon are Tara Helfman and John Coghlan, as partners; Chase Harrington and Kyle West, as associates; plus former White House counsel Fred Fielding and former acting Drug Enforcement Administration head Tim Shea, who'll be of counsel...

[WATCH: Underwear-Clad Man Crashes Dick Morris's Live Shot on Newsmax](#)

(Mediaite)

1/17/24

Dick Morris, author and commentator, did a live shot on Newsmax on Monday with host **Rob Schmitt** and talked about something, but no one knows what he said because a man in his underwear just casually strolled through his live shot and no one ever said a word about it.

As a courtesy, Mediaite watched the video a few times to make sure we all saw what we saw exactly 13 seconds in, but also to report on what Morris said while everyone was trying to digest what happened.

It's a segment from Newsmax's [Iowa caucus](#) coverage, and Morris offered up his analysis of what an Iowa caucus victory would mean for former President **Donald Trump** and former UN Ambassador **Nikki Haley**...

[End of an era: Who comes after Kerry](#)

(Politico)

1/17/24

John Kerry has been many things as America's special presidential envoy for climate change.

Now, at age 80, he [plans to step down](#) after three years as the nation's top climate diplomat, a role he both seemed to relish and helped transform.

His successor will be hard-pressed to replicate his versatility, though experts say Kerry's tenure provides a helpful blueprint on what kind of leader is needed to fill that role given the challenges ahead.

Kerry brought star power at a time when the United States needed to rebuild trust after years of climate denialism under former President Donald Trump. He came carrying knowledge from decades of climate advocacy in the Senate and State Department, and he had clout with both diplomats and executives that helped Kerry open doors and usher in reforms and new pledges...

[Donald Trump Has Meltdown Over Nikki Haley](#)

(Newsweek)

1/17/24

Donald Trump has launched a series of social media attacks against his Republican primary rival [Nikki Haley](#) after he easily beat her in the Iowa caucus.

The former president has shared multiple attacks on Haley, who worked as U.N. ambassador in the Trump administration, on Truth Social over the space of a few hours. These attacks include sharing polls showing he is the better suited GOP candidate to beat President [Joe Biden](#) in the 2024 election, saying she wants to cut Social Security benefits and increase taxes, and accusing the former South Carolina governor of being an "establishment candidate."

He also likened her to Trump's 2016 challenger, [Hillary Clinton](#), by posting a photo that imposed Haley's face

over an image of Clinton.

The attacks come amid suggestions that Haley, and not Florida Governor [Ron DeSantis](#), who came a distant second in Iowa on Monday, [is Trump's biggest challenger in the race](#) for the 2024 Republican presidential nomination. The New Hampshire primary on January 23 is expected to be a closer race, with some polls showing Haley has [narrowed Trump's lead there to single digits](#).

In one Truth Social post, Trump attacked Haley over her speech following the Iowa caucus results, while misspelling her now unused first name Nimarata. In that speech, she said "when you look at what we're doing in New Hampshire, in South Carolina, and beyond, I can safely say tonight Iowa made this [Republican primary a two-person race](#)."...

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SOS | ELECTION NEWS

[Secretary of State announces free small business webinar](#)

More: [Secretary of State's office to host 'one-stop shop' seminar...Raffensperger hosts "one stop shop"](#)

(Valdosta Today)

1/22/24

Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger is announcing that She Leads will be hosting its first webinar of the new year "One-Stop Shop: SOS Licensing, Corporations, Securities/Charities." This free webinar will take place on Tuesday, January 30 at 6pm. Registration is free and open to all Georgians.

The Georgia Secretary of State's office is your one-stop shop for growing your small business. Corporations, limited liability companies, and limited partnerships in Georgia are formed by filing with the Corporations Division. The Licensing Division handles applying for, renewing, and printing your license. The agency also provides administrative support to 42 licensing boards overseeing various skilled trades and professions. The Securities Division regulates securities activity statewide and protects against investment fraud and promotes financial literacy. The Charities Division will help you with starting, registering, renewing, reinstating, withdrawing or amending your charitable organization.

The Division Directors of SOS Licensing, Corporation and Securities/Charities, will provide details about their division and walk you through the sos.ga.gov website for all of your small business needs...

[Ga. elections chief sets security, voting integrity as priorities](#)

(Atlanta News First)

1/18/24

As lawmakers prepare the budget for the upcoming fiscal year — the one thing they're required by law to do before the legislative session ends — Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger presented his priorities to lawmakers on Wednesday.

Raffensperger, whose office is in charge of the licensing process and running elections in Georgia, said voting and election integrity were his top priorities.

"This is a very busy year and just an awful lot of moving parts," said Raffensperger, who spoke before the joint appropriations committee at the state Capitol.

Raffensperger requested funding for a team of POST-certified law enforcement employees to solely handle claims around election fraud and election integrity. He also asked for funding to update all of the state's uninterruptable power supplies — the devices that power and secure ballot tabulators — at \$6 million.

The proposal also included an ask for \$183,529 to cover legal fees as Raffensperger's office handled claims and lawsuits about the 2020 election four years after it happened.

But what drew the most attention, and criticism, from lawmakers on the committee was Raffensperger's lack of intent to eliminate QR code readers from paper ballots. Some voters and politicians have claimed the code readers present a security risk...

[Georgia elections chief wants money for audit technology, cost unclear](#)

(The Center Square)

1/19/24

Georgia's top election official wants more tax dollars to fund technology that could "audit the ballot text of every race" without using QR codes.

"Voters deserve comprehensive audits of all races and the reassurance that the ballots are being counted correctly," Georgia Republican Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger said in a statement after he presented his proposed budget to the joint Appropriations Committee.

"We want all Georgians to have full confidence in their elections," Raffensperger added. "That is why my office has been working with multiple companies to develop an auditing tool that would read and tally, not the QR code, but the text of the ballot summary. To deploy this tool, that would be able to verify every contest on the ballot, we need the General Assembly to fund the final development and deployment."

[EDITORIAL: Too soon to shut down debate on ranked choice voting](#)

(Valdosta Daily Times)

1/22/24

In late December, Georgia Secretary of State [Brad Raffensperger](#) called upon the Legislature to consider eliminating runoffs in state races.

Eliminating runoffs seems like a great idea. The U.S. Senate runoff in 2021 cost the state's taxpayers \$10 million, voting experts told [WSAV for a 2022 article](#).

As with most things, the devil is in the details.

Georgia law requires the winner of an election to have a majority — anything more than half of the votes cast. That's easy in an election with one or two candidates, but elections with three or more have the potential for the top vote-getter to have less than half the votes.

In those cases, the law requires a second election between the top two vote-getters to ensure the winner has a majority of the votes cast. Georgia had state-level runoffs in 2018, 2020 and 2022.

The easiest way to eliminate runoffs would be to make the winner whoever has the most votes, even if it's only 30 or 40 percent of the votes cast, or maybe even less.

But easy isn't always best. Under the current system, the winner clearly represents the will of the majority of the voters who weighed in. Under a plurality system, he could be seen to represent the will of, at best, the largest minority of the voters.

Two states — [North Carolina and South Dakota](#) — use different runoff rules. A candidate can win in North Carolina if he's the top vote-getter and has at least 30% of the votes cast; in South Dakota it's the same principle, but he'd need 35% of the votes. The winner may not reflect the will of the majority, but they represent the will of a large enough minority to be able to govern, according to the legislatures of those states.

