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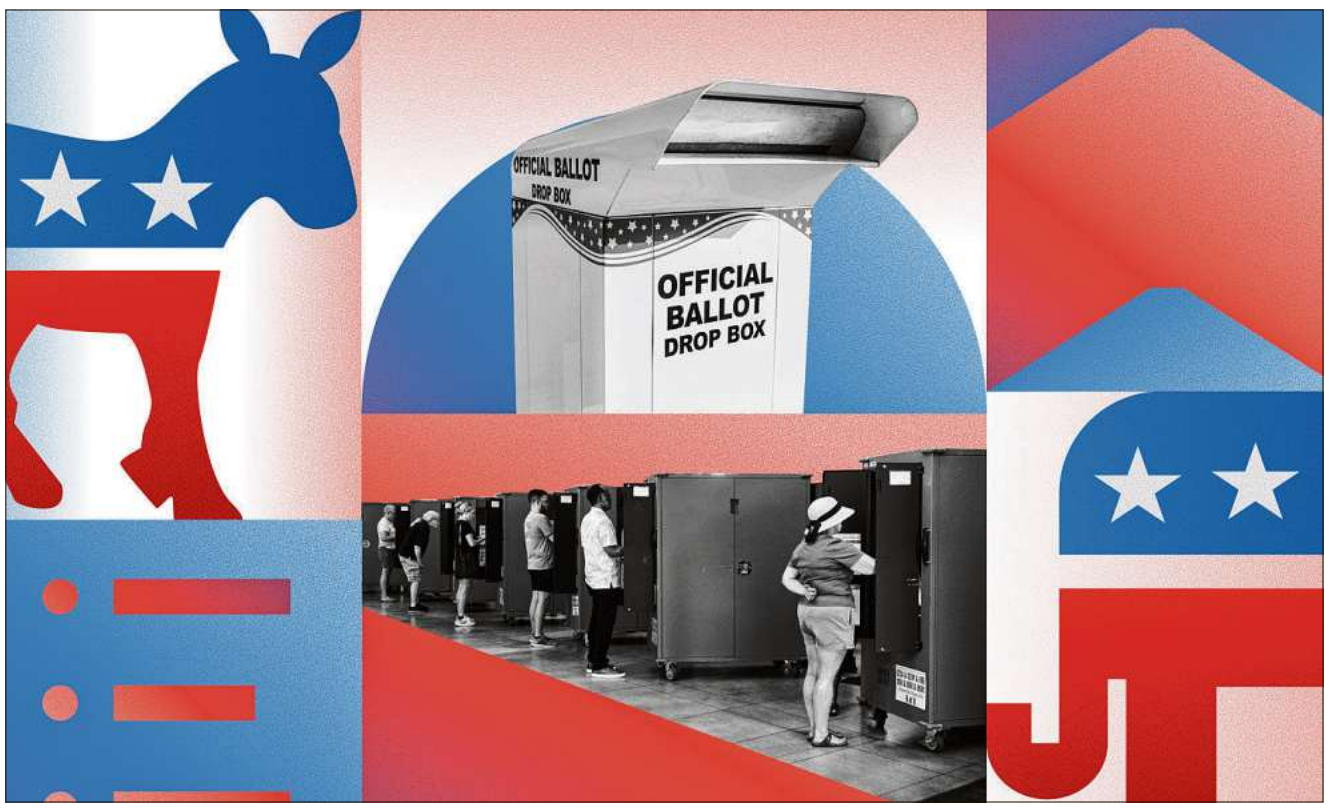
How do Georgia candidates vote?



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There's a partisan split on Election Day vs. early in-person voting. Rick Jackson is the absentee voting champ.

By David Wickert
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Republican nominee Rick Jackson has pledged to be President Donald Trump's favorite governor. But he has consistently used the president's most-maligned method of voting in recent years – absentee ballots.

Jackson's opponent, Democrat Keisha Lance Bottoms, has not voted absentee in recent years. Neither have Democratic U.S. Sen. Jon Ossoff or his Republican opponent, U.S. Rep. Mike Collins.

Those are a few of the findings of an Atlanta Journal-Constitution review of the voting habits of 38 Georgia candidates for federal and state offices. The analysis also shows Republican candidates were more likely than Democrats to vote on Election Day in recent years, while Democrats strongly preferred to vote early in person. Only 16 of the 38 candidates have voted by absentee ballot in recent years, and none more so than Jackson.

The glimpse of candidates' voting habits comes as Trump continues to blast absentee voting while voting absentee himself. The president has claimed, without evidence, that absentee voting is a source of widespread voting fraud, and some of his supporters want him to ban the kind of no-excuse absentee voting that Georgia permits.

