

# THE FUTURE OF VOTING

A PROFILE OF ASIAN AMERICAN AND  
PACIFIC ISLANDER VOTERS IN GEORGIA

AUGUST 2022



# ABOUT THE AUTHORS

## **Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Atlanta**

Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Atlanta is the first nonprofit legal advocacy organization dedicated to protecting the civil rights of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (AANHPI) and Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim, and South Asian (AMEMSA) communities in Georgia and the Southeast.



## **Asian American Advocacy Fund**

The Asian American Advocacy Fund (AAAF) is a 501(c)(4) organization that works towards building a more politically conscious and engaged Asian American base. Through deep and relational organizing, coalition building, policy advocacy, and involvement in state and local elections, AAAF hopes to transform the political landscape of Georgia.



Thank you to Clarity Campaign Labs for conducting the data analysis and *reimagine collective* for preparing this report on behalf of Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Atlanta and the Asian American Advocacy Fund.

# METHODOLOGY

The voter data analysis included in this report is based on voter files. Sources of data include the Georgia Secretary of State, TargetSmart, and AVGA - Catalyst.

Where possible, data from the Georgia Secretary of State was used. Where unavailable, data from the TargetSmart voter file was used. TargetSmart data combines self-reported race provided by the Secretary of State and supplements with race modeling when self-reported race is unavailable. Race modeling is not perfect, but it is the best tool available to estimate race in the aggregate and is largely stable over time. It may underestimate or overestimate certain groups, and should be viewed as a rough estimate rather than an exact number. Most analysis was done on the TargetSmart voter file using TargetSmart's 2020 and 2021 Vote History. All race analysis looking at past elections was done using data from the Georgia Secretary of State. Analysis looking at current registrants was done using TargetSmart's voter file, which pulls largely from the Georgia Secretary of State but may not line up exactly.

Due to data improvements and district line changes, there are some nuances to doing historical analysis of this type. For

instance, the modeling that is used to identify a person's race was updated after the 2016 election, so some of the shifting demographics seen over time could be caused by changes in the modeling rather than true changes in the population.

The bulk of racial analysis was done using race as reported by the Secretary of State. The congressional analysis is based on the 2020 Congressional Districts. Researchers have done their best to translate the historical files onto new map lines to approximate a current comparison, but there are some geographic nuances that are related to those changes. All things considered, most of these data inconsistencies and challenges are not significant when doing analysis in the aggregate, but they are still worth noting and could explain some of the shifting in the analysis at the sub-state level.

Lastly, the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) population in Georgia is not homogeneous. It consists of many groups with different languages, cultures, lengths of residences, and reasons for arrival. Data for this report were disaggregated wherever possible. Unfortunately, most report data combines the two groups or includes only "Asians" in the aggregate.

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# OVERVIEW

**Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) are the fastest growing population and fastest growing electorate in Georgia.<sup>1</sup>** In recent elections, AAPI voters have made statewide races competitive with their record turnout. This report highlights the growing Georgia AAPI electorate as an increasingly important voting block capable of delivering critical margins of victory at the city, county, state and congressional levels.

1 Pew Data

## KEY DATA POINTS FROM THIS REPORT INCLUDE:

**486,327**

AAPIs live in Georgia.

**52%**

Since 2010, the Asian American population in the state has increased by **52%**.

**196,210**

AAPIs in Georgia are **registered voters.**

**3%**

AAPIs make up **3%** of the electorate share.

**45,000+**

AAPI voters voted **for the first time** in the 2020 General Elections.

**18%**

Counties with the highest AAPI populations include Forsyth (**18%**), Gwinnett (**13.2%**), Fulton (**7.6%**), DeKalb (**6.6%**) and Cobb (**5.6%**).

# ASIAN AMERICANS AND PACIFIC ISLANDERS IN GEORGIA



# GROWING DIVERSITY IN GEORGIA

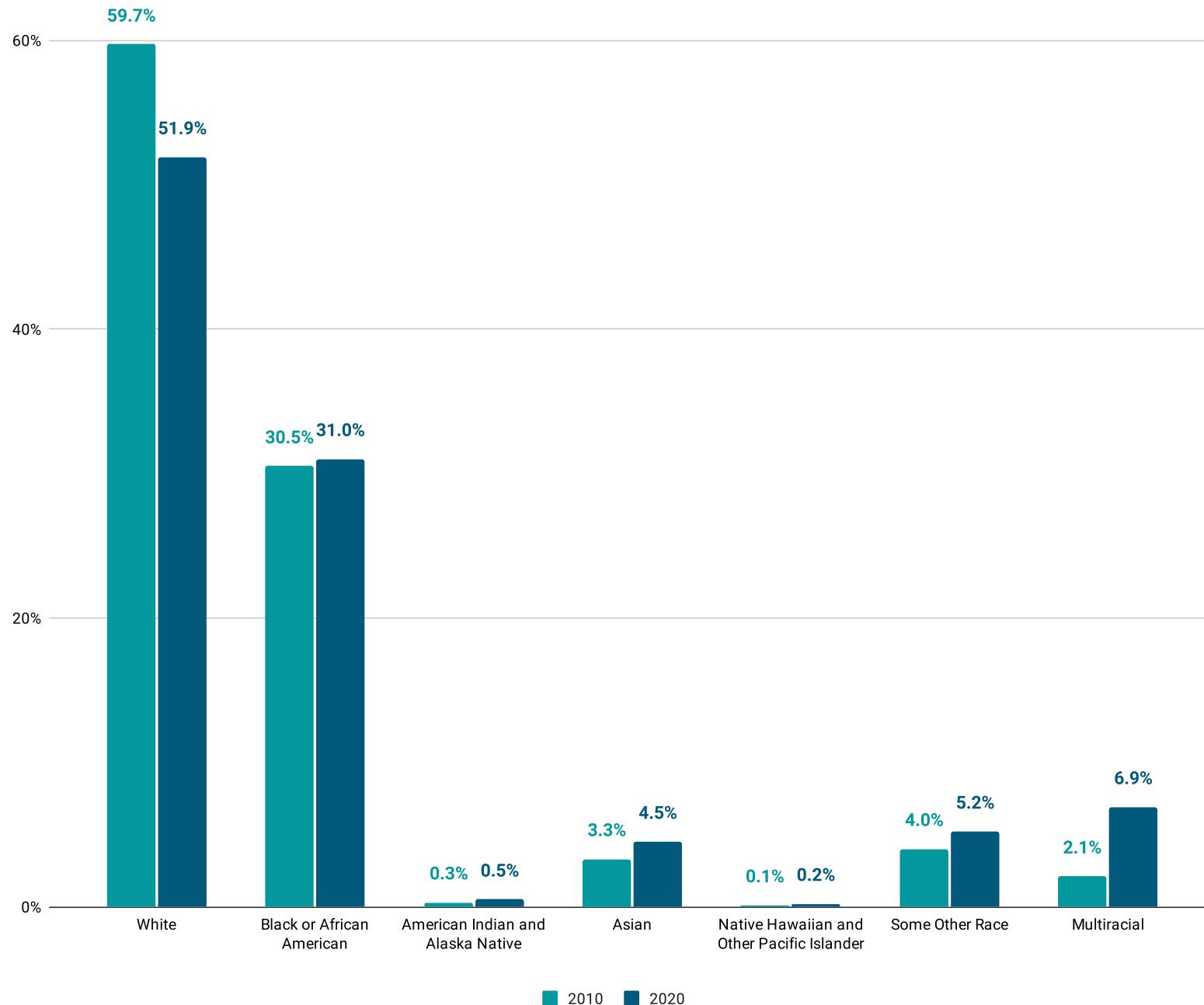
According to the 2020 Census, Asians make up about 4.5% of the population and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders (NHPI) make up about 0.1%. From 2010 to 2020, the Asian population in Georgia increased by approximately 52%. NHPI numbers increased by approximately 7%. In total, the numbers of Black, Indigenous, and other people of color increased 32% from 2010, making up about 48% of the population.<sup>2</sup>

**Figure 1.** Racial Breakdown in Georgia

	2020		2010		CHANGE BETWEEN 2010 & 2020 (+/-)	
	COUNT	%	COUNT	%	COUNT	%
White	5,555,483	51.9%	5,787,440	59.7%	-231,957	-4.0%
Black or African American	3,320,513	31.0%	2,950,435	30.5%	370,078	+12.5%
American Indian and Alaska Native	50,618	0.5%	32,151	0.3%	18,467	+57.4%
Asian	479,028	4.5%	314,467	3.3%	164,561	+52.3%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	7,299	0.1%	6,799	0.1%	500	+7.4%
Some Other Race	555,059	5.2%	388,872	4.0%	166,187	+42.7%
Multiracial	743,908	6.9%	207,489	2.1%	536,419	+258.5%

Source: 2020 Census

**Figure 2.** Racial Breakdown Changes Between 2010 and 2020 in Georgia



Source: 2020 Census

# ETHNIC BREAKDOWN OF AAPIs LIVING IN GEORGIA

**AAPIs in Georgia are a diverse group made up of various ethnic groups.** According to the American Community Survey (ACS)<sup>3</sup>, there are at least 19 Asian ethnic groups in Georgia. Asian Indians make up the largest group (34.6%). The next four largest groups are: Vietnamese (16.3%), Chinese, except Taiwanese (13.2%), Korean (12.0%), and Filipino (5.6%). Among NHPIs, about a third (33%) identified as Native Hawaiian.<sup>4</sup>

## TOP 5 LARGEST AAPI ETHNIC GROUPS

**34.6%**  
ASIAN INDIAN

**16.3%**  
VIETNAMESE

**13.2%**  
CHINESE, EXCEPT TAIWANESE

**12%**  
KOREAN

**5.6%**  
FILIPINO

<sup>3</sup> For the ethnic breakdown, the ACS 2019 1-Year Estimates (Asian Alone by Selected Groups) data was used. Thus the numbers slightly differ from the 2020 Census reports.

<sup>4</sup> For the ethnic breakdown, the ACS 2019 1-Year Estimates (ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates) was used. Thus the numbers slightly differ from the 2020 Census reports.

**Figure 3.** Ethnicities of Asians in Georgia

ETHNICITY	COUNT	PROPORTION OF ASIANS
Asian Indian	152,164	34.6%
Bangladeshi	6,780	1.5%
Bhutanese	2,845	0.7%
Burmese	3,069	0.7%
Cambodian	2,747	0.6%
Chinese, except Taiwanese	57,797	13.2%
Filipino	24,724	5.6%
Hmong	3,162	0.7%
Indonesian	1,879	0.4%
Japanese	10,103	2.3%
Korean	52,871	12.0%
Laotian	6,732	1.5%
Malaysian	1,929	0.4%
Nepalese	4,961	1.1%
Pakistani	11,941	2.7%
Sri Lankan	679	0.2%
Taiwanese	4,384	1.0%
Thai	7,042	1.6%
Vietnamese	71,583	16.3%
Other <sup>5</sup>	12,024	2.7%

Source: ACS 2019 1-Year Estimates

<sup>5</sup> This category of Asians include those who were classified as “Other Asian, specified,” “Other Asian, not specified,” and “two or more Asian.”