Another proposal some states are trying is [ranked choice voting](#). There are several ways this could work, but a common one is the "instant runoff." Voters rank the candidates in their preferred order: The one they like the best is 1, second best is 2, and so on down the list. If a candidate gets a majority of the first-choice votes, they win, just like the current system.

If the leader doesn't get more than half the vote, though, the bottom vote-getter is eliminated. Of the voters who chose him first, their second-choice votes are applied instead. This continues until one of the candidates has a majority of the votes.

Lt. Gov. Burt Jones and many other conservatives say ranked choice voting is a bad idea and have introduced legislation to ban it in Georgia. They say it runs contrary to the long-held ideal of "one person, one vote." On the practical side, ranked choice voting would require expensive changes to voting equipment. And it's more complicated than the current system, so voters could get confused....

[Georgia Sec. of State says 17 cases under investigation for double-voting in 2022](#)

(WSB)

1/17/24

The Georgia Secretary of State's Office said it is referring more than a dozen cases of suspected double-voting to local district attorneys.

According to the office, 17 voters in nine counties may have voted twice in the 2022 midterm elections.

They're accused of voting once in Georgia and again in another state.

The states, and the identities of those with cases under investigation, were not identified by the Secretary of State's Office.

As a result, the DA's office will now evaluate the cases and pursue indictments where and if appropriate.

"One illegal vote cast is too many," Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger said in a statement.

"Georgians deserve to have their voice heard fully, not have it diluted by bad actors."

Georgia officials said they became aware of the allegations of double voting thanks to their membership in the Electronic Registration Information Center, a multi-state network encompassing just under half of U.S. states and the District of Columbia.

The network allows election administrators to ensure accurate voter roles through the sharing of interstate data.

According to the Secretary of State's Office, ERIC is the best large-scale tool available to identify illegal voting in the U.S.

Cases of suspected double-voting involve vote records from Barrow, Chatham, Cobb, Douglas, Fannin, Forsyth, Fulton, Morgan and Tift counties...

STATE | NATION | WORLD

[Expert shows how to tamper with Georgia voting machine in security trial](#)

(AJC)

1/23/24

Huddled around a voting machine in a federal courtroom, a small crowd watched as expert witness Alex Halderman demonstrated how someone could meddle with a Georgia election within seconds.

Halderman, a University of Michigan computer scientist, changed results of a hypothetical referendum on

Sunday alcohol sales. He flipped the winner in a theoretical election between President George Washington and Benedict Arnold, the Revolutionary War general who defected to the British. He rigged the machine to print out as many ballots as he wanted.

All he needed was a pen to reach a button inside the touchscreen, a fake \$10 voter card he had programmed, or a \$100 USB device that he plugged into a cord connected to a printer, rewriting the touchscreen's code. Halderman delivered his presentation during an [election security trial](#) evaluating whether Georgia's voting system is vulnerable to manipulation or programming errors. All in-person voters in Georgia make their choices on [touchscreens that print out paper ballots](#).

Election officials countered Halderman's testimony with assurances that real-world elections in Georgia have never been hacked and security precautions prevent the possibility of interference...

[Louisiana governor signs new Congressional maps into law](#)

(The Hill)

1/23/24

Louisiana Gov. Jeff Landry (R) signed a bill Monday approving new Congressional maps that will create a second majority-Black district.

The Louisiana state legislature approved the updated Congressional maps last week which will redraw the Sixth Congressional District to be state's second majority-Black district. The district is currently represented by Rep. Garret Graves (R-La.). The state's 2nd Congressional District remained the other majority-Black district.

"Today, we began the process of necessary structural change to our election system, allowing for a cleaner and simpler final ballot, and we took the pen out of the hand of a non-elected judge and placed it in the hands of the people," Landry [said on X](#), formerly Twitter, in his post announcing the signed bill.

He also signed bills relating to the primary system in the state as well as allocating funds to certain state agencies on Monday.

The battle in Louisiana over the congressional districts have been ongoing for more than a year. Former Gov. John Bel Edwards (D) vetoed a set of maps passed by the state legislature in 2022, arguing that the proposed maps were in violation of the Voting Rights Act because there was only one majority-Black district...

[Nikki Haley sweeps Dixville Notch's primary, winning all 6 votes](#)

(AP)

1/23/24

The six registered voters of tiny Dixville Notch in New Hampshire all cast their ballots for [Nikki Haley](#) at midnight on Tuesday, giving her a clean sweep over former President [Donald Trump](#) and all the other candidates.

The resort town was the first place in the nation to vote in [the 2024 primaries](#). The voters were outnumbered more than 10-to-1 by reporters from every corner of the globe — not to mention by a pile of freshly baked chocolate chip cookies.

Dixville Notch has a tradition of first-in-the-nation voting that dates back to 1960, with the results announced just a few minutes after midnight.

With such a tiny sample of voters, the results are not typically indicative of how an election will end up. But they do provide for an early curiosity.

In some previous elections, a couple of other tiny New Hampshire towns have also voted at midnight, but this year Dixville Notch went it alone...

[Donald Trump has a big problem ahead](#)

(Politico)

1/23/24

[Donald Trump](#) has a problem no matter what happens in New Hampshire on Tuesday night: There's a whole swath of the Republican electorate and a good chunk of independents who appear firmly committed to not voting for him in November if he becomes the nominee.

It's an issue that became starkly apparent in polling ahead of the Iowa caucuses, when an [NBC News/Des Moines Register/Mediacom poll](#) of voters in that state found that fully 43 percent of Nikki Haley supporters said they would back President Joe Biden over Trump. And it's a dynamic that has been on vivid display as the campaign shifted this week to New Hampshire.

"I can't vote for Trump. He's a crook. He's too corrupt," said Scott Simeone, 64, an independent voter from Amherst, who backed Trump in 2016 and 2020. "I voted for him, and I didn't realize he's as corrupt as he is." Primary elections can create intra-party divisions that, in the moment, seem impossible to heal. In 2008, a bloc of Hillary Clinton supporters started the PUMA (Party Unity My Ass) movement as a threat to never back Barack Obama after that bruising primary. Bernie Sanders' supporters vowed to never support Clinton eight years later. In 2016, Trump himself faced pushback to his nomination all the way up to the convention floor...

[Fake Joe Biden robocall tells New Hampshire Democrats not to vote Tuesday](#)

(NBC News)

1/23/24

The New Hampshire attorney general's office says it is investigating what appears to be an "unlawful attempt" at voter suppression after NBC News reported on a robocall impersonating President Joe Biden that told recipients not to vote in Tuesday's presidential primary.

"Although the voice in the robocall sounds like the voice of President Biden, this message appears to be artificially generated based on initial indications," the attorney general's office [said in a statement](#). "These messages appear to be an unlawful attempt to disrupt the New Hampshire Presidential Primary Election and to suppress New Hampshire voters. New Hampshire voters should disregard the content of this message entirely."

The investigation comes after a prominent New Hampshire Democrat, whose personal cellphone number showed up on the caller ID screens of those receiving the call, filed a complaint.

"What a bunch of malarkey," the robocall phone message begins, echoing a favorite term Biden has uttered before..