Voting continued on **A7**

The gubernatorial candidates: Republican Rick Jackson and Democrat Keisha Lance Bottoms.

Democratic U.S. Sen. Jon Ossoff (left) is being challenged by Republican U.S. Rep. Mike Collins.

Election board's chief acts on his own

Critics fear State Election Board Executive Director James Mills' lone actions could undermine the public's trust in voting.

By Caleb Groves
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State Election Board Executive Director James Mills has been on the job for over a year. In his tenure, he has feuded with the board chair. He's made hiring decisions without board members' knowledge. Most recently, he asked the Trump administration to intervene in Georgia's election and force changes to the state's voting system.

Three of five board members say they never approved that last request, which came less than two weeks before early voting begins.

Mills, sympathetic to conspiratorial beliefs about the 2020 election and hailed by some election skeptics as a champion of voting integrity, has long clashed with members, squabbling over his power. Even as Mills continues to sidestep board approval and frustrations grow among members, no one has tried to oust him or reduce his power. In 2025, they voted to expand his authority.

Critics have said Mills – and the board – are creating confusion and fueling distrust in Georgia elections and the state-

Mills continued on **A7**

State Elections Board Executive Director James Mills, without board approval, wrote to ask the Trump administration to force changes to Georgia's voting system. AJC FILE

Isaias has moved on, so expect a warm, dry week

Weather service predicts for the region above-average highs going into upper 80s.

By Taylor Croft
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As Georgia recovers from the high winds and heavy rain that pummeled the state over the weekend, a reprieve appears to be ahead.

But those eager to pull out their sweaters and coats may have to wait a bit longer. This week is expected to be dry and warm, with above-average temperatures, the National Weather Service predicted.

Hurricane Isaias made landfall Friday night as a Category 2 hurricane near Destin, Florida, and weakened overnight to a post-tropical cyclone. When it hit Georgia, it downed trees and power lines and left more than 120,000 customers without electricity Saturday.

As of 9 a.m. Sunday morning, fewer than 10,000 power customers still were experiencing outages, per Georgia Power and Georgia EMC outage maps – a sig-

While some events were canceled or postponed, there still were pastries to be bought Saturday at the Freedom Farmers Market in Atlanta. ABBEY CUTRER FOR THE AJC

nificant improvement from Saturday.

Some areas remained under a flood watch and at risk for high winds early Sunday, and some lingering winds were forecast for the afternoon, the Weather Service said. But the worst of the storm

Weather continued on **A7**

Top Dawgs: Georgia the new No. 1 in college football polls

Coach Kirby Smart's squad is now the only remaining undefeated team in the SEC.

By Sarah Spencer
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Georgia was ranked No. 2 before taking down No. 6 Alabama 20-17 Saturday night to get its first win in Tuscaloosa since 2007.

Combine the Bulldogs passing their big road test and previously top-ranked Texas falling to unranked Oklahoma, and Georgia is the new No. 1 team in The Associated Press weekly poll. Coach Kirby Smart's team also took over the top spot in the Coaches' Poll.

In the AP poll, Texas fell to No. 7 and Alabama did not fall in the rankings, remaining at No. 6. In the Coaches Poll, Texas dropped to No. 6 and Alabama stayed at No. 7.

Georgia (6-0 overall, 4-0 in the SEC) is the only remaining undefeated team in the conference.

The Bulldogs have endured despite

Georgia defensive players Zion Branch (left) and Chris Cole celebrate Saturday after beating Alabama at Bryant-Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa. JASON GETZ/AJC

being banged up. They were missing wide receiver Isiah Canion plus their top two running backs, Nate Frazier and Chauncey Bowens, against Alabama, but got a stellar performance from running back Dwight Phillips Jr. (120 rush-

UGA continued on **A7**

TODAY'S TOP STORIES INSIDE

GEORGIA & THE SOUTH, A4

Massive cleanup after Helene is still going on

The PVC pipes swept away by Hurricane Helene flooding, which dumped more than 30 inches of rain in some areas, still dominate cleanup of a North Carolina river.

OPINION, A11

Clancy case sheds light on mental health care

The Lindsay Clancy trial and tragedy has placed maternal mental health in the forefront of people's minds and attention the past several weeks.

SPORTS, B1

Falcons game goes here xxxxxx xxxx xxxx

Tinch 1 inchs

LIVING, C2

Gwinnett teacher welcomes 1st child at 41

Tamia Janae, the 2-month-old daughter of Tamica Brown and her husband, Ted, was born July 23, after a yearslong journey through fertility treatments and IVF.

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