**Figure 4.** Ethnicities of NHPIs in Georgia

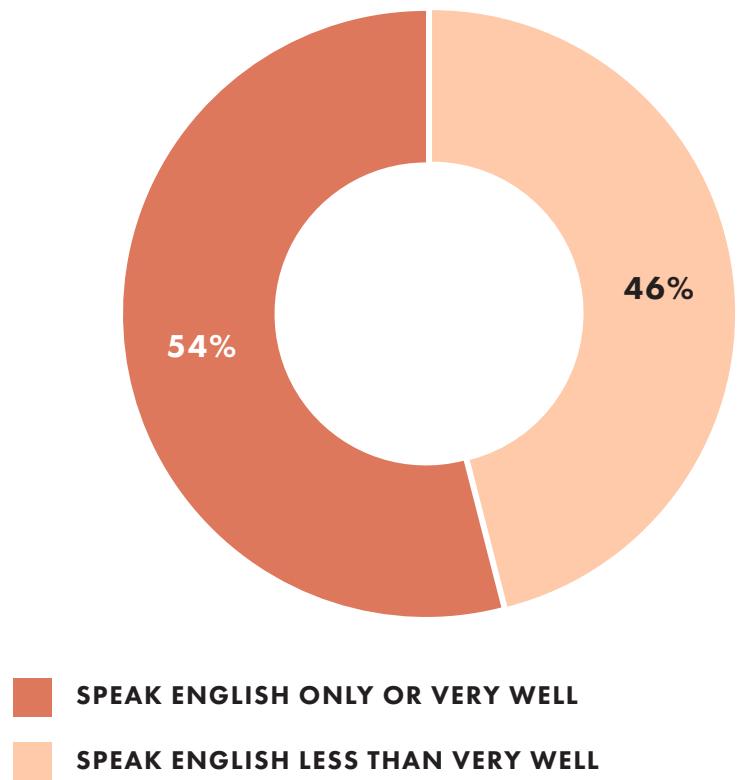
ETHNICITY	COUNT	PROPORTION OF NHPIs
Native Hawaiian	2,293	33.0%
Guamanian/Chamorro	1,668	24.0%
Samoan	726	10.5%
Other	2,260	32.5%

Source: ACS 2019 1-Year Estimates

# LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY OF AAPIs IN LIVING IN GEORGIA

Limited English proficient (LEP) households represent about one-fifth (21.4%) of total AAPI households<sup>6</sup>. Of the residents who speak an Asian or Pacific Islander language in Georgia,<sup>7</sup> about half (46%) are LEP.<sup>8</sup> Counties that have the highest proportion of LEP residents are Gwinnett, Barrow, Hall, DeKalb, and Forsyth. Three of these counties also have the highest percentage of AAPI residents — Gwinnett, Forsyth, DeKalb.<sup>9</sup> In addition, Forsyth County has the fastest growing Asian population with an 11.8% increase recorded between the 2010 and 2020 Census.

**Figure 5.** Proportion of LEPs Among AAPIs Who Speak an API Language



<sup>6</sup> ACS 2019 1-Year Estimates (Languages Spoken at Home by Ability to Speak English)

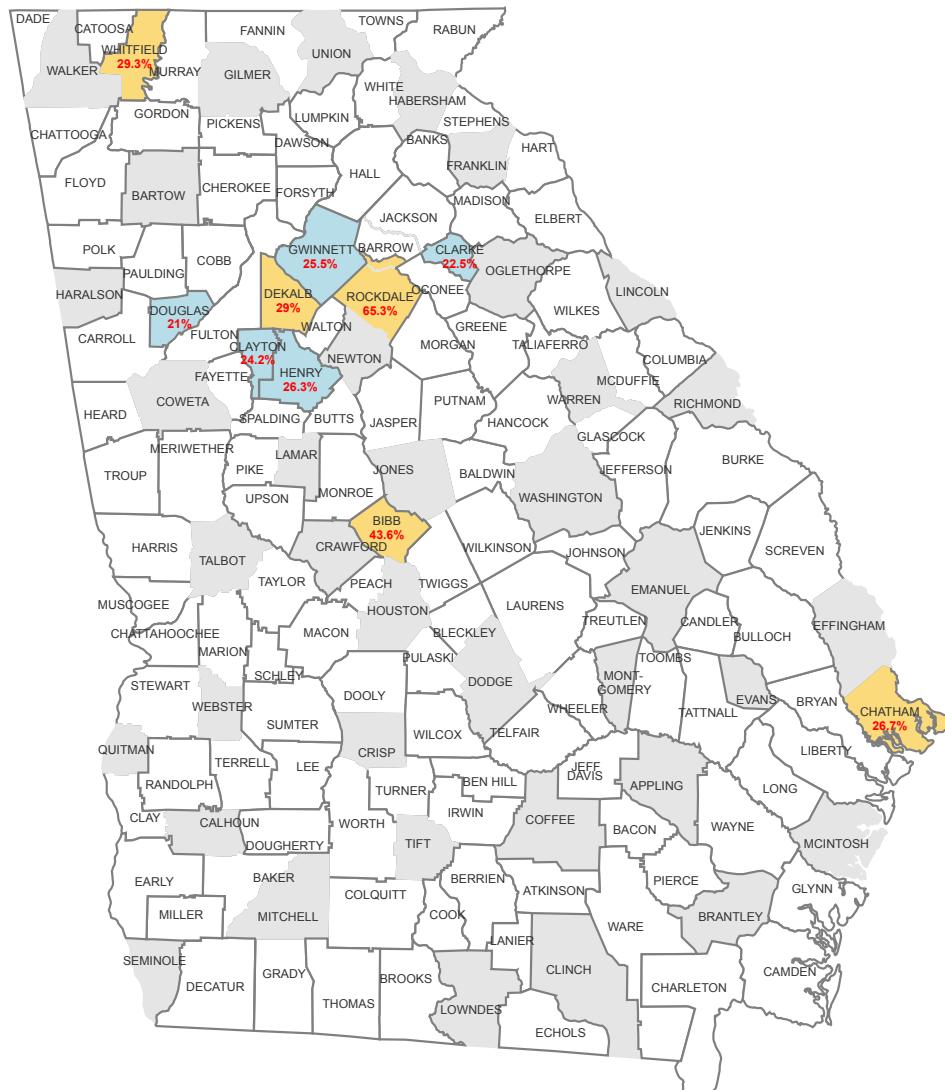
<sup>7</sup> About 2.4% of Georgia residents speak an Asian or Pacific Islander language.

<sup>8</sup> ACS 2019 5-Year Estimates (Language Spoken at Home)

<sup>9</sup> 2020 Census.

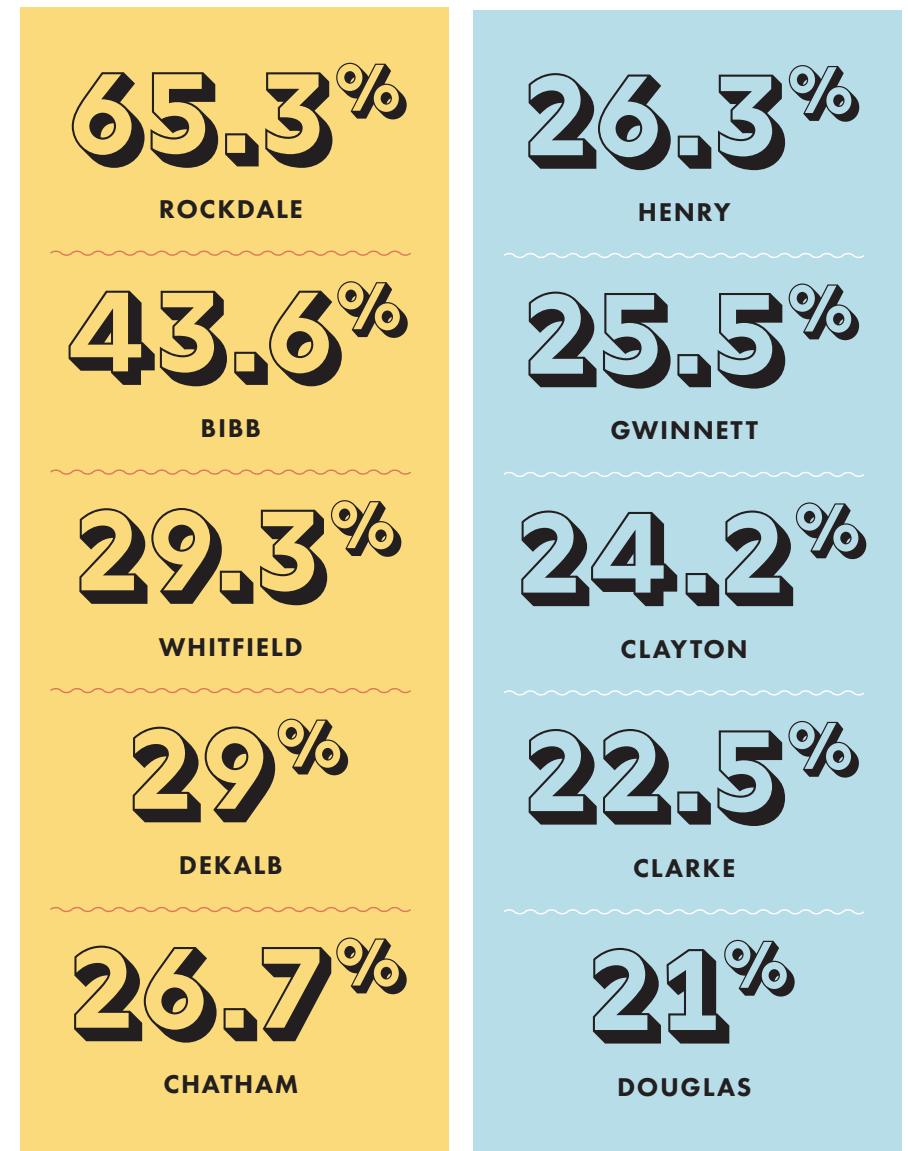
*Source: ACS 2019 5-Year Estimates  
(Language Spoken at Home)*

**Figure 6.** Top 10 Counties With Highest Proportion of LEP Households That Speak API Languages



TOP FIVE COUNTIES

NEXT TOP COUNTIES



Source: ACS 2019 5-Year Estimates (Language Spoken at Home)

**Figure 7.** Top 15 Counties With the Highest Proportion of Asians

	COUNTY	COUNT	PROPORTION OF ASIANS
1	Forsyth	45,117	18.0%
2	Gwinnett	126,526	13.2%
3	Fulton	80,632	7.6%
4	DeKalb	50,076	6.6%
5	Cobb	42,533	5.6%
6	Fayette	6,362	5.3%
7	Oconee	2,066	4.9%
8	Columbia	7,102	4.6%
9	Clayton	13,491	4.5%
10	Barrow	3,233	3.9%
11	Clarke	4,920	3.8%
12	Chatham	10,620	3.6%
13	Henry	7,976	3.3%
14	Chattahoochee	304	3.2%
15	Stewart	167	3.1%

Source: 2020 Census

## BRINGING EQUAL ACCESS TO VOTING FOR ALL

**In the past, limited English proficient (LEP) voters were barred from selecting an interpreter of their choice in state and local elections.** In 2018, Jin Kwon, a 65-year-old Korean voter with limited English proficiency filed a lawsuit asking a federal judge to block the Georgia law. This lawsuit was filed by Advancing Justice-Atlanta, Advancing Justice-Los Angeles, and pro bono law firms Buckley Beal, LLP and Alston & Bird, LLP.

