

2021 Georgia Legislative Session: Voting and Election Bills



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ACLU-GA Voter Rights Legislative Priorities

- **Protecting the right to vote for all Georgians**
 - **Opposing any legislation that makes it harder to vote**
 - Example: SB 69 which would eliminate automatic voter registration at the Department of Driver Services
 - ACLU-GA opposes this legislation because the problem it pretends to solve, voter fraud, has not been found in any way through the course of extensive investigations into the automatic voter registration process; instead this bill would make it harder to register. (2 recounts and an audit by the GBI)
 - **Protecting vote by mail (including dropboxes)**
 - **Supporting legislation that makes voting more accessible**

Voter Registration & The 2020 Election Cycle

- Over 7.6 million people are registered to vote in Georgia
- Automatic voter registration has led to an increase of almost 1 million Georgia voters since 2016.
- **November 2020 General Election**
 - In-Person Early Votes: 2,694,879
 - Mail-In Ballots: 1,316,943
- **January 2021 Runoff Election**
 - In-Person Early Votes: 2,075,076
 - Mail-In Ballots: 1,070,596

Legislation

Voter Registration Bills

Lessen barriers:

- **HB 113**
 - Allows same day voter registration.
- **HB 121 & HB 280**
 - Eliminate “use it or lose it” voter removal.
- **HB 101 & HR 28**
 - Removes felony convictions as a disqualifier for registering to vote.
 - **SB 39** works similarly, but for those convicted of crimes involving controlled substances.
- **HB 132**
 - Requires counties to create standardized operating procedures for voter registration and elections.

Create barriers:

- **SB 69**
 - Changes automatic voter registration at the DDS from an “opt-out” to an “opt-in” system.
 - Automatic voter registration has led to a record number of voters in Georgia. Changing this system could negatively impact new voters and their ability to easily register to vote.
- **HB 267**
 - Requires electors to vote in person the first time they vote.

Access to the Ballot: Bills that lessen barriers

- **HB 65**

- Changes the date for local, nonpartisan elections to coincide with November general election date.
- This bill is a bipartisan effort to align smaller, low turnout elections with a larger election to increase voter participation.

- **HB 77**

- Allows voters to cast a ballot at any precinct in their county.

- **SB 26**

- Establishes dropboxes at all early voting locations.

- **SB 38**

- Establishes a permanent absentee voter list.

- **SB 99**

- Turns all early voting sites into voting locations for any elector in the county on Election Day.

Access to the Ballot: Bills that create barriers

- **HB 270**
 - Bans county election offices from issuing and mailing absentee ballots 10 days prior to Election Day.
- **HB 227, SB 29, and SB 67**
 - Create ID requirements for absentee ballots.
- **SB 68**
 - Prohibits absentee ballot dropboxes.
- **SB 71 & HB 325**
 - Eliminates no-excuse absentee by mail voting.
- **SB 70**
 - Prohibits those who voted for federal office in another state from voting in a runoff for those same offices in Georgia.
- **HB 250**
 - Limits ability of county election offices to add more advanced voting locations prior to the start of early vote.
- **HB 228**
 - Restricts types of ID accepted at the polls.
- **SB 73**
 - Prohibits non-governmental third-parties from sending absentee ballot applications to voters.
- **SB 93**
 - Prohibits the use of mobile voting locations, except in emergency situations
 - Would eliminate the very popular mobile voting buses in Fulton County.
 - Mobile buses filled in for places that went down during storms or power outages

Elections Administration & Ballot Counting

Lessen barriers:

- **SB 35**
 - Eliminates county residency requirement for poll workers
 - The poll worker residency requirement bars poll workers from serving in a county other than the one they reside in.
- **SB 36**
 - Establishes a pilot grant program aimed at funding early voting locations in rural counties.
- **HB 284**
 - Allows counties and municipalities to utilize instant runoff voting for local elections.
- **SB 40**
 - Allows absentee ballots to be opened and counted prior to Election Day.

Create barriers:

- **HB 62 & HR 2**
 - Prohibits Election Boards (or other relevant election authority) from receiving any money not allocated by the government.
 - Grants from non-governmental organizations played a pivotal role in funding elections across the state of Georgia.
- **HB 162**
 - Authorizes the county commissioner to appoint Morgan County Board of Election members; removes requirement that each major political party be represented on the board.
- **HB 59 Substitute**
 - Creates instant runoff ballots for overseas citizens and military personnel.

Questions?

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