From: [Haisty, Maggie <mhaisty@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:mhaisty@sos.ga.gov)

To: [Haisty, Maggie <mhaisty@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:mhaisty@sos.ga.gov)

[Sterling, Gabriel <gsterning@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:gsterning@sos.ga.gov)

[McGowan, Charlene <cmcgowan@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:cmcgowan@sos.ga.gov)

[Teasley, Sam <samteasley@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:samteasley@sos.ga.gov)

[Evans, Blake <bevans@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:bevans@sos.ga.gov)

[LaRoche, Zachary <zlaroche@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:zlaroche@sos.ga.gov)

[Thompson, Tori <vthompson@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:vthompson@sos.ga.gov)

Date: 1/19/2024 11:36:12 AM

Subject: Senate Ethics Meeting

Agenda:

- SB 355 Robertson, 29th (LC 56 0021) - Elections and Primaries; use of ranked-choice voting; prohibit
- SB 358 Burns, 23rd (LC 56 0053) - State Election Board; remove the Secretary of State; authorize the board to investigate

From: [Haisty, Maggie <mhaisty@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:mhaisty@sos.ga.gov)

To: [Haisty, Maggie <mhaisty@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:mhaisty@sos.ga.gov)

[Sterling, Gabriel <gstirling@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:gstirling@sos.ga.gov)

[McGowan, Charlene <cmcgowan@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:cmcgowan@sos.ga.gov)

[Teasley, Sam <samteasley@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:samteasley@sos.ga.gov)

[Evans, Blake <bevans@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:bevans@sos.ga.gov)

[LaRoche, Zachary <zlaroche@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:zlaroche@sos.ga.gov)

[Thompson, Tori <vthompson@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:vthompson@sos.ga.gov)

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From: [Haisty, Maggie <mhaisty@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:mhaisty@sos.ga.gov)

Required: [Sterling, Gabriel <gsterling@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:gsterling@sos.ga.gov)

[McGowan, Charlene <cmcgowan@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:cmcgowan@sos.ga.gov)

[Teasley, Sam <samteasley@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:samteasley@sos.ga.gov)

[Evans, Blake <bevans@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:bevans@sos.ga.gov)

[LaRoche, Zachary <zlaroche@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:zlaroche@sos.ga.gov)

[Thompson, Tori <vtthompson@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:vtthompson@sos.ga.gov)

Optional: [Jennings, Nicole <njennings@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:njennings@sos.ga.gov)

[Wilkerson, Thomas <twilkerson@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:twilkerson@sos.ga.gov)

Subject: Senate Ethics Meeting

Location: CLOB 307

When: 1/23/2024 5:00:00 PM - 6:00:00 PM

Agenda:

- SB 355 Robertson, 29th (LC 56 0021) - Elections and Primaries; use of ranked-choice voting; prohibit
- SB 358 Burns, 23rd (LC 56 0053) - State Election Board; remove the Secretary of State; authorize the board to investigate

From: [Teasley, Sam <samteasley@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:samteasley@sos.ga.gov)
To: [Haisty, Maggie <mhaisty@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:mhaisty@sos.ga.gov)
[Sterling, Gabriel <gsterling@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:gsterling@sos.ga.gov)
[McGowan, Charlene <cmcgowan@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:cmcgowan@sos.ga.gov)
[Evans, Blake <bevans@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:bevans@sos.ga.gov)
[LaRoche, Zachary <zlaroche@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:zlaroche@sos.ga.gov)
[Thompson, Tori <vtthompson@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:vtthompson@sos.ga.gov)
Date: 1/19/2024 12:01:13 PM
Subject: Re: Senate Ethics Meeting

I assume we should have someone there and prepared to speak to the 2nd bill... thoughts on the 1st?

Sam Teasley
Office of Secretary of State

From: Haisty, Maggie <mhaisty@sos.ga.gov>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 11:36 AM
To: Sterling, Gabriel <gsterling@sos.ga.gov>; McGowan, Charlene <cmcgowan@sos.ga.gov>; Teasley, Sam <samteasley@sos.ga.gov>; Evans, Blake <bevans@sos.ga.gov>; LaRoche, Zachary <zlaroche@sos.ga.gov>; Thompson, Tori <vtthompson@sos.ga.gov>
Cc: Jennings, Nicole <njennings@sos.ga.gov>; Wilkerson, Thomas <twilkerson@sos.ga.gov>
Subject: Senate Ethics Meeting

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From: [LaRoche, Zachary <zlaroche@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:zlaroche@sos.ga.gov)

To: [Thompson, Tori <vthompson@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:vthompson@sos.ga.gov)

Date: 1/22/2024 9:26:29 AM

Subject: Bills for Today

Tori,

Can you please keep track of the following bills when the Senate refers bills today?

SB 354

SB 355

SB 358

Zachary La Roche
External Affairs Coordinator
Georgia Secretary of State
Phone: 470-222-1470
zlaroche@sos.ga.gov



From: [McGowan, Charlene <cmcgowan@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:cmcgowan@sos.ga.gov)
To: [Teasley, Sam <samteasley@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:samteasley@sos.ga.gov)
Date: 1/19/2024 12:11:38 PM
Subject: Re: Senate Ethics Meeting

I can speak on the second bill.

Not sure we need to take a position on the first bill. I personally don't see why we need to ban something that we don't do anyways and isn't otherwise permissible under the elections code.

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 19, 2024, at 12:01 PM, Teasley, Sam <samteasley@sos.ga.gov> wrote:

I assume we should have someone there and prepared to speak to the 2nd bill... thoughts on the 1st?

Sam Teasley
Office of Secretary of State

From: Haisty, Maggie <mhaisty@sos.ga.gov>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 11:36 AM
To: Sterling, Gabriel <gsterling@sos.ga.gov>; McGowan, Charlene <cmcgowan@sos.ga.gov>; Teasley, Sam <samteasley@sos.ga.gov>; Evans, Blake <bevans@sos.ga.gov>; LaRoche, Zachary <zlaroche@sos.ga.gov>; Thompson, Tori <vthompson@sos.ga.gov>
Cc: Jennings, Nicole <njennings@sos.ga.gov>; Wilkerson, Thomas <twilkerson@sos.ga.gov>
Subject: Senate Ethics Meeting

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From: [Haisty, Maggie <mhaisty@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:mhaisty@sos.ga.gov)

To: [Haisty, Maggie <mhaisty@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:mhaisty@sos.ga.gov)

[Sterling, Gabriel <gstirling@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:gstirling@sos.ga.gov)

[McGowan, Charlene <cmcgowan@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:cmcgowan@sos.ga.gov)

[Teasley, Sam <samteasley@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:samteasley@sos.ga.gov)

[Evans, Blake <bevans@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:bevans@sos.ga.gov)

[LaRoche, Zachary <zlaroche@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:zlaroche@sos.ga.gov)

[Thompson, Tori <vthompson@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:vthompson@sos.ga.gov)

Date: 1/19/2024 11:36:12 AM

Subject: Senate Ethics Meeting

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- SB 358 Burns, 23rd (LC 56 0053) - State Election Board; remove the Secretary of State; authorize the board to investigate

From: [Barnes, Michael <mbarnes@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:mbarnes@sos.ga.gov)
To: [Sherrail Jarrett <sjarrett@harriscountyga.gov>](mailto:sjarrett@harriscountyga.gov)
Date: 1/24/2024 3:45:03 PM
Subject: Re: UOCAVA

No runoff for PPP.

