



TO: Interested Parties  
 FROM: Lauren Groh-Wargo, Senior Advisor of Fair Fight  
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 RE: Georgia's Battleground Status  
 DATE: July 9, 2020

In Georgia's Democratic primary, held exactly one month ago yesterday, **Democrats outnumbered Republicans by a staggering quarter-million votes, 1,283,836 to 1,033,308**. 437,003 of these Democratic primary voters *had never voted in a primary before*.\*\*

Democrats cast more ballots by mail (52.2% to Republicans' 45.6%), more ballots early in-person (50.8%-48.4%), and more ballots on Election Day (52.8%-43.4%).

**Georgia Democrats set a record for primary election turnout -- surging past the previous (2008) record of 1,060,851, a 21 percent increase** over a Super Tuesday election in which two historic candidates were on the primary ballot. In addition, **more Black Georgians voted in the 2020 primary than in the 2008 one with Barack Obama on the ballot**. Georgia was one of only NINE primary states to see an increase over 2008 turnout, and it had the third-highest increase. The average primary state saw a 15 percent *reduction* in Democratic primary turnout from 2008.\*

Georgia also saw a **68 percent increase in Democratic primary turnout from 2016** -- despite the primary being held months after the presidential nominee had been determined, instead of on Super Tuesday, as was the case in 2016. This was the **second-highest increase in the country**; only Virginia, with a 69 percent increase over 2016, compared. The average primary state saw only an 11 percent increase.\*

**Among 2020 primary voters who did not vote in 2018, Democrats outvoted Republicans 164,196 to 115,477, a 48,719 voter edge**. This number is nearly Stacey Abrams' entire vote 2018 deficit (<55,000) from 2018.

In the higher-turnout November election, opportunities to turn out new voters could easily provide the margin of Democratic victory. **Georgia has more than 750,000**

	Increase 16P to 20		Increase 08P to 20
VA	68.89%	VA	34.44%
<b>GA</b>	<b>67.75%</b>	AZ	28.90%
SC	45.12%	<b>GA</b>	<b>21.02%</b>
TX	44.57%	MD	15.97%
TN	38.48%	CA	11.20%
AZ	25.97%	MA	11.02%
KY	19.69%	NH	3.82%
MT	18.67%	VT	1.82%
MS	18.63%	SC	1.09%
NH	17.96%	FL	-0.64%
VT	16.66%	OR	-3.14%
NC	15.72%	DC	-10.73%
MA	14.54%	AL	-15.75%
AL	13.55%	NC	-16.33%
DC	12.49%	WI	-16.90%
MD	11.08%	TN	-17.76%
CA	8.92%	MT	-17.79%
MO	5.55%	MO	-19.67%
AR	3.67%	KY	-22.47%
FL	1.73%	IL	-23.16%
SD	-0.65%	AR	-27.09%
OR	-3.57%	OK	-27.14%
PA	-6.64%	TX	-27.80%
WI	-8.18%	PA	-32.73%
OK	-9.49%	MS	-37.93%
RI	-16.01%	RI	-44.84%
IL	-23.81%	SD	-46.15%
IN	-24.99%	WV	-49.52%
WV	-25.09%	OH	-59.95%
OH	-27.96%	IN	-62.52%
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>10.77%</b>	<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>-15.02%</b>

**new voters** who were not registered and eligible to vote for Stacey Abrams in 2018 but who are now registered and eligible to vote for Vice President Biden, Jon Ossoff, and Reverend Raphael Warnock in 2020. *49 percent of these voters are voters of color and 45 percent are under the age of 30* -- two demographic groups that overwhelmingly support Democrats. **Among Georgians who cast their first vote ever** in the state during the June 9 primary, **Democrats won 59.3 percent compared to Republicans' 35.9 percent.**\*\*

**Black Georgians made up 33 percent of the 2020 primary electorate**, with 96 percent of Black voters choosing Democratic ballots. That 33 percent proportion is a significant bump from the 30 percent that is typical in recent elections. Despite punditry suggesting that Black voters did not trust vote by mail, **vote by mail was the most popular voting method among Black Georgians**, with 42.0 percent of total Black primary voters choosing to vote by mail and being able to successfully do so despite malfeasance and deliberate indifference from the Secretary of State.

**White voters broke much more Democratic than usual**, with 28.1 percent of white voters voting Democratic ballots, larger than the 25 percent proportion that Abrams won in 2018 (which was the highest level of support in a generation). If Democrats win the same percentage of white voters in November, or close to it, they will almost certainly win. Georgia's Democratic strength is anchored by **the largest proportion of Black voters of any battleground state** in the country.

In the key competitive Congressional races of **CD-6 and CD-7, Democrats earned 26,000 and 20,000 more votes than Republicans, respectively.** Both districts are a microcosm of demographic and political change in the state. Thus, Democrats are poised to re-elect Lucy McBath, and Carolyn Bourdeaux (D), who lost the closest House race in the country in 2018, is poised to pick up the much-changed CD-7. In addition, **Democrats won more primary votes in 19 state house seats currently controlled by Republicans**; a 16-seat gain in November - building on the 14 won in 2018 on the Abrams-led ticket - will hand control of the Georgia House to Democrats.

Make no mistake: Democratic turnout in the June 9 primary happened in spite of the Georgia Secretary of State and not because of him. His malfeasance and deliberate indifference caused voters to fail to receive their vote by mail ballots and to walk away from long lines. **Had Georgia's Secretary of State not run a "Complete Meltdown" of an election, Democratic turnout would have been even higher.** Fair Fight and other groups are demanding change so that every eligible voter is able to cast their ballot and have it counted in November without burden.

Several factors went into the exceptionally high Democratic turnout -- and those factors will only increase in impact going into November.

First and foremost, **Georgia is the epicenter of the challenges facing our country** -- from a broken criminal justice system to a suppressive electoral system to failed leadership from Donald Trump and Brian Kemp on COVID-19. Georgians who suffered through these challenges are eager to march from the streets to the ballot box. Again, 437,003 Georgia Democratic primary voters had never voted in a primary before, but they saw voting as a way to take action and bring change. Notably, *Georgia Democrats voted in record numbers months after the Democratic nominee for president was determined*, because it was one step they could take to express their anger and demand change.

Second, while the State failed to take many common sense steps to promote vote by mail, a number of small steps were taken to make voting more accessible. Ballot applications were sent to all active voters in the state and drop boxes were permitted but not required for use by counties. **In November, it is likely that campaigns or third-party groups will pick up the tab for mailing ballot applications to voters**, but this action will have a positive impact on Democratic turnout, because the junk-mail-looking forms from the Secretary of State will be replaced by professional mailings. Third, intense media coverage of COVID-19 and vote by mail from in-state and national outlets promoted the voting method. Through word-of-mouth, driven by groups like Fair Fight Action, voters educated one

another on how to vote safely from home. Lastly, **Georgians voted because we asked.** When Fair Fight Action urged voters to vote by mail by sending 900,000 texts (including instructional videos), voters responded in record numbers.

Hard data point to an unmistakable determination that Georgia is a battleground state. Georgia has changed, Democrats are motivated, and Republicans are out of touch and have failed the leadership test. With these key factors in mind, **Democratic victory in Georgia is more likely than ever.**

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\*37 primary states that have conducted and counted voting are included; Georgia ranks 2nd of 37 in increase over 2016 Democratic primary turnout and 3rd of 37 in increase over 2008. Low-turnout caucus states that switched to high-turnout primaries are not comparable.

\*\*Accessible data goes back to 2012. It is possible but highly unlikely that a significant number of voters participated in an election election prior to, but not since, 2012.