

November 30, 2021

Brad Raffensperger
Secretary of State
Georgia Capitol
206 Washington St SW
Atlanta, GA 30334

Complainant: True the Vote, PO Box 3109 #19128 Houston, TX 77253-3109

Complaint: Ballot trafficking General Election November 2020 and Runoff Election January 2021 periods

Counties: Atlanta metro area

Potential Violations: O.C.G.A. § 21-2-385 (a) Procedure for voting by absentee ballot; advance voting

INFORMATION IN SUPPORT OF COMPLAINT

As part of True the Vote's ongoing nonpartisan election integrity research and in response to reports of ballot trafficking in Georgia and other states across the country, we undertook certain efforts to examine this issue more closely. Following a detailed account of coordinated efforts to collect and deposit ballots in drop boxes across metro Atlanta, True the Vote obtained publicly available surveillance video as well as commercially available cell phone data which revealed concerning patterns of behavior consistent with the reports made to our organization. True the Vote hereby submits this Complaint to the Georgia Secretary of State detailing the potentially improper election efforts which took place during the General Election of November 2020 and Runoff Election of January 2021.

Acting upon information provided to us, True the Vote's contracted team of researchers and investigators spoke with several individuals regarding personal knowledge, methods, and organizations involved in ballot trafficking in Georgia. One such individual, hereinafter referred to as John Doe, admitted to personally participating and provided specific information about the ballot trafficking process. This information was provided under agreement of anonymity.¹

John Doe described a network of non-governmental organizations ("NGO"s) that worked together to facilitate a ballot trafficking scheme in Georgia. John Doe claimed to have been one of many individuals paid to collect and deliver absentee ballots during the early voting periods of the November 2020 General Election and the January 2021 Runoff Election. While acknowledging that others might view his actions as inappropriate, John Doe did

¹ It is imperative that True the Vote maintain confidentiality agreements made with persons willing to speak openly with the organization. First and foremost, True the Vote is primarily concerned for the safety of individuals willing to come forward to speak about such sensitive topics. True the Vote is not a law enforcement agency, we do not have the resources of the State, and we are unable to provide any safety guarantees to those individuals willing to provide information other than to keep our word that their identity will not be disclosed. Furthermore, for the same reason law enforcement agencies do not disclose the identities of their confidential informants, True the Vote must also maintain such confidences. To do otherwise would greatly inhibit future efforts of the organization as individuals would no longer be willing to speak openly about such matters. Finally, to the extent an individual admits to conduct constituting a crime, True the Vote is unable to offer immunity from prosecution. Informants would not be honest in their discussions if they lacked confidence that any admissions made would be held in the strictest of confidences and would not subject them to criminal prosecution in the future.

While True the Vote will not directly identify the individual who made the admission, the organization is able to provide the publicly available data we used in our research. As an office possessing investigative powers and the resources of the State, the identity of any individual who may have information pertinent to your efforts is discoverable in the data set now available to you. Working in conjunction with law enforcement, the State, in their discretion, can provide the necessary and appropriate safety guarantees and immunity protections for cooperating witnesses should that become necessary.

not seem to understand the unlawful nature of this conduct nor that it might constitute organized criminal activity. John Doe's perception was that he had been hired to do a job and it was appropriate to be paid for the services rendered.

John Doe's assignment included collecting ballots, both from voters in targeted neighborhoods and from NGOs that had their own ballot collection processes, delivering those ballots to other NGOs, picking up designated ballot bundles from the same group of NGOs, and depositing ballots into drop boxes spanning six counties in the metro Atlanta area. Each drop box delivery would typically include between 5 to 20 ballots. John Doe described a payment validation process which involved taking cell phone pictures of the drop box where ballots were deposited. Participants were compensated, typically at a rate of \$10 per ballot. John Doe stated he had been paid directly by one of these NGOs.²

Following this report, True the Vote submitted open records requests to obtain the surveillance video of various drop boxes across Georgia during the General Election of November 2020 and Runoff Election of January 2021. Despite a legal mandate to maintain this video, county officials were only able to produce an estimated 20% of the surveillance video requested in the counties of Fulton, DeKalb, Cobb, and Gwinnett.³ Nonetheless, in our initial review of the available 3 million minutes of surveillance video, we found compelling evidence to support the reports of absentee ballot trafficking conducted during the November 3, 2020, General Election and January 5, 2021, Runoff Election periods.

In addition to ordering surveillance video, True the Vote also purchased commercially available, anonymized, geospatial mobile device information. This cell phone data establishes what devices were at a particular location at a particular time but does not disclose any private information about a person's identity. There are a variety of uses for this type of data including product marketing and targeted messaging in political campaigns. This type of unique device identification data is highly desirable because of its accuracy and its use is becoming more mainstream as of late. In fact, virtually every cell phone user has received some type promotional or political text. Law enforcement, defense, and intelligence agencies have been using geospatial mobile device data to generate information on possible suspects or witnesses in investigations for several years. For the purposes of our research, True the Vote purchased such data and used it to identify patterns of potentially inappropriate election activities. After reviewing this data, True the Vote was able to confirm certain patterns of activity around absentee ballot drop boxes, as initially reported by John Doe.