Michael Barnes
Deputy Director - Election Systems
Georgia Secretary of State
Main: 470-312-2630
Cell: 470-316-2884



From: Sherrail Jarrett <sjarrett@harriscountyga.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2024 3:40 PM
To: Barnes, Michael <mbarnes@sos.ga.gov>
Subject: UOCAVA

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Michael,

Have I missed the Ranked Choice Ballot for the UOCAVA mail out ballots?

Sherrail Jarrett
Election Supervisor
Harris County Elections & Registrations
Office: 706-628-5210
<https://www.harriscountyga.gov/board-of-elections-registration-2/>
<https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/s/>

From: [Koth, Sara <skoth@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:skoth@sos.ga.gov)
 To: [Haisty, Maggie <mhaisty@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:mhaisty@sos.ga.gov)
 Date: 1/22/2024 6:52:24 PM
 Subject: Re: Legislative Update - Day 6

Thank you!

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From: Haisty, Maggie <mhaisty@sos.ga.gov>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 4:59:12 PM
To: Fuchs, Jordan <jfuchs@sos.ga.gov>
Cc: Sterling, Gabriel <gsterling@sos.ga.gov>; McGowan, Charlene <cmcgowan@sos.ga.gov>; Teasley, Sam <samteasley@sos.ga.gov>; Thompson, Tori <vthompson@sos.ga.gov>; LaRoche, Zachary <zlaroche@sos.ga.gov>; Sinners, Robert <RSinners@sos.ga.gov>; Hausmann, Liz <lmhausmann@sos.ga.gov>; Brooks, Dianna <dbrooks@sos.ga.gov>; Wilkerson, Thomas <twilkerson@sos.ga.gov>; Jennings, Nicole <njennings@sos.ga.gov>; Evans, Blake <bevans@sos.ga.gov>; Harris, Jesse <jharris@sos.ga.gov>; Barnes, Michael <mbarnes@sos.ga.gov>; Koth, Sara <skoth@sos.ga.gov>; Walker, Anika <amwalker@sos.ga.gov>; Fisher, Julie <jfisher@sos.ga.gov>; Zaharis, Noula <NZaharis@sos.ga.gov>; Jaffe, Wanda <wjaffe@sos.ga.gov>; Barboza, Sandra <sbarboza@sos.ga.gov>; Jones, Chris <cjones@sos.ga.gov>; Coman, Bradley <bcoman@sos.ga.gov>; Tyler-Jones, La Trenda <lajones@sos.ga.gov>; Zimmerman, Brig <jzimmerman@sos.ga.gov>; Price, Adrienne (Stacy) <aprice@sos.ga.gov>; Taylor, Natara <ntaylor@sos.ga.gov>; Woodruff, Matthew <mwoodruff@sos.ga.gov>; Tyser, Matthew <mtyser@sos.ga.gov>; Kelling, Meaghan <mkelling@sos.ga.gov>
Subject: Legislative Update - Day 6

Good afternoon Jordan,

Please see the legislative update for 1/22 below.

Upcoming Session Schedule

- Monday, January 22nd Legislative Day 6
- Tuesday, January 23rd Legislative Day 7
 - [House State & Local Gov. Subcommittee](#), 1:00 pm, CLOB 415
 - [Senate Children's and Families](#), 1:15 pm, CLOB 307
 - [House Governmental Affairs Subcommittee on Elections](#), 1:30 pm, CLOB 415
 - TBD
 - [Senate Regulated Industries](#), 4:30 pm, CAP 450
 - **HB 498:** (PLB) “**Funeral directors and embalmers; reinstatement of lapsed license; change certain provisions**” **Senate Regulated Industries** - (Rep. Danny Mathis, Republican, 149th) adds “has allowed” to the code so that someone who has let their license lapse within a ten year period may get it reinstated upon reapplication.
 - **SB 354:** (PLB) “**Cosmetologists and Barbers; persons performing certain limited responsibilities; exempt from licensure**”, (Senator Larry Walker, Republican). **Senate Hopper**. Amends chapter 10 of title 43 of the O.C.G.A relating to licensing of cosmetologists and barbers. This bill would repeal the requirement to hold a license for individuals who perform limited services such as hairstyling, with the use of mechanical tools (straighteners, flat irons, etc.), shampooing and washing, drying, and the application of oils/creams/serums/ etc.
 - [Senate Ethics](#), 5:00 pm, CLOB 307
 - TBD
- Wednesday, January 24th Legislative Day 8
 - [House Agriculture and Consumer Affairs](#), 8:00 am, CLOB 606
 - [House Appropriations Gen. Gov. Subcommittee](#), 1:00 pm, CLOB 515
 - PRESENTING – AFY 24 Budget

- [House Governmental Affairs](#), 3:00 pm, CLOB 606
 - TBD
- Thursday, January 25th Legislative Day 9
 - [Senate Ethics](#), 8:00 am, CLOB 307
 - [Senate Children & Families](#), 1:00 pm, CLOB 307
 - [Senate Regulated Industries](#), 2:00 pm, CAP 450
- Friday, January 26th Legislative Day 10

Highlights

1. New Legislation

Elections

[HB 894](#): (Elections) **Elections; prohibit bar codes, QR codes, and other machine codes on ballots printed by electronic ballot markers** (Rep. Mitchell Horner, Republican, 3rd) **House Governmental Affairs**. Changes the requirement so that bar codes, QR codes, or any other other machine coding cannot be printed on the paper ballot. (same language as HB 948)

[HR 780](#): (Elections) **Only citizens of the United States have right to vote in elections in Georgia; clarify - CA** (Rep Jesse Petra, Republican, 166th) **House Judiciary**. Changes the wording of every person that is a citizen to only individuals who are citizens.

[HB 931](#): (Elections) **“State Ethics Commission; posting or publishing on the internet the personally identifying information of judges; prohibit”** (Rep Jordan Ridley, Republican, 22nd) **Not Assigned**. Defines the terms “judge” as any elected or appointed justice, and “personally identifiable information” as phone number and address. Bans the commission from making judges’ personally identifiable information available online without written consent.

[HB 948](#): (Elections) **Elections; prohibit bar codes, QR codes, and other machine codes on ballots printed by electronic ballot markers** (Rep. Martin Momtahan, Republican, 17th) **House Governmental Affairs**. Changes the requirement so that bar codes, QR codes, or any other other machine coding cannot be printed on the paper ballot. (same language as HB 894)

[HB 949](#): (Elections) **“Elections; voting devices shall not utilize any form of wireless network cards or wireless technology; provide”** (Rep. Martian Momtahan, Republican, 17th). **Not Assigned**. Bans voting machines in any election from using any wireless technology or cards. If the machine has such technology, the cards will be removed before voting.

[SB 338](#): (Elections / Redistricting) **“Board of Education of Cobb County; education districts; change the description”**, (Senator Ed Setzler, Republican). **Senate Health and Human Services**. Cobb County School Board redistricting.

[SB 355](#): (Elections) **“Elections and Primaries; use of ranked-choice voting; prohibit”**, (Senator Randy Robertson, Republican, 29th). **Senate Hopper**. Amends chapter 2 of title 21 of the O.C.G.A relating to elections and primaries. This bill would prohibit “rank-choice voting” and define this practice in code.

