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## All Hands On Deck: Rallying Business Support for Urgent Election Needs Across Georgia

*Community organizer, GaVotingWorks, convenes Georgia businesses and Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger at kick-off event today around urgent election support and employee engagement*

*In sync with the national movement to mobilize the business sector for a healthy democracy led by Business for America and Operation Vote Safe*

(ATLANTA) —Businesses across the state of Georgia are rallying together to lend a hand for a smooth, safe, accessible election experience in 2020. In an election year that is facing a record number of voters, COVID-19 challenges, and the implementation of new voting machines in Georgia, election officials welcome the support from the business community. Part of a national movement, more businesses than ever before are fostering civic engagement in the election process.

Today, GaVotingWorks kicked off their collaborative effort with a virtual meet up, which included Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger, Business for America, and several influential Georgia companies. Secretary Raffensperger briefed the assembly on current state needs from driving early voters, to signing up technology support workers, to securing plexiglass dividers for polling locations. “As a small business owner myself, I know how important these private organizations are to a strong and vibrant civic life in Georgia,” said Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger. “I look forward to working with GaVotingWorks and their partners in the private sector to help make sure elections in November are smooth, efficient, and secure.”

GAVotingWorks co-founder Betsy Armentrout shared her inspiration: “I realized that businesses are a source of trust, communication and resources that could be leveraged in the upcoming election. In the backdrop of COVID-19, employees haven’t been able to engage in their communities like they once did. There is a very real desire to give back and the upcoming election is an ideal opportunity.”

“This is not another non-profit or 501(c)3,” said Jennifer Dorian, GAVotingWorks co-founder. “This is community organizing for the business sector. Participation is free and open to business leaders who want to use their influence for good and in service to our fellow citizens in this historic election.”

National partner organization for GaVotingWorks, Business for America, helped launch the kick off and is inviting national Operation Vote Safe members to bring their programs to Georgia. “Georgia businesses are enthusiastically joining the national movement for safe, secure elections,” said Sarah Bonk, founder and CEO of Business for America. “We’re excited to connect our national partners with the Georgia action team for local programs including companies such as Warby Parker and Sweetgreen.”

Participating Georgia organizations and companies in GaVotingWorks to date include AT&T, The Atlanta Hawks, The Coca-Cola Company, The Corporate Volunteer Council of Atlanta, Cox Enterprises, Delta

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Airlines, Gas South, Home Depot, The Lola, Mercedes Benz USA, Parkmobile, and Roadie and the YMCA of Metro Atlanta. GaVotingWorks will hold a general information session for interested companies to learn more about the effort on Friday, September 25 at 9:30 am via a virtual webinar format ([link here](#)). GaVotingWorks has a free tool kit for employers of every size who wish to find information to support employees at <https://gavotingworks.org/business-voting-toolkit>.

Participating companies will meet up virtually throughout September and October to share best practices and collaborate in three key areas to support a positive voting experience for all:

Technology worker recruiting - across the state, Dominion Voting Systems is hiring tech-savvy workers to set up and oversee polling station technology and voting machines. The state will need 3,000 technology support workers on 11/3 with one technician per precinct. GaVotingWorks and the participating companies will recruit from the vast wealth of tech-savvy workers in their companies and the broader business community. The tech support worker application form is [HERE](#). Interested parties should apply ASAP as there will be training in October.

A joint voice on early voting - participating companies will have the opportunity to amplify the state's messages to get out the early in-person vote (October 12-30) and especially the first week (October 12-20). Companies are exploring all the creative and effective ways that they can help support messaging.

Supplies for precincts - the state is looking to source plexiglass dividers as well as boost the number of absentee ballot drop boxes. Companies may make a financial contribution or donate supplies. GaVotingWorks is working with the Secretary of State's office to coordinate the matching of needs and provision of supplies.

#### Business Involvement

The first company to join and encourage Armentrout and Dorian, the Atlanta Hawks, was already practicing industry-leading civic engagement. According to Steve Koonin, CEO of The Atlanta Hawks, "At the Hawks, we're putting civic engagement and safe polling front and center, and proud to be an early voting location at State Farm Arena. It's great to see other companies joining up and collaborating in this non-partisan forum that Betsy and Jennifer have stood up very quickly."