Because of the settlement, the law was not enforced in the December 2018 runoff election, the March 2019 special election, or any subsequent election thereafter. The move protected the rights of thousands of immigrant voters in Georgia.

“



*“Thank you for helping me and my wife vote in the elections. Because of this settlement, I feel relieved that I will be able to continue voting moving forward.”*

JIN KWON  
LEP Voter

# FURTHER DEMOGRAPHICS OF AAPIs LIVING IN GEORGIA

**AAPI voters make up about 202,410 (3%) of eligible voters in Georgia.<sup>10</sup>** About 43% of AAPIs are between 35 and 64 years of age.<sup>11</sup> Based on the household income of AAPIs in Georgia,<sup>12</sup> the largest proportion of AAPIs fall in the middle class (within an annual household income of more than \$45,000 but less than \$108,000).<sup>13</sup> More than half (57%) of Asians in Georgia hold a bachelor's degree or higher.<sup>14</sup>

10 ACS 2019 5-Year Estimates (Sex by Age by Nativity and Citizenship Status; ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates)

11 ACS 2019 1-Year Estimates (Sex by Age)

12 ACS 2019 1-Year Estimates (Household income in the past year)

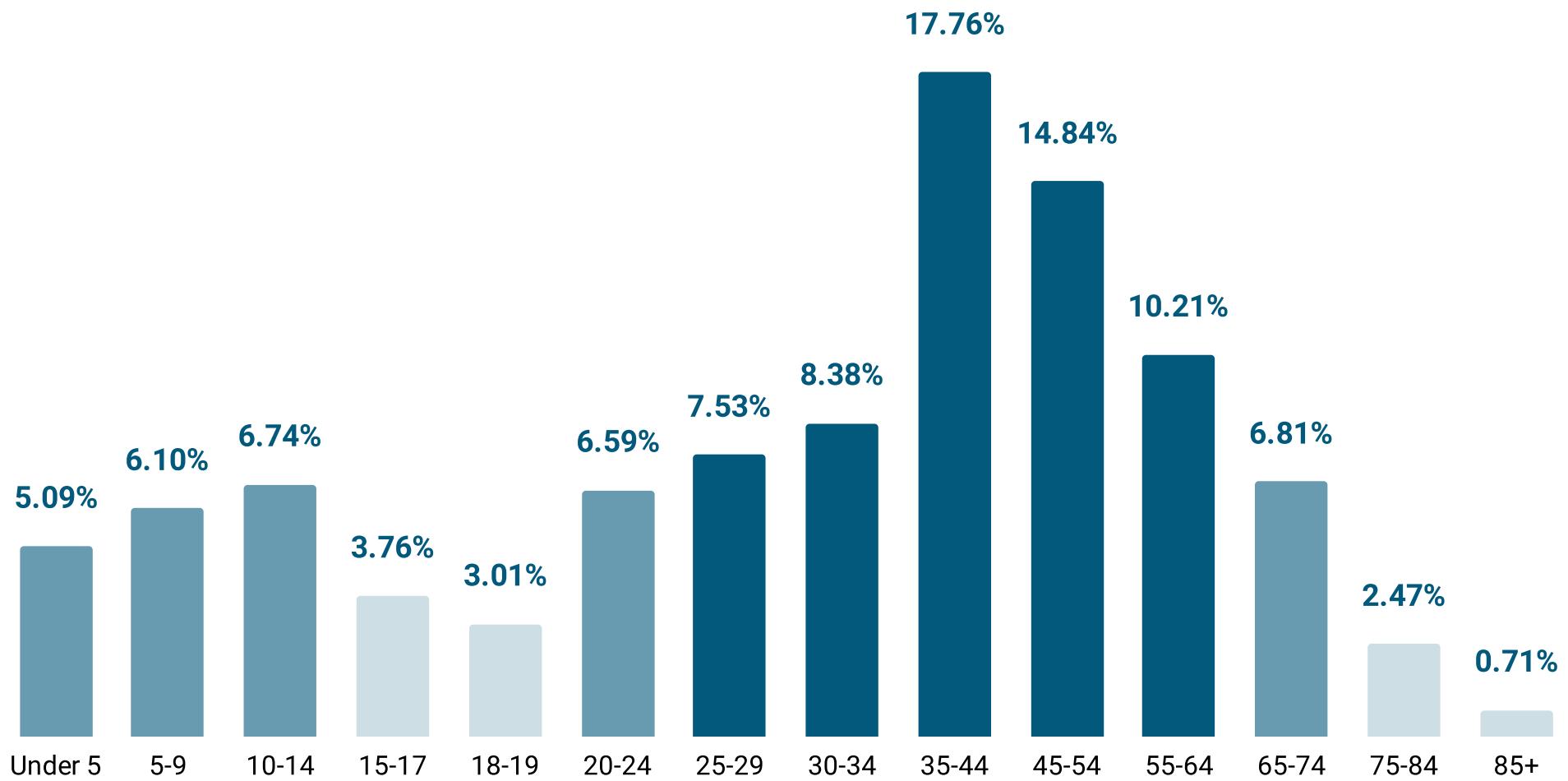
13 Adapted household income scales from Georgia Budget & Policy Institute's (GBPI) People-Powered Prosperity (2018) <https://gbpi.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/People-Powered-Prosperity.pdf>

14 ACS 2019 1-Year Estimates (Sex by Educational Attainment for the Population 25 Years and Over; Asian Alone)



THE LARGEST AGE GROUP OF AAPIs IS BETWEEN 35 AND 44 YEARS OLD.

Figure 8. Age Distribution of AAPIs in Georgia



Source: ACS 2019 1-Year Estimates (Sex by Age)

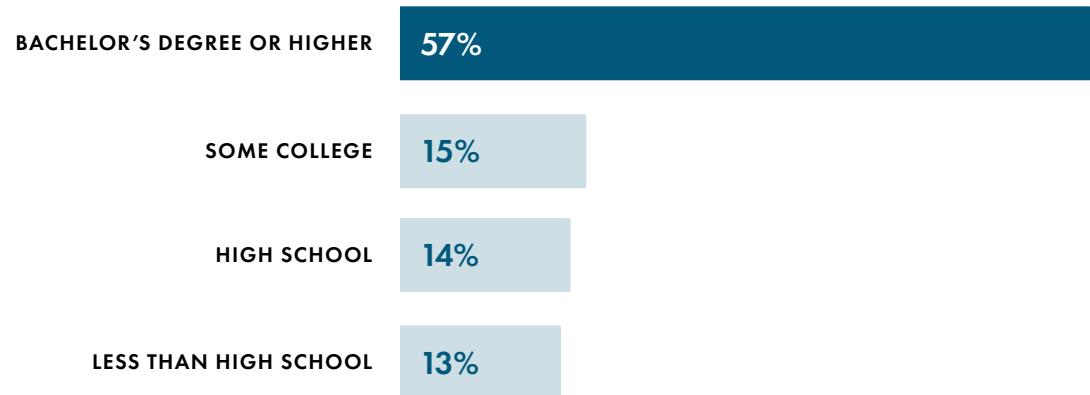
**Figure 9.** Household Income Distribution of AAPIs in Georgia



Source: ACS 2019 1-Year Estimates (*Household Income in The Past Year*)

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**Figure 10.** Education Level Attained by AAPIs in Georgia

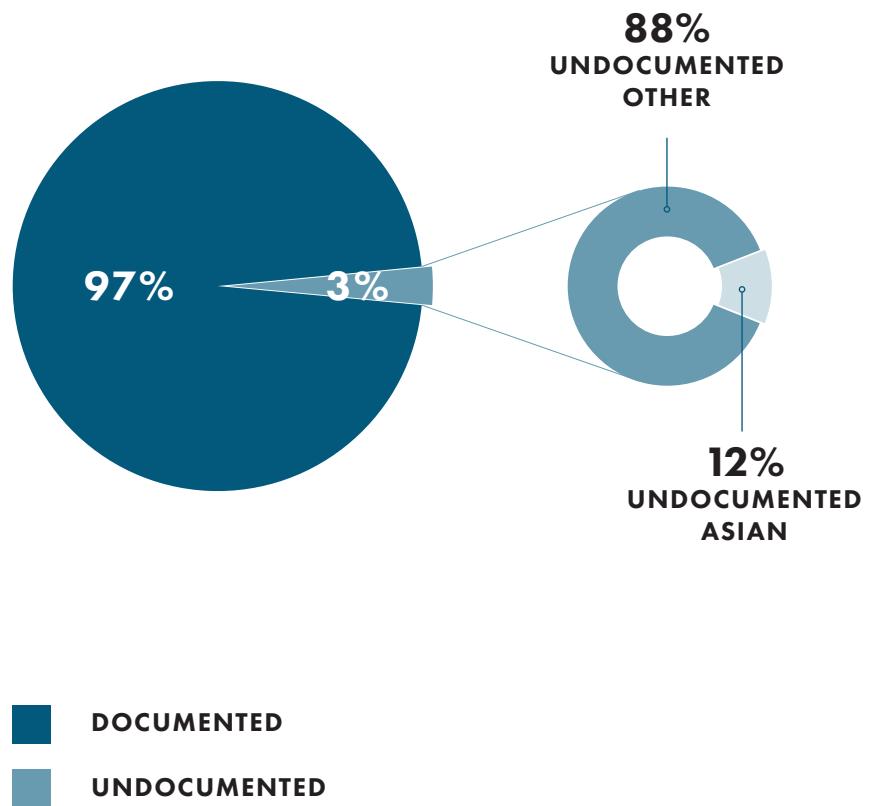


Source: ACS 2019 1-Year Estimates (*Sex by Educational Attainment for the Population 25 Years and Over; Asian Alone*)

MORE THAN  
HALF OF AAPIs  
IN GEORGIA  
ARE MIDDLE  
TO UPPER  
CLASS (59%)  
AND HAVE A  
BACHELOR'S  
DEGREE OR  
HIGHER (57%).