[SB 358](#): (Elections) **“State Election Board; remove the Secretary of State; authorize the board to investigate”**, (Senator Max Burns, Republican). **Senate Hopper**. This proposed bill would amend chapter 2 of title 21 of the O.C.G.A relating to the State Election Board to remove the Secretary of State from the board entirely and authorize the board to investigate the Secretary of State and require total compliance with said investigation.

PLB

HB 832: (PLB) “**Contractors; eligibility for licensure without examination; change certain provisions**” (Rep. Alan Powell, Republican, 33rd) **House Governmental Affairs** Removes references to a code section exempting applicants from examination requirements. Strikes references to acquiring a license as a qualifying agent for a business. Strikes reference to applying for license as a qualifying agent and having to show that they have completed a certain # of projects. This is broadly clean-up language (removing duplicate language)

HB 880: (PLB) “**Professions and businesses; military spouses to use an existing license in good standing from another state; allow**” (Rep. Bethany Ballard, Republican, 147th) **House Regulated Industries Committee** The spouse of a service member, while the service member is stationed in Georgia, may practice in their profession without being licensed when the spouse holds a license to practice issued by another State, that license is in good standing, and the spouse is hired. The in-state employer must verify that the spouse maintains the out-of-state license. The relevant PLB may investigate any person exempted under this code section.

SB 325: (PLB) “**Dispensing Opticians; employee of a licensed physician or optometrist who is under the direct or real-time supervision of a licensed optician; exempt from licensure**”, (Senator Sheikh Rahman, Democrat). (HHS). **Senate Health and Human Services**. This bill would remove the license requirement for employees of optometrists or physicians provided they are under the direct or real-time supervision of a licensed optometrist.

SB 354: (PLB) “**Cosmetologists and Barbers; persons performing certain limited responsibilities; exempt from licensure**”, (Senator Larry Walker, Republican). **Senate Hopper**. Amends chapter 10 of title 43 of the O.C.G.A relating to licensing of cosmetologists and barbers. This bill would repeal the requirement to hold a license for individuals who perform limited services such as hairstyling, with the use of mechanical tools (straighteners, flat irons, etc.), shampooing and washing, drying, and the application of oils/creams/serums/ etc.

Securities/ Charities/ Cemeteries

HB 911: (Cemeteries) “**Cemetery and funeral services; additional time under certain circumstances for purchasers of burial lots; provide**”, (Representative Sandra Scott, Democrat). (Judiciary). **House Second Readers**. This proposed bill would increase the amount of time allotted under additional circumstances to purchasers of burial lots, burial rights, burial merchandise, and burial services to pursue a civil cause of action against sellers that violate certain laws.

SOS Office and Attached Agencies

SB 324: (SOS Office) “**State Printing and Documents; a victim centered address confidentiality program; provide**” **Senate Children and Families** (Sen Kim Jackson, Dem, 41st) Full summary attached.

SB 350: (Cannabis) “**Prohibit sale of consumable hemp to those under the age of 21**”, (Senator Kay Kirkpatrick, Republican). **Senate Read and Referred**. This proposed bill would amend chapter 12 of title 16 O.C.G.A to prohibit the sale of consumable hemp products to anyone under the age of 21. This bill would provide penalties for violation and charge any individual who violates this code shall be charged with a misdemeanor.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you,

Maggie Haisty
Legislative Director
Georgia Secretary of State
Phone: 404-805-8528
mhaisty@sos.ga.gov



From: [LaRoche, Zachary <zlaroche@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:zlaroche@sos.ga.gov)
To: [Jennings, Nicole <njennings@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:njennings@sos.ga.gov)
Date: 1/29/2024 10:11:32 AM
Subject: FW: 1/26/24 Hopper

As a reminder,

Please track the referring of these bills and SB 355 and 358

From: LaRoche, Zachary
Sent: Friday, January 26, 2024 3:40 PM
To: Teasley, Sam <samteasley@sos.ga.gov>
Cc: Haisty, Maggie <mhaisty@sos.ga.gov>; Thompson, Tori <vthompson@sos.ga.gov>; Jennings, Nicole <njennings@sos.ga.gov>
Subject: 1/26/24 Hopper

Good morning,

Please find the following attached –

HB 1050 – Relating to professional counselors, social workers, marriage and family therapists and to change education requirements, change statutory construction
SB 410 – Relating to the licensing of Veterinarians generally, allowing for out-of-state veterinarians to perform sanitation tasks, to provide for temporary licenses for out-of-state veterinarians
SB 411 – Giving voters with children under the age of 5 preferential treatment in line
SB 412 – Raising fines on fraudulent charities.

Zachary La Roche
External Affairs Coordinator
Georgia Secretary of State
Phone: 470-222-1470
zlaroche@sos.ga.gov



From: [LaRoche, Zachary <zlaroche@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:zlaroche@sos.ga.gov)

To: [Haisty, Maggie <mhaisty@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:mhaisty@sos.ga.gov)

Date: 1/29/2024 9:05:52 AM

Subject: 1/29/2024 Items for Today

Good morning,

Here are some items of note for today that we should be aware of:

HB 976 – General Calendar in the House – ballots used in optical scan voting systems shall use paper with a visible watermark security feature.

SB 355 – First Reader in House

SB 358 – First Reader in House

HB 455 – Senate Rules Calendar – Professions and Business, professional programs to address career fatigue and wellness

SB 354 – Cosmetologists and Barbers, persons performing certain limited responsibilities.

Just

Zachary La Roche
External Affairs Coordinator
Georgia Secretary of State
Phone: 470-222-1470
zlaroche@sos.ga.gov



From: [Thompson, Tori <vthompson@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:vthompson@sos.ga.gov)
To: [LaRoche, Zachary <zlaroche@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:zlaroche@sos.ga.gov)
Date: 1/22/2024 10:41:25 AM
Subject: RE: Bills for Today

Perhaps

Tori Thompson
Government Affairs Coordinator
Georgia Secretary of State
Phone: 470-618-3876
vthompson@sos.ga.gov



From: [LaRoche, Zachary <zlaroche@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:zlaroche@sos.ga.gov)
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 9:26 AM
To: [Thompson, Tori <vthompson@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:vthompson@sos.ga.gov)
Subject: Bills for Today

Tori,

Can you please keep track of the following bills when the Senate refers bills today?

SB 354
SB 355
SB 358

Zachary La Roche
External Affairs Coordinator
Georgia Secretary of State
Phone: 470-222-1470
zlaroche@sos.ga.gov





Office of the Secretary of State

Brad Raffensperger
SECRETARY OF STATE

Charlene McGowan
GENERAL COUNSEL

January 9, 2024

Mr. John G. Malcolm
Vice President, Institute for Constitutional Government
The Heritage Foundation
john.malcolm@heritage.org

Dear Mr. Malcolm,

Please accept this as a follow-up to my letter of August 18, 2023, to provide you with updated information regarding Georgia's list maintenance activities that were completed in 2023.

As previously noted, our office has been working diligently to fill any information gaps caused by states leaving ERIC by entering into bilateral agreements with other states to share voter registration information. Georgia has secured registration information sharing agreements with our neighboring states of Florida, Alabama, and South Carolina, as well as Virginia.