During the Runoff Election period, in six counties in and around Atlanta, 552,987 cell phones came within a narrowly defined distance of ballot drop boxes during our study period. However, 242 unique devices made repeat trips to drop boxes averaging 23 trips each. These same 242 devices also went repeatedly, averaging eight trips each, to specific NGOs.

These 242 individual devices went to drop boxes a total of 5,668 times with approximately 40% of the visits occurring between the unusual hours of 12:00 a.m. and 5:00 a.m.

The review of surveillance video was queued according to our geospatial data analyses and focused on the device patterns that emerged from our research. The video, though often grainy and sometimes distant, revealed numerous unusual behaviors.

² John Doe stated the NGOs made the payments, but it was not entirely clear from his description whether participants were paid directly by the NGOs or through an intermediary.

³In separately filed complaints, we detail the missing video footage, including explanations afforded us by county election officials, to support further investigations and develop standards regarding critical aspects of surveillance video capture.

Individuals were observed attempting to deposit multiple ballots into the drop box. Sometimes, the person was attempting to deposit so many ballots that they were unable to fit them all in and the video shows ballots falling to the ground.

Additionally, in our cursory review of surveillance video it was confirmed that individuals made repeat visits to drop boxes.

Cars were observed with out-of-state license plates, including rental cars identifiable because of the sticker seal rental car companies affix to the driver's side door. This in itself is not necessarily problematic; however it is notable because these out of state and rental cars were driven by individuals who were also in our targeted study group of 242 devices.

Consistent with John Doe's report regarding the proof necessary to receive payment, individuals were observed taking cell phone photos, not of themselves, but of their ballot deposits or of the drop box after the ballots had been deposited.

Curiously, a change in behavior seemed to occur on or around December 23, 2020, the day after Arizona authorities announced that fingerprints on absentee ballot envelopes helped uncover an illegal ballot harvesting scheme in that state. After that announcement, individuals depositing ballots into drop boxes in Georgia are seen wearing blue surgical gloves. They often put them on just before picking up their stack of ballots and remove them as they exit the drop box area.

In conclusion, following John Doe's personal admission to participation in a large-scale ballot harvesting effort in Georgia, True the Vote obtained publicly available video footage and commercially available cell phone data which supports his account of these efforts. In the data we reviewed, the 242 mobile devices which repeatedly visited drop boxes also repeatedly visited locations associated with a select group of NGOs. Not only did these devices make repeat visits but a significant number of these visits, approximately 40%, were made during extremely unusual hours in the middle of the night. Additionally, surveillance footage shows numerous instances in which individuals deposited multiple ballots at a time – a practice which is prohibited under Georgia law except under very limited circumstances.⁴ Finally, consistent with John Doe's description of how participants were paid, individuals were seen taking photos of drop boxes or of ballots as they were deposited into a drop box.

True the Vote files this Complaint and provides this information to the Secretary of State as the arbiter of election integrity for the State of Georgia.⁵ In conjunction with an investigation and formal request by the Secretary of State's office, True the Vote will provide all publicly or commercially available information including the geospatial data and surveillance video to assist with any efforts undertaken by your office.⁶

⁴ O.C.G.A. § 21-2-385 (a) reads in pertinent part: Such envelope shall then be securely sealed and the elector shall then personally mail or personally deliver same to the board of registrars or absentee ballot clerk, provided that mailing or delivery may be made by the elector's mother, father, grandparent, aunt, uncle, brother, sister, spouse, son, daughter, niece, nephew, grandchild, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, or an individual residing in the household of such elector. The absentee ballot of a disabled elector may be mailed or delivered by the caregiver of such disabled elector, regardless of whether such caregiver resides in such disabled elector's household. The absentee ballot of an elector who is in custody in a jail or other detention facility may be mailed or delivered by any employee of such jail or facility having custody of such elector. An elector who is confined to a hospital on a primary or election day to whom an absentee ballot is delivered by the registrar or absentee ballot clerk shall then and there vote the ballot, seal it properly, and return it to the registrar or absentee ballot clerk.

⁵ In filing this Complaint, True the Vote makes no assessment of the legality of any activity seen in the data or surveillance video but merely provides this information for official State use as deemed appropriate by your agency.

⁶ This raw and unedited data purchased by True the Vote does not include any analysis conducted by True the Vote or its contractors nor does it include any list of specific IMEI devices of interest. Furthermore, this data does not include any identifying information about any individuals other than commercially available, anonymized, IMEI data in its original form.