

# [***Amid GOP focus on elections, Georgia Republicans remove officer found to have voted illegally***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6C0P-V4G1-JC5B-G0DB-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

ATLANTA — Georgia's Republican Party has removed one of its officers after an administrative law judge found he voted illegally nine times after moving to the state.

The state Republican Committee voted 146-24 on Friday to remove Brian K. Pritchard, its first vice chairman, state Chairman Josh McKoon said after the closed meeting.

Georgia is one of a number of state Republican parties that [*have experienced turmoil*](https://apnews.com/article/republicans-house-leadership-chaos-states-infighting-bb5d9287214cd5aa0a1fdf03b56bebcb) as supporters of Donald Trump have taken over at the grassroots level, [*ousting previous leaders*](https://apnews.com/article/georgia-republicans-chairman-election-trump-speech-044edbcaa5b18eacc8dc9ae970b19b58) and demanding [*that the party prioritize*](https://apnews.com/article/politics-us-republican-party-colorado-6ab686410f80d67b4fe0950a54f16bdb) Trump's false claims of fraud in the 2020 election.

Many established Georgia Republicans including Gov. Brian Kemp have [*walked away from the state party organization*](https://apnews.com/article/brian-kemp-trump-georgia-republican-party-476d1008c824a3df8fbb1cf48eab3a6e). Kemp, for example, doesn't plan to appear at the state Republican Convention next week in Columbus.

But the fervor is having an impact, and demands for “election integrity” have translated into multiple changes to Georgia election law. Earlier this week [*Kemp signed a law*](https://apnews.com/article/georgia-kemp-voting-challenges-changes-aa1fd9b62c7bcdd430c24dc439f8a728) that could ease the removal of people from the voting rolls through [*challenges to voter eligibility*](https://apnews.com/article/georgia-elections-voting-rights-mass-voter-challenge-6dd6c85531453c55a135a7cab9bc346e).

Under pressure from GOP activists, Republicans [*rammed through a sprawling law*](https://apnews.com/article/what-does-new-georgia-gop-election-law-do-87665a200f6442e28ef43cbc60c88653) in 2021 that shortened the time for requesting a ballot by mail, allowed only restricted use of ballot drop boxes and made it illegal to give food or water to voters waiting in line near a polling place.

It's that focus that made the findings against Pritchard acutely embarrassing to many Republican activists. In March, Administrative Law Judge Lisa Boggs found that Pritchard was still on probation when he moved to north Georgia's Gilmer County after he pleaded guilty to forging signatures on two checks worth $38,000 in his home state of Pennsylvania in 1996.

She ruled that Pritchard lied when he registered to vote in 2008 by swearing he wasn't serving a sentence for a felony conviction. Boggs found that Pritchard voted illegally in nine elections in 2008 and 2010, fined him $5,000, ordered that he receive a public reprimand and ordered him to repay the $375 that the State Election Board spent investigating the case.

Pritchard, who hosts an online conservative talk show, has long denied wrongdoing, saying he didn't believe he was still on probation in 2008. After McKoon asked him to step down, Pritchard claimed McKoon and others were out to get him for fighting against so-called RINOs, or Republicans in name only.

“My mission was clear: to steer our party back on course and ensure that in 2024, Donald J. Trump would rightfully reclaim his position as our nation’s leader,” Pritchard wrote on Facebook in April. “But as I began to ask the tough questions, to challenge the status quo, I found myself facing a barrage of resistance from within. You see, in the eyes of the entrenched RINO establishment, questioning their authority is akin to heresy. They’d rather maintain their grip on power than uphold the values we hold dear.”

McKoon said Friday after the vote that removing Pritchard was necessary after he refused to step down.

“Today's vote demonstrates how serious we take election integrity,” McKoon said in a statement.

Other party activists agreed.

“It was the right thing to do,” Debbie Dooley, an outspoken Trump supporter, posted on the social platform X. “The focus needs to be electing Donald Trump and fighting for election integrity and combating election fraud.”

Pritchard's ouster could play into a brewing fight over who should represent Georgia on the Republican National Committee. Besides McKoon, who serves on the committee by virtue of his position, delegates will elect two other members — last time that was Committeewoman Ginger Howard and Committeeman Jason Thompson

Those two now face challengers driven in part by the same forces that elected Pritchard last year.

Among them are the party's Second Vice-Chairman David Cross, who has been one of Pritchard's most vocal defenders, and his wife, Shawn Cross. David Cross declined to comment to The Associated Press on Friday, expressing criticism of the news agency's prior coverage of [*State Election Board*](https://apnews.com/article/rick-jeffares-georgia-state-election-board-0426b6a5251331ba1704465b7600abe3).

Other challengers are expected to include Jason Frazier, who has been [*active in making voter elegibility challenges*](https://apnews.com/article/georgia-elections-board-gop-nominee-rejected-lawsuit-064bdd674a8827a9f1d21ce522904d56), and Amy Kremer, who got her start in Republican ***politics*** as a Tea Party activist and later became one an ardent Trump supporter. A group that Kremer led [*obtained permits*](https://apnews.com/article/election-2020-donald-trump-capitol-siege-campaigns-elections-d14c78d53b3a212658223252fec87e99) for the Jan. 6, 2021, “Stop the Steal” rally in Washington. Some attendees at that rally later attacked the U.S. Capitol.

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