In addition to collecting voter registration information through Georgia's membership in ERIC and state-to-state agreements, our office has been working with the Georgia Department of Driver Services to develop new tools to identify possible voters who have moved out of state. Through this collaboration with DDS, our office is now able to get information indicating when a Georgia voter has canceled their Georgia driver's license to get a license in another state.

In December 2023, we used this data to send 66,711 notices to voters with Active status on voter rolls informing them that they needed to cancel their Georgia voter registration if they have moved. The records will be moved to Inactive status if they do not respond to the notice or have other activity. This list maintenance activity, combined with our other cross-state efforts to identify when people move out of Georgia, means that Georgia has received cross-state data for list maintenance from all other 49 states plus the District of Columbia.

214 State Capitol • Atlanta, Georgia • 30334

Mr. John G. Malcolm

January 9, 2024

Page 2 of 2

Below is a summary of all list maintenance mailings Georgia conducted in 2023:

2023 Mailing	Quantity
NCOA (National Change of Address) Out of County (ERIC provided)	84,523
NCOA Within County (ERIC provided)	127,904
NCOA Out of State (ERIC provided)	100,685
ERIC Cross State Mailing	82,077
ERIC In State Updates Mailing	37,285
DDS GA Driver's License Cancellation	66,711
No Contact notice to voters without activity for 5 calendar years	183,584
Cancellation notice to Inactive voters without activity for 2 federal general elections	191,473
TOTALS	874,242

The extensive list maintenance measures that Georgia conducted throughout 2023 are unmatched throughout the country. We have every confidence that Georgia has the cleanest state list of active registered voters as we enter the 2024 election cycle.

We appreciate your consideration of this supplemental information when assessing Georgia's election integrity measures for the Election Integrity Scorecard. Please feel free to reach out should you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Charlene McGowan

General Counsel

cc: Jack Fitzhenry (jack.fitzhenry@heritage.org)



Office of the Secretary of State

Brad Raffensperger
SECRETARY OF STATE

Charlene McGowan
GENERAL COUNSEL

April 18, 2024

Mr. John G. Malcolm
Vice President, Institute for Constitutional Government
The Heritage Foundation
john.malcolm@heritage.org

Dear Mr. Malcolm,

Please accept this as a follow-up to my letter of August 18, 2023, to provide you with updated information regarding Georgia's list maintenance activities completed in 2023.

As previously noted, our office has been working diligently to fill any information gaps caused by states leaving ERIC by entering into bilateral agreements with other states to share voter registration information. Georgia has secured registration information sharing agreements with our neighboring states of Florida, Alabama, and South Carolina, as well as Virginia.

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Mr. John G. Malcolm

April 18, 2024

Page 2 of 2

Below is a summary of all list maintenance mailings Georgia conducted in 2023:

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NCOA Out of State (ERIC provided)	100,685
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TOTALS	874,242

The extensive list maintenance measures that Georgia conducted throughout 2023 are unmatched throughout the country. We have every confidence that Georgia has the cleanest state list of active registered voters as we enter the 2024 election cycle.

We appreciate your consideration of this supplemental information when assessing Georgia's election integrity measures for the Election Integrity Scorecard.

Sincerely,

Charlene McGowan

General Counsel

cc: Jack Fitzhenry (jack.fitzhenry@heritage.org)

The Heritage Foundation.



Katie Samalis Aldrich

Program Coordinator,

Edwin Meese III Center for Legal and Judicial Studies

Institute for Constitutional Government

The Heritage Foundation

4 Massachusetts Avenue, NE

Washington, DC 20002

202 608 6181

heritage.org

From: [McGowan, Charlene <cmcgowan@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:cmcgowan@sos.ga.gov)

To: [Fuchs, Jordan <jfuchs@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:jfuchs@sos.ga.gov)
[Sterling, Gabriel <gsterling@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:gsterling@sos.ga.gov)
[Raffensperger, Brad <brad@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:brad@sos.ga.gov)
[Evans, Blake <bevans@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:bevans@sos.ga.gov)

Date: 1/9/2024 8:55:44 AM

Subject: FW: The Heritage Foundation's Election Integrity Scorecard Update Notice and Information Request

Attachments: [Ltr to Heritage Foundation 1.9.24.pdf](#)

FYI.

From: McGowan, Charlene
Sent: Tuesday, January 9, 2024 8:55 AM
To: Malcolm, John <John.Malcolm@heritage.org>
Cc: Fitzhenry, Jack <Jack.fitzhenry@heritage.org>
Subject: RE: The Heritage Foundation's Election Integrity Scorecard Update Notice and Information Request

John,

reach out should you need further information or documentation.

Sincerely,
Charlene

Charlene S. McGowan

General Counsel
Georgia Secretary of State
Direct: 470-690-0403
Mobile: 770-417-0755
cmcgowan@sos.ga.gov



From: Malcolm, John <John.Malcolm@heritage.org>
Sent: Friday, August 18, 2023 5:08 PM
To: McGowan, Charlene <cmcgowan@sos.ga.gov>
Cc: Fitzhenry, Jack <Jack.fitzhenry@heritage.org>
Subject: Re: The Heritage Foundation's Election Integrity Scorecard Update Notice and Information Request

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Thank you, Charlene!

John Malcolm

Vice President, Institute for Constitutional Government, Director of the Edwin Meese III Center for Legal and Judicial Studies, and Ed Gilbertson and Sherry Lindberg Gilbertson Senior Legal Fellow
Institute for Constitutional Government

The Heritage Foundation
4 Massachusetts Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20002
202 608 6273
heritage.org

From: McGowan, Charlene <cmcgowan@sos.ga.gov>
Sent: Friday, August 18, 2023 5:00 PM
To: Malcolm, John <John.Malcolm@heritage.org>
Cc: Fitzhenry, Jack <Jack.fitzhenry@heritage.org>
Subject: FW: The Heritage Foundation's Election Integrity Scorecard Update Notice and Information Request

Dear Mr. Malcolm,

Мы ценим возможность предоставить обратную связь в прилагаемом письме.
We appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback in the attached letter.

Please feel free to reach out to me to discuss any of these issues further.

Sincerely,
Charlene

Charlene S. McGowan

General Counsel
Georgia Secretary of State
Direct: 470-690-0403
Mobile: 770-417-0755
cmcgowan@sos.ga.gov



From: Heckman, Caroline <Caroline.Heckman@heritage.org> **On Behalf Of** Malcolm, John
Sent: Tuesday, August 1, 2023 5:22 PM
To: SOS Contact <soscontact@sos.ga.gov>
Subject: The Heritage Foundation's Election Integrity Scorecard Update Notice and Information Request

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Secretary Raffensperger:

I hope that you are well.

As you can see from the attached letter, we are seeking your assistance to verify information about your [Election Integrity Scorecard](#). I am sure you will agree that having accurate information on this vital subject is of the utmost importance and in

Thank you in advance for your time and attention to this matter.