According to the Migration Policy Institute, there are about 330,000 undocumented residents living in Georgia, which accounts for about 3% of Georgia residents. 12% of these undocumented residents are from Asia.<sup>15</sup>

**Figure 11.** Proportion of Undocumented Residents in Georgia and Those from Asia



*Source: Migration Policy Institute - GA Undocumented Population*

<sup>15</sup> Migration Policy Institute - GA Undocumented Population (<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/charts/unauthorized-immigrant-populations-country-and-region-top-state-and-county>)

## HELPING IMMIGRANTS TO BECOME U.S. CITIZENS

**In order for AAPI communities in Georgia to access their full rights and responsibilities, access to citizenship is critical.** Advancing Justice-Atlanta hosts free monthly multi-lingual citizenship application workshops throughout the state. Staff and volunteers evaluate eligibility for naturalization and provide application assistance especially to low-income, LEP families. These events are often hosted in partnership with other public agencies and community organizations.

Despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, they pivoted their in-person workshops to remote services allowing them to expand their naturalization services throughout Georgia and make naturalization accessible to more communities. Advancing Justice-Atlanta has helped more than 300 individuals access naturalization legal services and assisted in the filing of 100 naturalization applications.

“



*“We haven’t stopped providing legal services in spite of the pandemic. Our free naturalization workshops have been hosted once a month. We utilize free and encrypted platforms to complete the N-400 application and fee waiver.”*

**SOL OCHOA**

Legal Program Coordinator,  
Advancing Justice-Atlanta

# AAPI VOTING TRENDS IN GEORGIA

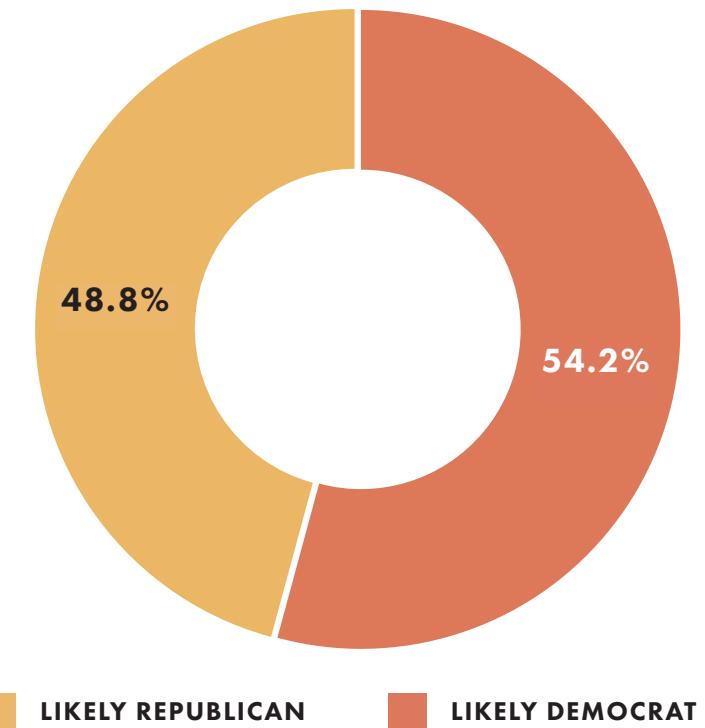


# STATEWIDE AAPI VOTING TRENDS

In 2019, it was estimated that there were 7,356,558 voting age residents in Georgia.<sup>16</sup> The number of current registered voters in 2020 was 7,706,952.<sup>17</sup> The following shows the partisanship of Georgian voters as well as their demographic breakdown.

According to TargetSmart data, it was estimated that there were **slightly more Georgians that were “likely Democrats”** compared to the estimated “likely Republicans,” with an average partisanship score of 52.6 and PVI<sup>18</sup> of R+3.

**Figure 12.** Partisanship of Georgia Voters



Source: TargetSmart

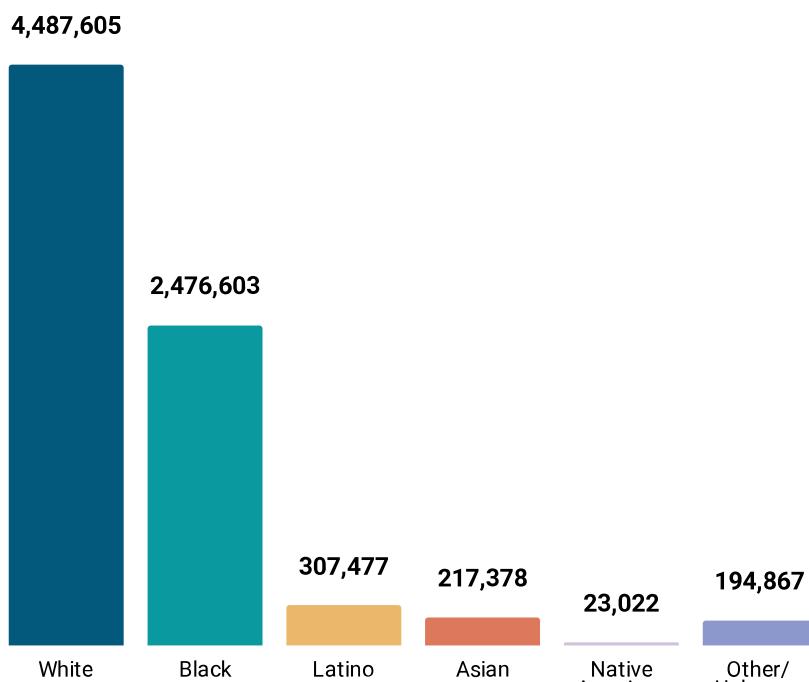
<sup>16</sup> ACS 2019 5-Year Estimates (Sex by Age by Nativity and Citizenship Status; ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates)

<sup>17</sup> TargetSmart

<sup>18</sup> Cook Partisan Voting Index

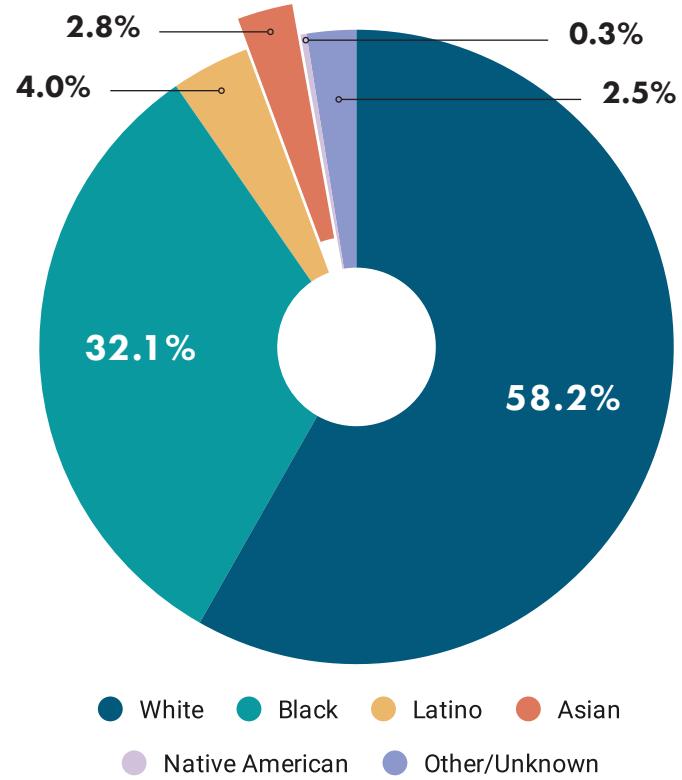
According to TargetSmart data, in the 2020 General Election, about 58% of Georgian voters were white.  
**AAPI voters made up about 3% of Georgia's voting population.**

**Figure 13.** Racial Breakdown of Registered Voters (in Numbers)



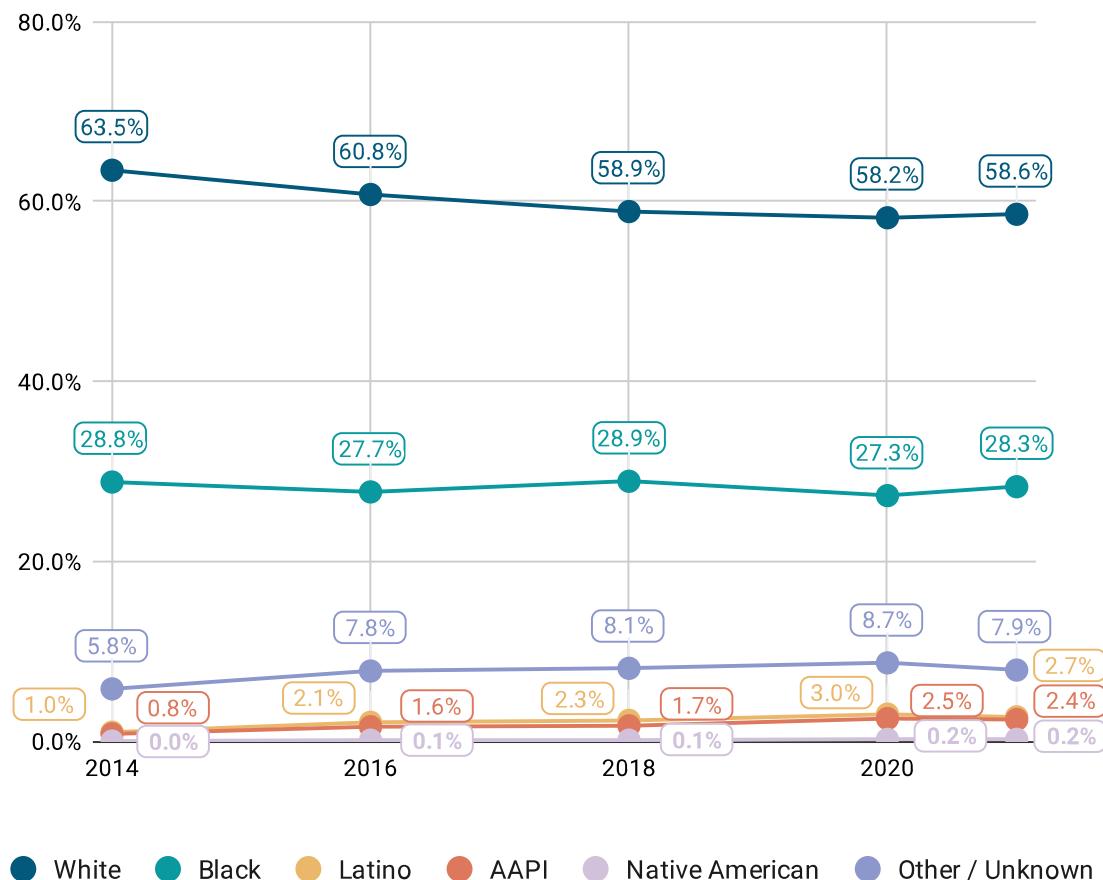
Source: TargetSmart

**Figure 14.** Racial Breakdown of Registered Voters (in Percentages)



Source: TargetSmart

**Figure 15.** Historical Turnout: Racial Breakdown



Source: TargetSmart

HISTORICALLY, THE SHARE OF WHITE VOTERS HAS BEEN DECREASING WHILE THE SHARE OF HISPANIC AND AAPI VOTERS HAS BEEN STEADILY INCREASING OVER THE YEARS.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> States including Georgia periodically purge their voter files for infrequent voters. The voter file holds a smaller share of the historical electorate. Thus the historical analysis is often limited to people who have also voted since the election of interest. Additionally, the voter file may not pick up on demographic changes due to migration until later in the election cycle when voter registration increases.

