



GEORGIA VOTING ADAPTS: SURGES PAST 1 MILLION VOTE MILESTONE

(ATLANTA)- Georgia voters have cast over 1 million ballots with less than one week to go until the June 9 statewide elections. Even as COVID-19 has complicated elections in other states, the office of the Secretary of State and local elections officials have maintained numerous different avenues for Georgia voters to exercise their right to vote.

“Elections officials across the state have worked throughout the COVID-19 crisis to preserve the ways that Georgia voters prefer to cast their ballots,” said Raffensperger. “Because of the dedication of these tireless public servants, more than 1 million Georgians have been able to vote early through absentee ballot by mail or in person as they have in every other election. Though we encourage anyone who has requested an absentee ballot to return it by mail or submit it in a dropbox, we look forward to providing safe in-person voting on Election Day as well.”

Georgia voters have already cast 1,033,585 ballots. Of those, 810,024 were absentee by mail ballots, nearly 80% of the ballots cast so far. The significant surge in absentee by mail ballots demonstrates the speed and efficiency with which election workers and voters alike adapted to COVID-19.

Absentee ballots must be received by a county elections office no later than 7:00pm on Tuesday, June 9, in order to be counted.

The surge in absentee ballots by mail comes following tireless efforts to allow Georgians to vote in whatever way they feel most comfortable. Though more than 800,000 Georgians have submitted absentee ballots by mail so far, more than 20 times the 37,000 who voted that way in 2016, another 223,561 have cast their ballots in person.

The Secretary of State has worked with county election officials to provide the resources and guidance necessary to preserve those options for Georgia voters. The office of the Secretary of State purchased and distributed 35,000 masks for election workers in addition to other personal protective equipment (PPE) and sanitation supplies. County elections offices are also able to apply for millions in grants to purchase PPE and sanitation supplies on the local level. Additional grants are available to support election infrastructure such as extra tables, dividers, or even tape to mark safe social distancing, lowering the cost burden on the counties.

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These crucial supplies will help make it possible for in person voting to continue safely, even during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As head of the State Election Board, the Secretary spearheaded a rule allowing counties to provide drop boxes for absentee ballots so voters can submit their absentee confidently and safely. The office of the Secretary has made grants available for counties to subsidize the costs.

To help anticipate the surge in absentee ballot requests, the Secretary of State's office mailed 6.9 million absentee ballot request forms to active Georgia voters, a process that took only 6 days from ideation to execution. To further ease the burden on the counties, the Secretary secured vendors to print and mail the absentee ballots as well.

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