Kind regards,



John

John Malcolm

Vice President, Institute for Constitutional Government, Director of the Edwin Meese III Center for Legal and Judicial Studies, and Ed Gilbertson and Sherry Lindberg Gilbertson Senior Legal Fellow
Institute for Constitutional Government

The Heritage Foundation
204 Massachusetts Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20002
202 608 6273
[heritage.org](https://www.heritage.org)

From: [Fuchs, Jordan <jfuchs@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:jfuchs@sos.ga.gov)
To: [Brooks, Dianna <dbrooks@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:dbrooks@sos.ga.gov)
[Raffensperger, Brad <brad@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:brad@sos.ga.gov)
Date: 2/1/2024 12:35:58 PM
Subject: Fwd: FINAL DETAILS: Heritage, Honest Election Project, and Public Interest Legal Foundation Secretaries of State Conference | February 5-6, 2023

Please add this to the calendar:

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: SOS Contact <soscontact@sos.ga.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, January 30, 2024 2:55 PM
To: Fuchs, Jordan <jfuchs@sos.ga.gov>
Cc: Raffensperger, Brad <brad@sos.ga.gov>; Brooks, Dianna <dbrooks@sos.ga.gov>; Thompson, Tori <vtthompson@sos.ga.gov>
Subject: FW: FINAL DETAILS: Heritage, Honest Election Project, and Public Interest Legal Foundation Secretaries of State Conference | February 5-6, 2023

From: Samalis, Katie <Katie.Samalis@heritage.org>
Sent: Tuesday, January 30, 2024 2:42 PM
Subject: FINAL DETAILS: Heritage, Honest Election Project, and Public Interest Legal Foundation Secretaries of State Conference | February 5-6, 2023
Importance: High

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.



The Heritage Foundation
208 Massachusetts Ave. NE
Washington, D.C 20002
February 5-6, 2024

Dear Secretaries of State Conference Attendees:

We look forward to hosting you next week in Washington, D.C. Please review the details provided below in advance of the meeting. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me via email at katie.samalis@heritage.org or at (202) 608-6181.



• **Conference Location.** All sessions for the conference will be held at our headquarters located at 208 Massachusetts Ave. NE, Washington, DC 20002.

From: [ORR Administration <openrecords@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:openrecords@sos.ga.gov)
To: [Addison Scherler <addison@thefga.org>](mailto:addison@thefga.org)
Date: 3/6/2024 5:01:43 PM
Subject: RE: OPEN RECORDS REQUEST

Good afternoon,

The expected production date for these records has been updated to 3/8/2024.

Best,

Open Records Staff

From: ORR Administration <openrecords@sos.ga.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 3:20 PM
To: Addison Scherler <addison@thefga.org>
Subject: RE: OPEN RECORDS REQUEST

Good afternoon,

Our office is diligently working to fulfill this request, and we require additional time for production. We have updated the production date to 3/7/2024. Thank you for your patience and understanding. A payment link will be sent along with responsive records.

Best,

Open Records Staff

From: Addison Scherler <addison@thefga.org>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 12:00 PM
To: ORR Administration <openrecords@sos.ga.gov>
Subject: Re: OPEN RECORDS REQUEST

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

Just wanted to follow up to see how you prefer I process my payment?

Thanks,

Addison Scherler
Data Investigator

Foundation for Government Accountability
office: 239.244.8808 ext. 179
cell: [REDACTED]
TheFGA.org

From: Addison Scherler <addison@thefga.org>
Date: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 at 6:09 PM
To: ORR Administration <openrecords@sos.ga.gov>
Subject: Re: OPEN RECORDS REQUEST

Hello,

I accept these charges. Please let me know where to send the payment.

3/14/2024

GA-SOS-24-0195-A-000062

Thank you,

Addison Scherler
Data Investigator

Foundation for Government Accountability

office: 239.244.8808 ext. 179

cell: [REDACTED]

TheFGA.org

From: ORR Administration <openrecords@sos.ga.gov>

Date: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 at 2:12 PM

To: Addison Scherler <addison@thefga.org>

Subject: RE: OPEN RECORDS REQUEST

CAUTION: -External Sender-

Good afternoon,

With the updated parameters, this request generated 547 responsive records. We can provide these by 2/28 /2024, and this request will incur a cost of \$209.75. Please notify us within three business days if you accept these charges.

Best,

Open Records Staff

From: Addison Scherler <addison@thefga.org>

Sent: Wednesday, January 10, 2024 1:52 PM

To: ORR Administration <openrecords@sos.ga.gov>

Subject: Re: OPEN RECORDS REQUEST

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

Thank you for the update on my request. How will the number of documents, cost, and estimated date respond... documents.

Thank you,

Addison Scherler
Data Investigator

Foundation for Government Accountability

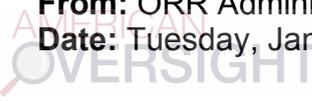
office: 239.244.8808 ext. 179

cell: [REDACTED]

TheFGA.org

From: ORR Administration <openrecords@sos.ga.gov>

Date: Tuesday, January 9, 2024 at 3:06 PM



To: Addison Scherler <addison@thefga.org>
Subject: RE: OPEN RECORDS REQUEST

CAUTION: -External Sender-

Good afternoon,

This search generated 5,478 responsive records. We can provide these by 3/5/2024 and this request will incur a cost of \$1,141.25. Please notify us within three business days if you accept these charges and we will begin processing this request.

Best,

Open Records Staff

From: Addison Scherler <addison@thefga.org>
Sent: Friday, January 5, 2024 10:35 AM
To: ORR Administration <openrecords@sos.ga.gov>
Subject: Re: OPEN RECORDS REQUEST

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

Thank you for sending over this information. While the membership agreement mentions the one-time membership fee of \$25,000, I would still like to receive information on the additional costs that are required on an annual basis. According to the document you sent me, Article II Section 5 states:

Article II Section 5 states: "The Dues Schedule may be amended, modified, or substituted by a vote of the Membership..."

Article II Section 5 states: "The Dues Schedule may be amended, modified, or substituted by a vote of the Membership..."

Please let me know if you need additional information and I will try my best to specify further.

Thanks,

Addison Scherler
Data Investigator

Foundation for Government Accountability
office: 239.244.8808 ext. 179
cell: [REDACTED]
TheFGA.org

From: ORR Administration <openrecords@sos.ga.gov>
Date: Thursday, January 4, 2024 at 2:39 PM
To: Addison Scherler <addison@thefga.org>
Subject: RE: OPEN RECORDS REQUEST

CAUTION: -External Sender-

Good afternoon,

Please see the attached record for part (1) of your request. For part (2) of your request, we are unable to provide responsive records due to the volume of search hits. If you are able to provide additional search GA-SOS-24-0195-A-000064



Open Records Staff

From: [ORR Administration <openrecords@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:openrecords@sos.ga.gov)

To: [ORR Administration <openrecords@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:openrecords@sos.ga.gov)

Date: 3/6/2024 5:00:36 PM

Subject: RE: OPEN RECORDS REQUEST

Good afternoon,

The expected production date for these records has been updated to 3/8/2024.

Best,

Open Records Staff

From: ORR Administration <openrecords@sos.ga.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 3:20 PM

To: Addison Scherler <addison@thefga.org>

Subject: RE: OPEN RECORDS REQUEST

Good afternoon,

Our office is diligently working to fulfill this request, and we require additional time for production. We have updated the production date to 3/7/2024. Thank you for your patience and understanding. A payment link will be sent along with responsive records.

