

Contact: Walter Jones,
Communications Manager
(470) 360-9033

Press Office: (404) 360-9033



Secretary of State and Georgia Cyber Center Join Forces

(AUGUSTA, Ga.) – Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger and the Georgia Cyber Center at Augusta University announced Wednesday their partnership on protecting Georgia’s election system against cybercrime.

“People are increasingly confident about the ease of use and the security of the new system as they learn more about it,” Raffensperger said. “The integrity of elections must be the first priority, and this system accomplishes that with paper ballots that can be readily audited. In this challenging environment, Georgia is fortunate to have national-caliber expertise to help stay ahead of the bad actors. This association is another way Georgians can be confident that their vote will be accurate and secure.”

Augusta University’s School of Computer and Cyber Sciences and the Georgia Cyber Center will work with the Secretary of State’s Office to help ensure the security and integrity of Georgia’s electronic voting system and advise the state on the safe use of these systems.

“Part of the mission of the Georgia Cyber Center is to leverage government, academic, and industry resources to help protect the citizens of Georgia and their information from malicious attacks. Nothing is more worthy of protection than our democracy and the election process. Our joint work will help increase the security and integrity of Georgia’s election system and increase voter’s confidence in the outcome of elections,” said Alex Schwarzmann, dean of the Augusta University School of Computer and Cyber Sciences, headquartered at the Georgia Cyber Center.

BACKGROUND

Raffensperger has been traveling Georgia meeting with local officials and community groups talking about the statewide implementation of the new system in time for early voting in the March 24 Presidential Preference Primary. Replacing the state’s 17-year-old electronic voting machines with modern, secure touchscreen ballot-marking devices, printers, scanners and locked ballot boxes is the largest one-time transition of election systems in U.S. history.

The old equipment is being collected from counties, and deliveries to them are being made.

Contact: Walter Jones,
Communications Manager
(470) 360-9033

Press Office: (404) 360-9033



Specifications for the system came from a bipartisan commission made up of experts on voting, security and handicapped accessibility. Next, national companies submitted proposals matching those specifications which were evaluated by a multi-agency panel that selected Dominion Voting Systems' bid. Then, an independent engineering firm tested and analyzed Dominion's equipment to ensure it met the specifications, which included U.S. Election Assistance Commission guidelines for voting security.

The first test in actual voting was conducted during municipal elections Nov. 5 in six counties followed by an audit under the supervision of two nonpartisan, national organizations with extensive experience with election audits across the country. The system received high marks in the risk-limiting audit of that initial pilot.

"Our office is transparent about everything we do because we know people deserve to feel sure their vote will be private and will be counted – accurately," Raffensperger said. "Look the system over, and you'll agree."

ABOUT THE GEORGIA SECRETARY OF STATE

The Georgia Secretary of State is the state's chief election officer and has the mission to help everyone who is eligible to vote. County election officials run the actual elections and handle voter registration.

Georgia is considered a leader in election innovation with automatic voter registration through the Department of Driver Services, three weeks of early voting – including a Saturday, and no-excuse-required absentee voting. It is the top state in the number of new voter registrations and experienced record registration and record turnout in the last election cycle.

ABOUT THE GEORGIA CYBER CENTER

The Georgia Cyber Center is a unique public/private collaboration among academia, state/federal government, law enforcement and the private sector. Certificate, undergraduate and graduate level programs are offered through our academic partners and the Center's Cyber Workforce Academy provides relevant training available to government and industry workforce professionals. The Center also serves as a hub for technology startups and organizations supporting the state's cybersecurity ecosystem.

###