# CONTINUING THE FIGHT AGAINST VOTER SUPPRESSION

The history of voter suppression in Georgia is alive and well. Policies and practices that have historically been used to suppress the Black vote now include xenophobic anti-immigrant policies and practices. Local civil rights groups have been at the frontlines fighting to protect Georgians against unjust, oppressive laws and policies.

## 2016

In [Georgia State Conference of the NAACP v. Kemp](#), local civil rights groups sued the Secretary of State over Georgia's "exact match" voter registration verification process. The "exact match" process automatically rejected voter registration applications if an applicant's information did not exactly match information in other state databases. Thousands of eligible voters were denied the right to vote even when their applications contained no errors. An injunction was won prior to the 2016 presidential election restoring about 40,000 voters. 76% on this list were people of color.

## 2017

Local civil rights groups challenged the Georgia statute that required Georgians to register to vote three months in advance of a federal runoff election, arguing that it was in violation of the National Voter Registration Act. A federal judge extended the voter registration deadline for the 2017 runoff election, enabling 8,000 additional voters to vote in the election. Learn about [Georgia State Conference of the NAACP v. State of Georgia](#).

## 2018

The Georgia Legislature passed House Bill 286 codifying the "exact match" voter registration verification process in 2017. In 2018, local civil rights groups filed a lawsuit to end the "exact match" law which placed more than 53,000 voter registration applications, 80% of which belonged to people of color, in "pending" status. Some of the applications in pending status were flagged erroneously as noncitizens. The lawsuit led a federal judge to increase protections to voters

# 2020

for the 2018 general and runoff elections. Learn about [Georgia Coalition for the Peoples' Agenda v. Kemp.](#)

American Civil Liberties Union of Georgia (ACLU of Georgia) filed a lawsuit on behalf of Georgia Muslim Voter Project and Advancing Justice-Atlanta to protect Georgia voters who had their absentee ballots or applications rejected due to an alleged "signature mismatch." The lawsuit resulted in a preliminary injunction that ordered election officials to give voters an opportunity to fix the issue before rejecting their absentee ballots in the November 2018 general election. Learn about [Georgia Muslim Voter Project v. Kemp.](#)

# 2021

Advancing Justice-Atlanta filed a lawsuit to challenge a state law that severely restricted who could be an interpreter in state and local elections. The lawsuit resulted in a settlement that entitled LEP voters to an interpreter of their choice in the December runoff election. This broad access to an interpreter now applies to all elections in Georgia. Learn about [Kwon v. Crittenden.](#)

GALEO filed an emergency lawsuit against Gwinnett County and the Secretary of State for their failure to provide election materials to Gwinnett County voters bilingually in English and Spanish. This case is still ongoing at the appellate level. Learn about [GALEO v. Gwinnett County Board of Elections.](#)

Advancing Justice-Atlanta filed a lawsuit challenging Senate Bill 202 which restricts absentee voting by mail. SB 202 reduces the time to request and return absentee ballots, eliminates absentee ballot drop-off locations, prohibits local and state officials from proactively mailing absentee applications, imposes burdensome new voter identification requirements, and criminalizes certain handling and return of completed absentee ballot applications. This case is still ongoing. Learn about [Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Atlanta v. Raffensperger.](#)

## 2020 GENERAL ELECTION VOTER TRENDS

**50.1%**

STATEWIDE VOTES FOR BIDEN

vs

**55%**

AAPI VOTES FOR BIDEN

**Joe Biden beat Donald Trump by about 12,000 votes statewide, receiving about 50.1% of the two-way vote.** Biden outperformed Clinton (2016 Presidential Election) in many counties, particularly in the Atlanta metro region. Biden received 50.1% of the two-way vote share in 2020, running several points ahead of Clinton's 47.3%.<sup>20</sup>

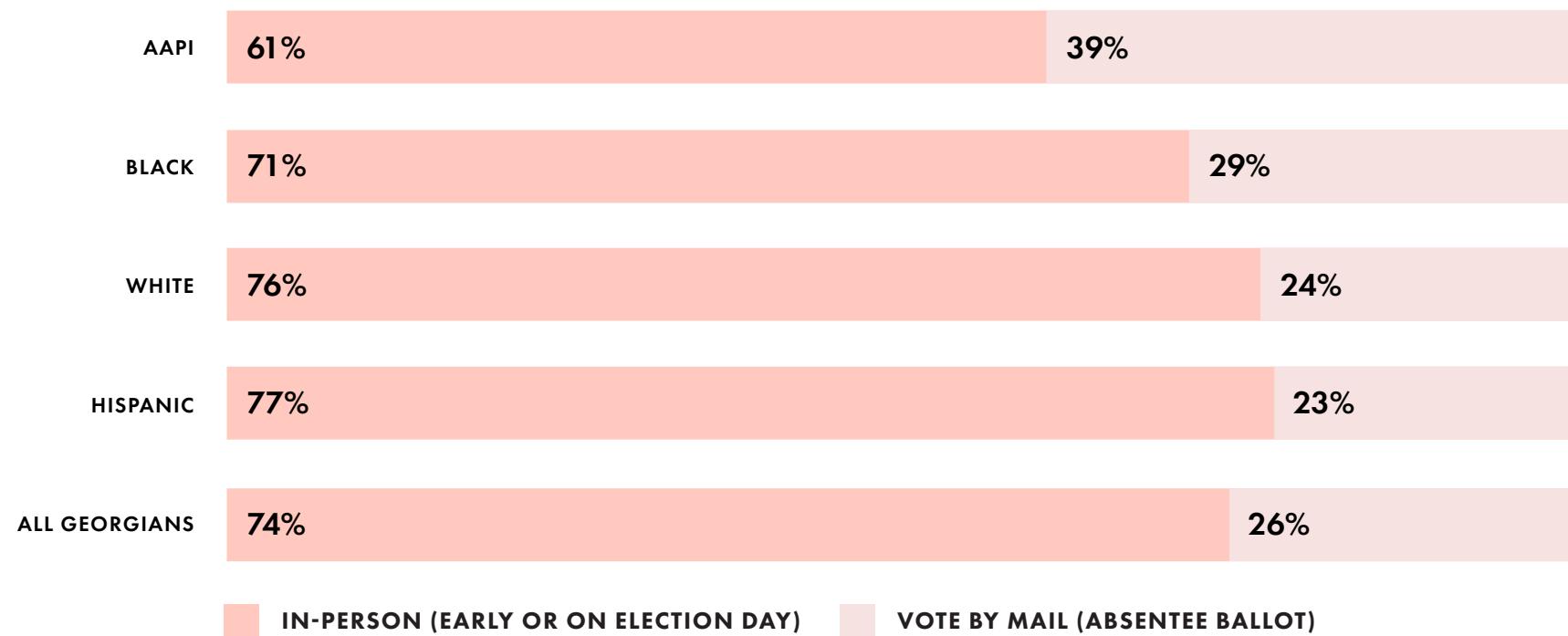
Based on the Clarity 2020 Biden Support Score and the TargetSmart voter file, it is estimated that roughly 73,355 AAPI voters voted for Joe Biden in the 2020 Presidential election. **This means Biden ran ahead of his statewide numbers among AAPI voters, winning about 55% of AAPI voters.**

20 Georgia Secretary of State

## VOTING METHODS

In the 2020 General Election, about a quarter (26.1%) of the Georgian voters voted early by mail (i.e., absentee vote). **More than a third (39.5%) of AAPI voters voted in the 2020 General Election by mail.**<sup>21</sup>

**Figure 16.** Voting Method of Georgian Voters in the 2020 General Election by Race



Source: Georgia Secretary of State

21 Georgia Secretary of State

## AAPI TURNOUT FOR 2020 GENERAL ELECTION

# 64.6%

RECORD TURNOUT RATE

During the 2020 elections, Asian Americans flexed their political muscle in presidential and congressional races, contributing to a record voter turnout across the state. Overall, the Georgia Secretary of State reports that 126,815 (64.6% turnout rate) AAPI voters cast a ballot in the 2020 General election. Biden won by 11,779 votes.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Based on Georgia Secretary of State's data of 196,210 registered voters who are AAPI.



# COMING TOGETHER IN THE MIDST OF COVID-19

**At the beginning of 2020 election season, community groups were facing unprecedented challenges, including the on-going COVID-19 pandemic, post office delays, and the struggle to stay afloat in this overall tumultuous time. With the belief that AAPIs should not have to choose between their health and voting, local civil rights organizations and thousands of volunteers worked around the clock to ensure that every option was available to safely make AAPI votes count.**



**ANTHONY PACHECO**

*Senior Community Organizer,  
Advancing Justice-Atlanta*

**"It was a lot harder to get out the vote during a pandemic.** We had to really think outside the box and build up our digital strategy using campaign technology. We were able to connect to every Asian American voter in the state in the safety of their homes."