Best,

Open Records Staff

From: Addison Scherler <addison@thefga.org>

Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 12:00 PM

To: ORR Administration <openrecords@sos.ga.gov>

Subject: Re: OPEN RECORDS REQUEST

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

Just wanted to follow up to see how you prefer I process my payment?

Thanks,

Addison Scherler

Data Investigator

Foundation for Government Accountability

office: 239.244.8808 ext. 179

cell: [REDACTED]

TheFGA.org

From: Addison Scherler <addison@thefga.org>

Date: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 at 6:09 PM

To: ORR Administration <openrecords@sos.ga.gov>

Subject: Re: OPEN RECORDS REQUEST

Hello,

I accept these charges. Please let me know where to send the payment.

3/14/2024

GA-SOS-24-0195-A-000067

Thank you,

Addison Scherler
Data Investigator

Foundation for Government Accountability

office: 239.244.8808 ext. 179

cell: [REDACTED]

TheFGA.org

From: ORR Administration <openrecords@sos.ga.gov>

Date: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 at 2:12 PM

To: Addison Scherler <addison@thefga.org>

Subject: RE: OPEN RECORDS REQUEST

CAUTION: -External Sender-

Good afternoon,

With the updated parameters, this request generated 547 responsive records. We can provide these by 2/28 /2024, and this request will incur a cost of \$209.75. Please notify us within three business days if you accept these charges.

Best,

Open Records Staff

From: Addison Scherler <addison@thefga.org>

Sent: Wednesday, January 10, 2024 1:52 PM

To: ORR Administration <openrecords@sos.ga.gov>

Subject: Re: OPEN RECORDS REQUEST

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

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Thank you,

Addison Scherler
Data Investigator

Foundation for Government Accountability

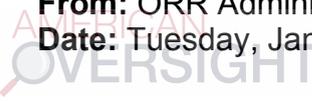
office: 239.244.8808 ext. 179

cell: [REDACTED]

TheFGA.org

From: ORR Administration <openrecords@sos.ga.gov>

Date: Tuesday, January 9, 2024 at 3:06 PM



To: Addison Scherler <addison@thefga.org>
Subject: RE: OPEN RECORDS REQUEST

CAUTION: -External Sender-

Good afternoon,

This search generated 5,478 responsive records. We can provide these by 3/5/2024 and this request will incur a cost of \$1,141.25. Please notify us within three business days if you accept these charges and we will begin processing this request.

Best,

Open Records Staff

From: Addison Scherler <addison@thefga.org>
Sent: Friday, January 5, 2024 10:35 AM
To: ORR Administration <openrecords@sos.ga.gov>
Subject: Re: OPEN RECORDS REQUEST

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

Thank you for sending over this information. While the membership agreement mentions the one-time membership fee of \$25,000, I would still like to receive information on the additional costs that are required on an annual basis. According to the document you sent me, Article II Section 5 states:

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Please let me know if you need additional information and I will try my best to specify further.

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Addison Scherler
Data Investigator

Foundation for Government Accountability
office: 239.244.8808 ext. 179
cell: [REDACTED]
TheFGA.org

From: ORR Administration <openrecords@sos.ga.gov>
Date: Thursday, January 4, 2024 at 2:39 PM
To: Addison Scherler <addison@thefga.org>
Subject: RE: OPEN RECORDS REQUEST

CAUTION: -External Sender-

Good afternoon,

Please see the attached record for part (1) of your request. For part (2) of your request, we are unable to provide responsive records due to the volume of search hits. If you are able to provide additional search criteria, please contact us. GA-SOS-24-0195-A-000069



Open Records Staff

We are also delighted to announce the continuation of our **ALEC Policy Academies**, spanning across all policy areas in 2024. If you're interested in participating, please fill out the academy interest form available [here](#).

We look forward to seeing you this year and, as always, we are happy to help with any questions!



Courtney Cook
Vice President, Events

P.S. For those interested in exhibiting, sponsoring, or seeking more information, please reach out to us via email at Meetings@alec.org.

Donate

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Our mailing address is:

American Legislative Exchange Council

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From: [Hassinger, Mike <mhassinger@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:mhassinger@sos.ga.gov)

To: Fred.Lucas@heritage.org

Date: 2/9/2024 2:20:08 PM

Subject: FW: Inquiry on voter data and jurisdiction

on NCOA data, within the requirements of state and federal law. Georgia law says that all persons whose names appear on the list of electors shall be allowed to deposit their ballots according to law at the precinct in which they are registered. None of the information provided by Mr. Davis shows evidence of what he

Mike Hassinger
PIO - Elections
(O) 470-707-6874

From: Lucas, Fred <Fred.Lucas@heritage.org>
Sent: Friday, February 9, 2024 9:07 AM
To: [sospressooffice <sospressooffice@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:sospressooffice@sos.ga.gov)
Cc: Schaffer, Ari <aschaffer@sos.ga.gov>
Subject: Inquiry on voter data and jurisdiction

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello.
I am writing inquiry about an email sent May 10, 2021 from Mark Davis of Data Productions, who did work for the Trump campaign's post-2020 election challenge. The letter asserted that his analysis of state voting data and U.S. Postal Service data. He stated he confirmed out of those that 10,372 voters had voted outside their jurisdiction where they live. He also sent 34,869 records that he asked the Secretary of State's office to review for residency issues. My question: Has the Secretary of State's office reviewed the data he sent? Is it legitimate? Have you tried to independently verify?

I would appreciate any response by 4 p.m. today.

Not to go on for too long. But for context, we wanted to check on this. There is not even a claim that anyone voted in the wrong jurisdiction, and this voted in the correct jurisdiction. So, it appears likely the absentee ballot applications or ballots were just forwarded from someone's address in one voting precinct to another voting precinct. So, in theory, it might have the potential to have more impact on a county race than any statewide race. Further, it's not clear that all of those votes would have gone to one candidate over another. That said, under Georgia law, knowingly doing this could carry up to 10 years in prison, or \$100,000 fine. So, if the information from Davis is correct, these would be illegal votes.

Fred Lucas
The Daily Signal
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Fred Lucas

Chief News Correspondent and Manager, Investigative Reporting Project, The Daily Signal

The Daily Signal

The Heritage Foundation

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From: [McGowan, Charlene <cmcgowan@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:cmcgowan@sos.ga.gov)

To: [Evans, Blake <bevans@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:bevans@sos.ga.gov)

Date: 1/8/2024 9:16:27 PM

Subject: Supplemental Letter to Heritage

Attachments: [Supplemental Letter to Heritage.docx](#)

Anything else we should say?

Charlene S. McGowan

General Counsel
Georgia Secretary of State
Direct: 470-690-0403
Mobile: 770-417-0755
cmcgowan@sos.ga.gov



From: [Hassinger, Mike <mhassinger@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:mhassinger@sos.ga.gov)
To: [Ellis, Steven <sellis@sos.ga.gov>](mailto:sellis@sos.ga.gov)
Date: 2/9/2024 3:20:11 PM
Subject: FW: Inquiry on voter data and jurisdiction

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PIO - Elections
(O) 470-707-6874

From: Hassinger, Mike <mhassinger@sos.ga.gov>
Sent: Friday, February 9, 2024 2:20 PM
To: Lucas, Fred <Fred.Lucas@heritage.org>
Cc: Sinners, Robert <RSinners@sos.ga.gov>
Subject: FW: Inquiry on voter data and jurisdiction

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