"All of us at Coca-Cola are driven by a belief that we have a responsibility to not only refresh the world but to make a difference. That commitment has no deeper root than in our home state of Georgia. We are proud to have announced Election Day as an additional paid company holiday for all U.S.-based employees earlier this summer, giving our associates the flexibility to vote when it works for them," said Monica Howard Douglas, General Counsel, The Coca-Cola Company. "The Coca-Cola Company stands ready to assist GaVotingWorks to help ensure a positive voting experience for people across our state. We hope that Georgia's 2020 General Election Day is a best-in-class example of how government, business and communities can make a difference when we all work together."

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"With Election Day right around the corner, Delta has launched an employee Get-Out-the-Vote effort which includes non-partisan communications and activities to encourage Delta people to make a plan to vote in the Nov. 3 election, including utilizing early voting options" says Jeff Davidman, Vice President, State and Local Government Affairs, Delta Air Lines.

"When we vote, we shape the future of our communities and our country. At The Home Depot, we believe that our democracy works best when all of us participate. We are proud to offer a Get Out the Vote site called HomeDepotVotes.com where anyone can access resources to find early voting deadlines, request a mail in or absentee ballot, and learn about the candidates up for election in their state," said Heather Kennedy, VP of Government Relations at The Home Depot. "We are encouraging employees to volunteer as a poll worker, educate themselves on who and what is on their ballot, and make their voices heard between now and November."

"At Gas South, it is our mission to be a Fuel for Good for our community, our customers and our employees. We strongly believe that encouraging civic engagement aligns with our mission, which is why we are supporting employees with resources to get involved this election cycle. Teaming up with GaVotingWorks is a natural extension to provide education, support, volunteer opportunities and time for our employees and our community to participate in the election process," says Kevin Greiner, CEO Gas South.

"Elections keep our republic functioning, as they give people the right to select their own government. Given that level of importance Mercedes Benz USA plans to close all U.S. offices Tuesday, November 3 to ensure employees have ample time to participate in their civic duty" said Lars Minns, Chief Human Resource Officer, Mercedes Benz USA.

"The Corporate Volunteer Council of Atlanta supports its members in their strategic commitment to employee volunteerism and civic engagement. Voting is the absolute best way that employees and citizens can be civically engaged, so we are passionate about GaVotingWorks' efforts to mobilize Georgia businesses around voter education and voting options, poll worker drives and well-equipped precincts."

"We know the main reason people don't vote is because of work commitments. We also recognize that the lines could be very long on Election Day this year. So we wanted to make sure all ParkMobile employees have a plan to exercise their civic duty. We applaud the work being done by GaVotingWorks to encourage the Atlanta business community to help employees vote" said Jon Ziglar, CEO of ParkMobile.

"Joining this organization was a no-brainer for us," said Kayla Duperrault, Roadie's Head of People. "At Roadie, we truly care about our team, both personally and professionally. This year, that's meant doing a lot of listening about what's important to them, and civic engagement is right at the top of that list."

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Voting this year is going to come with unique challenges, so we appreciate the work that GaVotingWorks is doing to make it an easier process for all."

"Supporting GaVotingWorks is a way for us to live out the YMCA's core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. We believe a vote equals a voice to make our communities stronger", says Lauren Koontz CEO of the YMCA of Metro Atlanta.

#### [About GaVotingWorks](#)

GaVotingWorks is a non-partisan effort to convene Georgia businesses for employee engagement in elections. As a community organizing initiative, GaVotingWorks focuses on collaboration with Georgia businesses to help their employees engage in the voting process and help the state with voter education, early voting demand, and workers and supplies for polling locations.

#### [About Business for America](#)

Business for America is a national nonpartisan network of civic-minded businesses advancing solutions to boost civic engagement, ensure election integrity, reduce political polarization, and modernize government. A well-functioning representative democracy will help foster a more competitive, innovative business climate in America. Businesses interested in getting involved can learn more at [bfa.us](http://bfa.us).

*Georgia is recognized as a national leader in elections. It was the first state in the country to implement the trifecta of automatic voter registration, at least 16 days of early voting (which has been called the "gold standard"), and no excuse absentee voting. Georgia continues to set records for voter turnout and election participation, seeing the largest increase in average turnout of any other state in the 2018 midterm election and record primary turnout in 2020, with over 1.1 million absentee by mail voters and over 1.2 million in-person voters utilizing Georgia's new, secure, paper ballot voting system.*

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