**SYEDA BANO**

*Senior Community Organizer,  
Asian American Advocacy Fund*

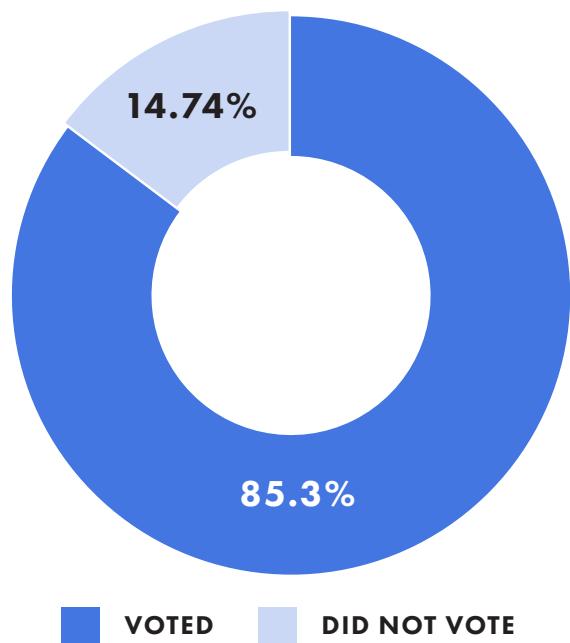
**"We had to make sure we were reaching our communities and respecting public health recommendations. In the midst of a global pandemic, our organizers' work to make calls and knock on doors were crucial to the victories seen in the 2020 and 2021 runoff elections."**

# 2021 SENATE RUNOFF VOTER TRENDS

Of the voters who voted in the 2020 General Election, most of them (85%) also voted in the 2021 Runoff Election. Of the voters who did not vote in the General Election, about 5% of them voted in the Runoffs.<sup>23</sup>

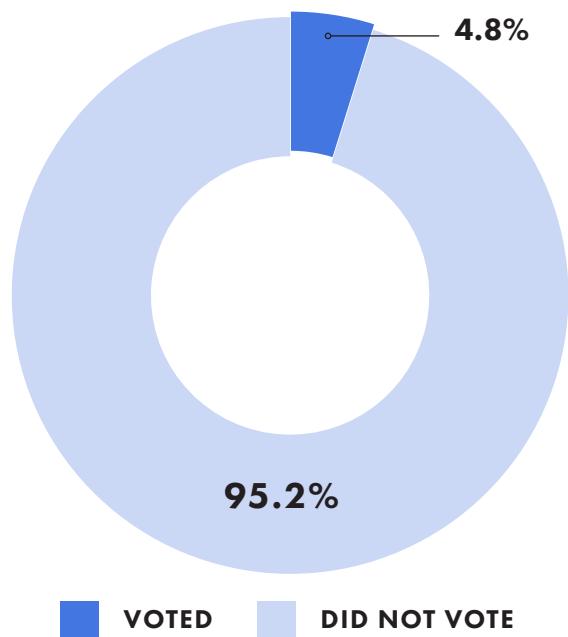
23 TargetSmart.

**Figure 17.** 2021 Runoff Voter Turnout Among 2020 General Election Voters



Source: TargetSmart

**Figure 18.** 2021 Runoff Voter Turnout Among 2020 General Election Non-Voters



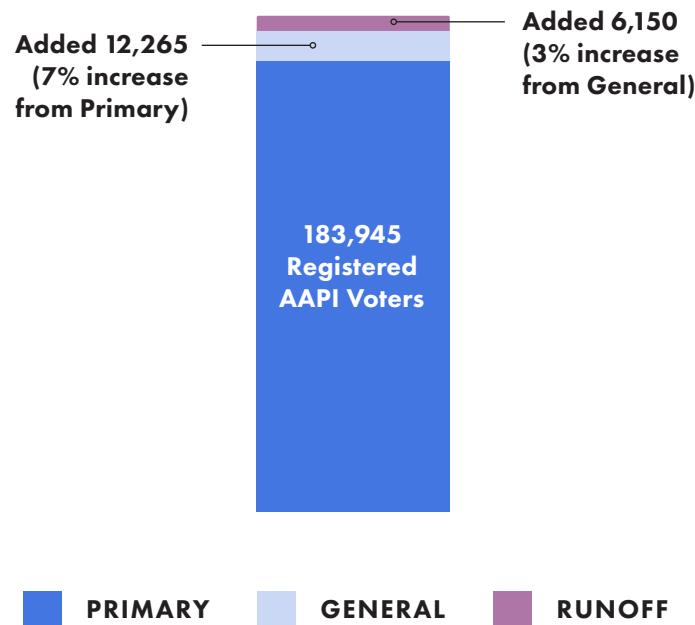
Source: TargetSmart

## AAPi VOTERS AND THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE 2020 AND 2021 ELECTIONS

The number of registered AAPI voters increased from Primary to General to Runoff elections. In total, there was about a 10% increase in registered AAPI voters from Primary to Runoff elections. Of the registered AAPI voters, about 2% actually voted in the Primary, 65% in the General, and 53% in the Runoff elections.<sup>24</sup>

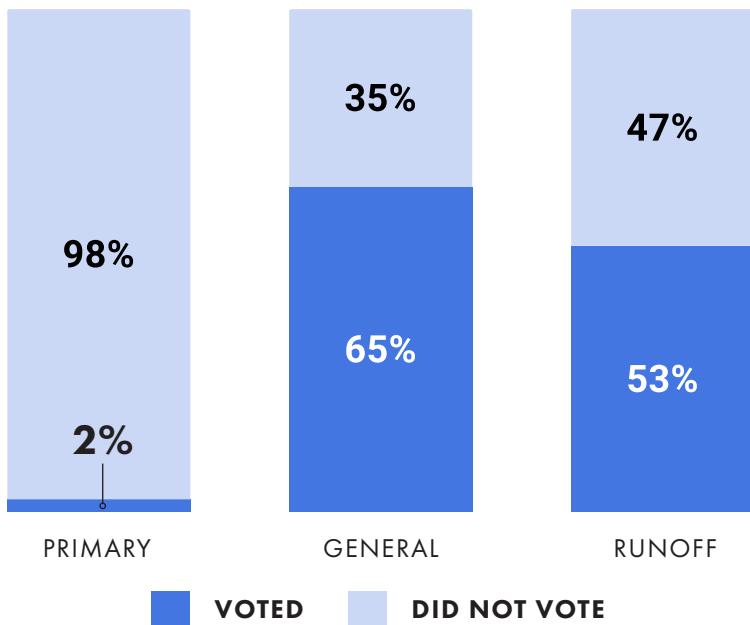
<sup>24</sup> Georgia Secretary of State.

**Figure 19.** Changes in Registered AAPI Voters in 2020 Primary, General, and 2021 Runoff Elections



Source: Georgia Secretary of State

**Figure 20.** Changes in AAPI Voter Turnout in 2020 Primary, General, and 2021 Runoff Elections



Source: Georgia Secretary of State

## TRENDS FROM GENERAL TO RUNOFF ELECTIONS

In general, the number of voters generally decreased from the General (4,997,716; 64.8%) to Runoff elections (4,484,954; 51.7%), which was a 10% decrease overall.<sup>25</sup> This trend was similar for AAPI voters. Even with the addition of newly registered AAPI voters (3% of AAPI voters) between General and Runoff elections, **the number of actual AAPI votes dropped from 65% to 53%.**<sup>26</sup>

In general, Georgia had slightly more voters who voted in-person (either early or on election day). **Compared to other race groups in Georgia, AAPI voters voted by mail at a higher rate.** When comparing the voting methods between the 2020 General Election and the 2021 Runoff Election, the vote-by-mail numbers decreased consistently across the state, whereas election day votes increased across the board. However, AAPI voters still voted by mail at a much higher rate than any other race group.

25 TargetSmart

26 Georgia Secretary of State

**Figure 21.** Vote by Mail Percentages in 2020 General and 2021 Runoff Elections

RACE	2020 GENERAL ELECTION	2021 RUNOFF ELECTION	DIFFERENCE
AAPI	40%	34%	-6%
Black	29%	27%	-2%
White	24%	22%	-2%
Hispanic	23%	20%	-3%
All Georgians	26%	24%	-2%

Source: Georgia Secretary of State

## VOTING METHOD

As previously discussed, similarly to the 2020 General Election, slightly less than a quarter (23.7%) of Georgians voted early by mail in the 2021 Runoff Election.

**About one out of three (34.1%) AAPI voters voted early by mail.**

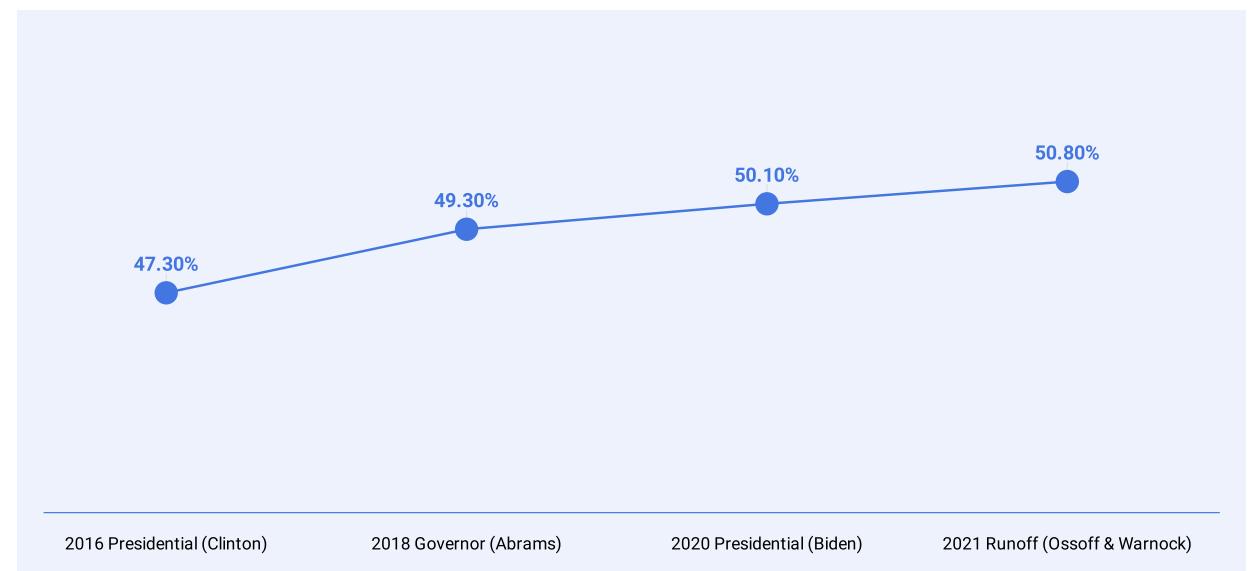
Voter suppression efforts to restrict early and absentee voting will significantly limit the participation of voters in Georgia, especially for AAPI voters.



## PARTISAN TRENDS

An increasing number of voters voted for the Democratic Party in Georgia since the 2016 Presidential Election to the 2021 Runoff Elections.<sup>27</sup>

**Figure 22.** Trend of Democrat Voters from 2016 to 2021



*Source: Georgia Secretary of State*

# ASIAN AMERICANS BY DISTRICT



# CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS

The data presented in this section reflects Congressional maps passed in 2011 and utilized until 2021. While data on new 2021 districts is still to be determined, trends from the 2016, 2018 and 2020 elections show the impact of AAPI voters.

