

Secretary of State **NEWS**

Brian P. Kemp, Georgia Secretary of State

Press Office

214 State Capitol Atlanta, Georgia 30334
TEL: 404-656-4269 FAX: 404.657.5804



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 19, 2015

CONTACT: TIM FLEMING

Deputy Secretary of State

404-463-1076

IMPORTANT NOTICE FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE REGARDING THE SECURITY OF THE STATE VOTER FILE

Dear Georgia Voters:

On Friday, November 13, 2015, the Georgia Secretary of State's office learned that voters' personal information was inadvertently included on a statewide voter disc that was sent to twelve groups. These groups included Georgia political parties and news media. Due to a clerical error where information was put into the wrong file, the discs contained personal identifying information that should not have been included. As of 11:00 am on Thursday, November 19, 2015 all twelve discs have been accounted for. Nine discs were retrieved by the Secretary of State's office. The other three were confirmed to be disposed of by the recipients. Each of the twelve recipients, including the Georgia Republican Party and the Georgia Democratic Party, confirmed that they did not retain a copy of the information, either electronic or otherwise and that the information was not disseminated to any outside groups.

The office took immediate action to protect Georgia voters' personal information. We retrieved the discs and confirmed that the recipients had not copied or otherwise disseminated the data. Our first priority is to minimize the impact of this mistake and to ensure that Georgia voter's personal information is secure. The discs were mailed to the recipients on October 13, 2015, but other than the IT employee responsible for the error, the office was not aware the discs contained sensitive personal information until Friday, November 13, 2015. The employee who made the error has been terminated and additional safeguards, including a three-part check system, have been implemented to ensure that this situation does not happen again. Again, each of the twelve recipients confirmed that they did not retain a copy of the information and that it was not disseminated to any outside group.

To reiterate, the Georgia Voter Registration System was not breached. The system has been and remains secure. This issue was caused by a clerical error that has been remedied. While information was included on those twelve discs that should not have been included, we are confident that the information has now been secured and accounted for.

Individuals Impacted

All registered voters in Georgia as of October 13, 2014 may be impacted. To check if you are a registered voter, visit the Georgia My Voter Page at www.mvp.sos.ga.gov.

Information Included

The information on the discs included names, addresses, dates of birth, social security numbers (if provided), driver's license numbers (if provided), voter registration numbers, phone numbers (if provided), gender (if provided), race (if provided), and voter precinct information.

Dedicated Hotline

The Secretary of State's office has established a dedicated hotline that you can call if you have questions related to this incident. That number is (404) 654-6045. We have included contact information for the three nationwide credit bureaus below.

Fraud Prevention Tips

We want to make you aware of steps you may take to guard against identity theft or fraud.

We recommend that potentially impacted individuals remain vigilant for incidents of fraud and identity theft; this includes reviewing account statements and monitoring free credit reports. It is always a good idea to review your payment card statements carefully and call your bank or card issuer if you see any suspicious transactions. The policies of Visa, MasterCard, American Express, and Discover provide that you have zero liability for any unauthorized charges if you report them in a timely manner.

You are entitled under U.S. law to one free credit report annually from each of the three national credit bureaus, whose contact information is below. To order your free credit report, you can also visit www.annualcreditreport.com, call toll-free at 877-322-8228 or complete the Annual Credit Report Request Form on the FTC's website (www.ftc.gov) and mail it to Annual Credit Report Request Service, P.O. Box 105281, Atlanta, GA 30348-5281. Review your credit report carefully to ensure that the information it contains is accurate. If you see anything on your credit reports or credit card accounts that appears incorrect, contact the credit reporting agencies and/or your credit card provider.

Report suspected incidents of identity theft to local law enforcement, the Federal Trade Commission, or your state attorney general. To learn more, you can go to the FTC's web site at www.consumer.gov/idtheft, call the FTC at 877-IDTHEFT, or write to the Federal Trade Commission, Consumer Response Center at 600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20580. The Georgia Department of Law Consumer Protection Unit may be contacted by telephone at 1-800-869-1123 or by mail at 2 Martin Luther King Jr. Dr., Suite 356, Atlanta, GA 30334. You can visit their website with additional information about identity theft at <http://consumer.georgia.gov/consumer-topics/identity-theft-what-to-do-if-it-happens-to-you>.

You should be aware of scam email campaigns targeting individuals. These scams, designed to

capture personal information (known as “phishing”), are designed to appear as if they are from the Secretary of State, and the emails include a “click here” link for credit monitoring. These emails are NOT from the Secretary of State.

- DO NOT reply to the email or reach out to the senders in any way.
- DO NOT supply any information on the website that may open, if you have clicked on a link in the email.
- DO NOT open any attachments that arrive with the email.

The Secretary of State is not calling individuals regarding the incident and is not asking for credit card information or Social Security numbers. For more guidance on recognizing scam email, please visit the FTC website: <http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0003-phishing>.

Credit Bureau Information

Equifax
PO BOX 740241
ATLANTA GA 30374-0241
1-800-685-1111
equifax.com

Experian	TransUnion
PO BOX 9532	PO BOX 2000
ALLEN TX 75013	CHESTER, PA 19022
1-888-397-3742	1-800-916-8800
experian.com	transunion.com

Fraud Alert and Credit Freeze Information

You may obtain additional information from the FTC and the nationwide credit bureaus about fraud alerts and security freezes. You can add a fraud alert to your credit report file to help protect your credit information. A fraud alert can make it more difficult for someone to get credit in your name because it tells creditors to follow certain procedures to protect you, but it also may delay your ability to obtain credit. You may place a fraud alert in your file by calling just one of the three nationwide credit bureaus listed above. As soon as that bureau processes your fraud alert, it will notify the other two bureaus, which then must also place fraud alerts in your file. In addition, you can visit the credit bureau links below to determine if and how you may place a security freeze on your credit report to prohibit a credit bureau from releasing information from your credit report without your prior written authorization:

- Equifax security freeze: <https://www.freeze.equifax.com>
- Experian security freeze: https://www.experian.com/consumer/security_freeze.html
- TransUnion security freeze: <https://www.transunion.com/personal-credit/credit-disputes/credit-freezes.page>
-

Notification Provided by Website and State-Wide Media

The total number of potentially affected voters is 6,181,413. Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 10-1-911(4)(D), the potentially affected class of individuals to be notified exceeds 100,000 people, and

the cost to notify those individuals exceeds \$50,000. The Secretary of State's office does not have e-mail addresses for the individuals to be notified. This notice will be posted on a conspicuous place on the Secretary of State's website at www.sos.ga.gov and will be sent to major state-wide media.

Brian Kemp has been Secretary of State since January 2010. Among the office's wide-ranging responsibilities, the Secretary of State is charged with conducting secure, accessible, and fair elections, the registration of corporations, and the regulation of securities, charities, and professional license holders.

###