## IMPACT OF 2021 REDISTRICTING IN GEORGIA

**The 2021 redistricting process in Georgia changed all districts which will have significant consequences for federal and state elections.** In an attempt to preserve Republican advantage in the state, legislators dramatically shifted district lines in Forsyth, Cobb, and Gwinnett, the three counties with the largest percentage of Asian Americans in Georgia. In addition, Congressional District 6 was redrawn to exclude minority areas and was extended north to instead include towns which favored Trump in the last election cycle. This shift nullified any chance of the minority vote having any impact in the district. On the other hand, given the continued rapid growth of Asians in Gwinnett County, Congressional District 7 was redrawn to advantage a clear Democratic win.

The Congressional Districts with the largest number of Asian Americans are 7th Congressional District<sup>15</sup> (67,440), 6th Congressional District<sup>30</sup> (41,239), 4th Congressional District<sup>31</sup> (18,355), 5th Congressional District<sup>32</sup> (16,421),

<sup>30</sup> CD 6 includes East Cobb County, North Fulton County, and North DeKalb County. The district includes part or all of Alpharetta, Brookhaven, Chamblee, Doraville, Dunwoody, Johns Creek, Marietta, Milton, Mountain Park, Roswell, Sandy Springs, and Tucker.

<sup>31</sup> CD 4 includes parts of DeKalb County, Gwinnett County, Newton County and Rockdale County. Cities include Conyers, Covington, Decatur, Lilburn and Lithonia.

<sup>32</sup> CD 5 includes central Fulton and parts of DeKalb and Clayton counties. The district includes some of the surrounding suburbs, including East Point, Druid Hills, and Forest Park.

and 11th Congressional District<sup>33</sup> (13,157). Turnout in these 5 districts in the 2020 General Elections was over 60%. In the runoffs, the AAPI turnout rates in these districts were over 50%.

**Figure 23.** AAPI Voters by Congressional District and Their Turnout Rates

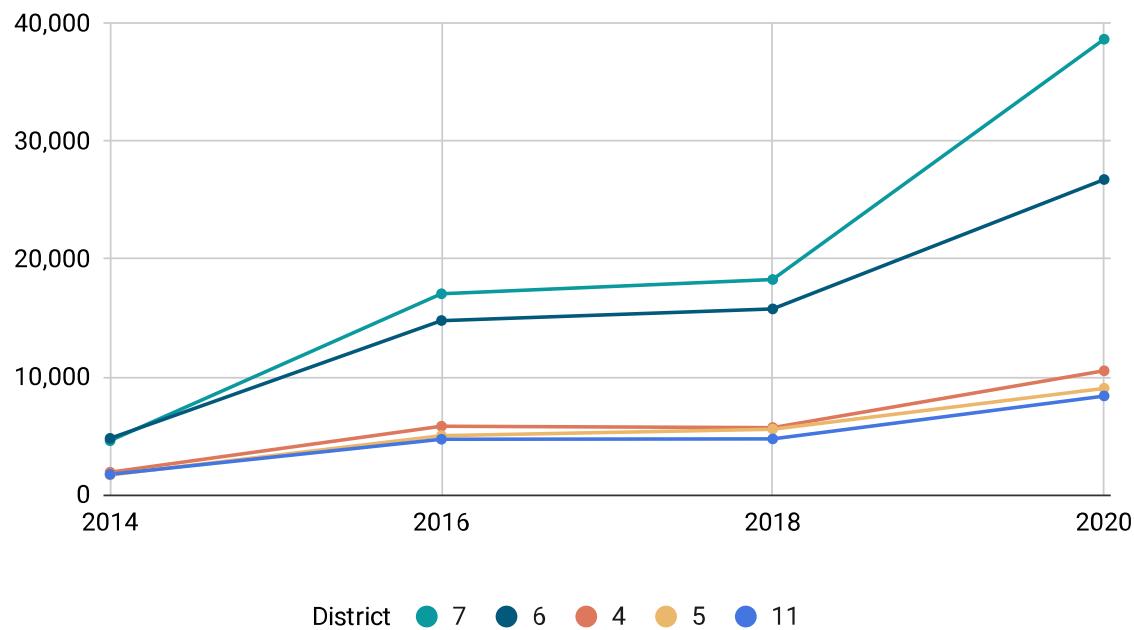
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT	ASIAN AMERICAN VOTERS REGISTERED	2020 GENERAL ELECTIONS AAPI TURNOUT	2021 RUNOFF ELECTIONS AAPI TURNOUT
1st Congressional District	7,758	55.2%	43.4%
2nd Congressional District	3,901	55.4%	42.9%
3rd Congressional District	7,372	63.1%	49.0%
4th Congressional District	18,355	62.5%	51.4%
5th Congressional District	16,421	60.0%	51.0%
6th Congressional District	41,239	72.6%	63.7%
7th Congressional District	67,440	65.5%	52.1%
8th Congressional District	5,998	60.8%	46.9%
9th Congressional District	5,914	59.9%	46.1%
10th Congressional District	9,207	59.6%	46.7%
11th Congressional District	13,157	68.0%	55.9%
12th Congressional District	7,006	60.7%	49.8%
13th Congressional District	9,952	59.8%	46.8%
14th Congressional District	3,590	62.4%	47.4%

Source: GA Secretary of State

<sup>33</sup> CD11 includes Cartersville, Kennesaw, Marietta, Woodstock and parts of the city of Atlanta. It includes Bartow and Cherokee counties, and parts of Cobb County and Fulton County.

## HISTORICAL TURNOUT BY AAPIs IN TOP 5 CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS

**Figure 24.** Turnout by AAPIs in Top 5 Congressional Districts



Source: GA Secretary of State

WHEN  
LOOKING AT  
HISTORICAL  
TRENDS,  
DATA SHOW  
**CONTINUED  
INCREASE IN  
AAPI TURNOUT  
SINCE 2014  
IN THE TOP  
5 CONGRES-  
SIONAL  
DISTRICTS.**

## FLIPPING DISTRICTS WITH THE ASIAN AMERICAN VOTE

**In the historically Republican 7th Congressional District,<sup>28</sup> Asian American voters helped swing the House race from red to blue.** Asian Americans strongly favored Democrat Carolyn Bourdeaux, making up 150 percent of her winning margin.<sup>29</sup> Many of these Asian American voters (40%) were first-time voters in this district.

If Asian Americans hadn't voted at all, Bourdeaux would have lost by 52 percent to 48 percent, making them critical to her win.

“



*“Asian Americans were the margin of victory in this historic congressional election—this was one of only three house seats in the country that flipped from Republican to Democrat in 2020. It was because of the growing power of the Asian American vote that this seat flipped.”*

**AISHA YAQOOB MAHMOOD**  
Executive Director,  
Asian American Advocacy Fund

<sup>28</sup> CD-7 includes most of Gwinnett County and part of Forsyth County. Cities include Peachtree Corners, Norcross, Cumming, Lawrenceville, Duluth, Snellville, Suwanee, and Buford.

<sup>29</sup> AAPI Civic Engagement Fund, 2020 American Election Eve Poll, <https://aapifund.org/program/research-and-tools/>.

# AAPI TURNOUT BY STATE LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS

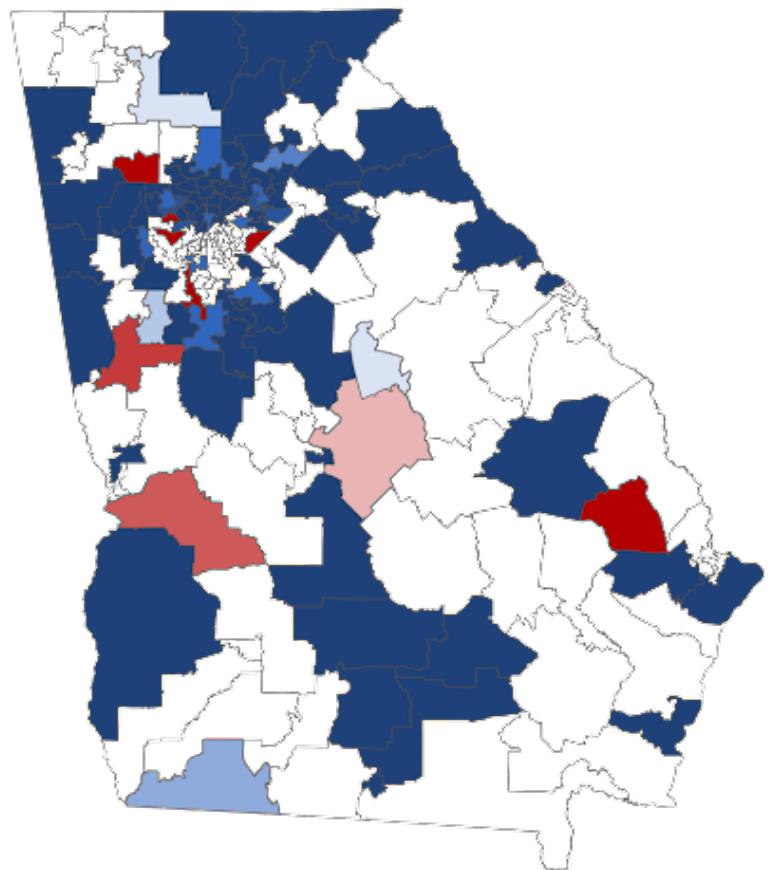
## STATE HOUSE TRENDS

This map shows the difference between the State House results in the 2020 General Election and the 2016 General Election.

Red districts became more Republican between 2016 and 2020, and blue districts became more Democratic between 2016 and 2020. White districts were not contested.

**Eight State House districts have the highest proportion of AAPI voters** according to the TargetSmart voter file as of 2021 — D-25, D-50, D-96, D-97, D-100, D-101, D-107, D-108. House Districts 25, 50, 97 and 107 were contested in 2020 but not 2016. House District 96 was contested in 2016 but not 2020.

**Figure 25.** Changes in the State House Election Results Between 2016 and 2020



Source: Wikipedia, New York Times

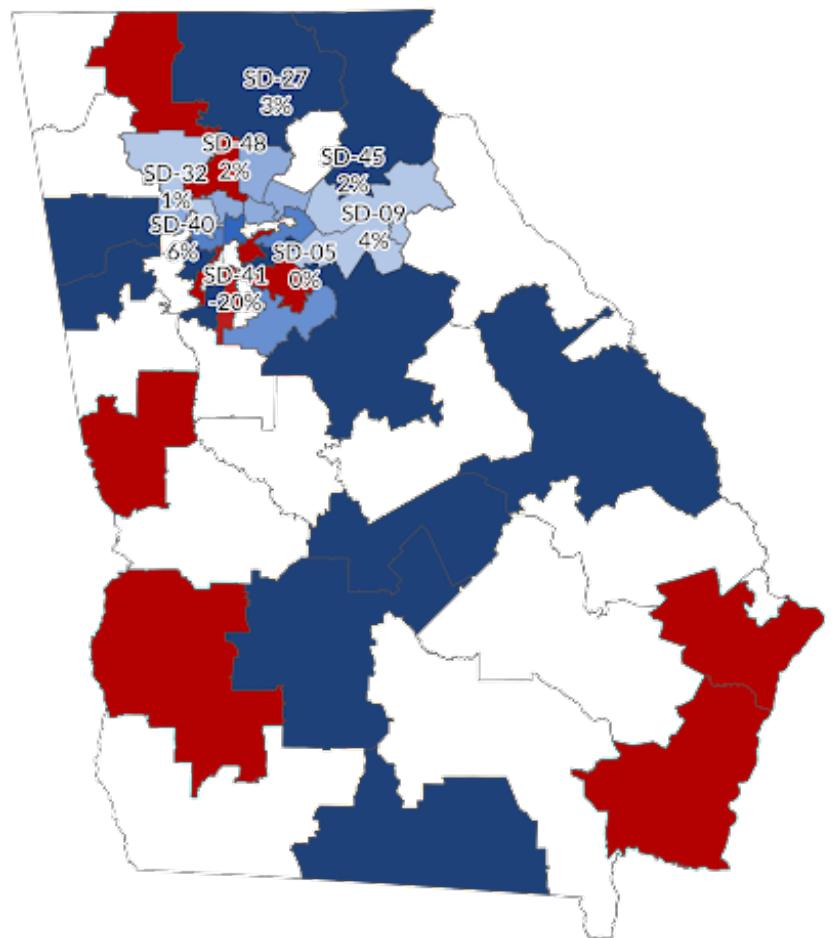
## STATE SENATE TRENDS

This map shows the difference between the State House results in the 2020 General Election and the 2016 General Election.

Red districts became more Republican between 2016 and 2020, and blue districts became more Democratic between 2016 and 2020. White districts were not contested.

**Eight State House districts have the highest proportion of AAPI voters** according to the TargetSmart voter file as of 2021 — D-25, D-50, D-96, D-97, D-100, D-101, D-107, D-108. House Districts 25, 50, 97 and 107 were contested in 2020 but not 2016. House District 96 was contested in 2016 but not 2020.

**Figure 26.** Changes in the State Senate Election Results Between 2016 and 2020



Source: Wikipedia, New York Times

# ASIAN AMERICANS IN GEORGIA POLITICS

**In every election cycle, Georgia has seen an increase in Asian Americans running and winning elected positions.** A series of historic wins by Rep. Sam Park (D-Lawrenceville), Rep. Bee Nguyen (D-Atlanta), and Rep. Marvin Lim (D-Norcross) in the House, and by Sen. Michelle Au (D-Johns Creek) and Sen. Sheikh Rahman (D-Lawrenceville) in the Senate has signaled a rapid rise in Asian American political power in the state.

These victories have marked significant steps forward, but AAPI representation in political offices still remains low.

“



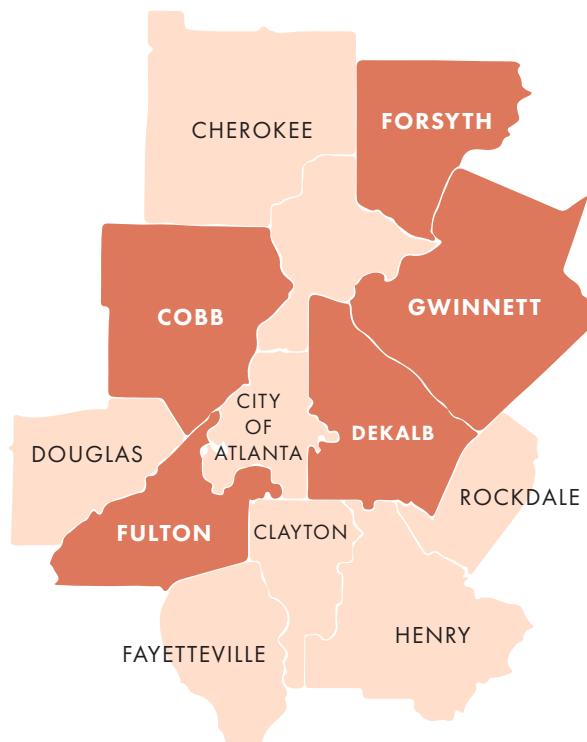
*“We have made strides towards electing Asian Americans across our state, but there is still more work to be done. We need more Asian Americans across local and state races, particularly those that align with our values. That's why AAAF is committed to recruiting and developing strong and passionate candidates.”*

**VYANTI JOSEPH**  
Political Director,  
Asian American Advocacy Fund

# AAPI TURNOUT BY COUNTIES AND CITIES

## TOP COUNTIES WITH AAPI VOTERS

Gwinnett, Fulton, Cobb, DeKalb and Forsyth are the counties with the highest number of AAPI voters. There is a registered voter in every county in Georgia that identifies as AAPI.



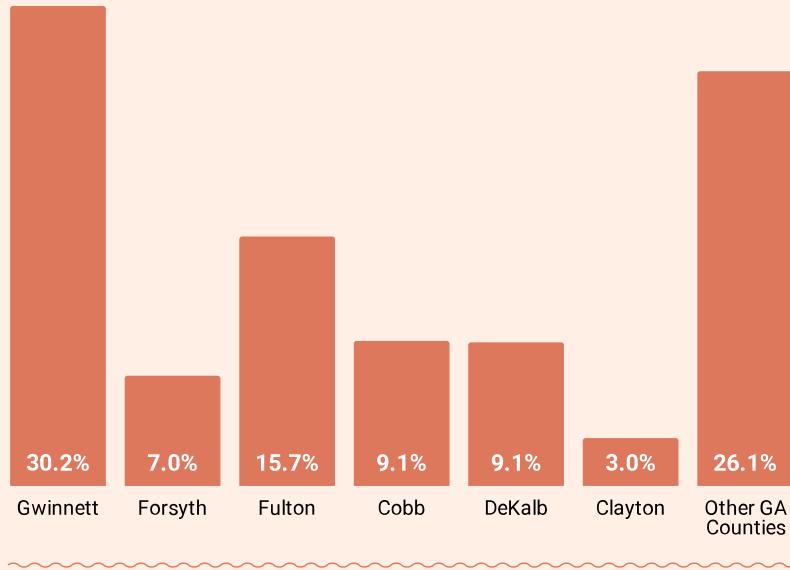
**Figure 27.** AAPI Registered Voters by County

COUNTY	COUNT
Gwinnett County	65,568
Fulton County	34,068
Cobb County	19,778
DeKalb County	19,699
Forsyth County	15,134
Clayton County	6,483
Chatham County	4,177
Columbia County	4,114
Henry County	4,109
Cherokee County	3,007
Houston County	2,677
Muscogee County	2,585
Fayette County	2,582
Hall County	2,175

Source: TargetSmart

**71% of all AAPI registered voters in Georgia live in five counties** — Gwinnett, Forsyth, Fulton, Cobb and DeKalb. Gwinnett County makes up 30.2% of AAPI registered voters in the state and Fulton is the second largest with 15.7%.

**Figure 28.** County Breakdown of AAPI Voters



Source: TargetSmart

**AAPIs in Gwinnett County make up 10.5% of the county's registered voters.** Forsyth County AAPIs make up 8.7% of the registered voters in the county.

**Figure 29.** Share of AAPI Registered Voters by County

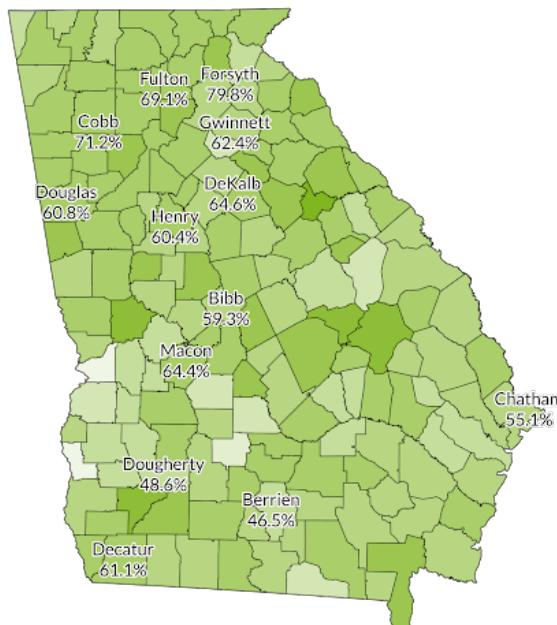
COUNTY	COUNTY VOTER COUNT	AAPI VOTER COUNT	% OF AAPI VOTERS
Gwinnett	625,304	65,568	10.5%
Forsyth	173,535	15,134	8.7%
Fulton	849,515	34,068	4.0%
Cobb	561,146	19,778	3.5%
DeKalb	569,065	19,699	3.5%
Columbia	118,938	4,114	3.5%
Clayton	205,069	6,483	3.2%
Barrow	59,856	1,713	2.9%
Fayette	96,590	2,585	2.7%
Houston	116,618	2,677	2.3%
Henry	183,532	4,109	2.2%

Source: TargetSmart

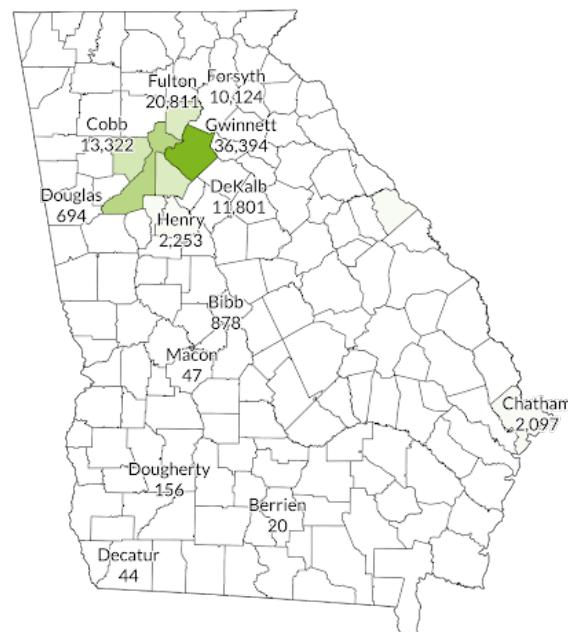
## AAPI TURNOUT FOR 2020 GENERAL ELECTION BY COUNTY

The largest AAPI turnouts in the 2020 General Election were in **Forsyth (79.8%)**, **Cobb (71.2%)**, **Fulton (69.1%)**, **DeKalb (64.6%)**, **Macon (64.4%)**, and **Gwinnett (62.4%)** counties, which are also the counties that Biden won in 2020.

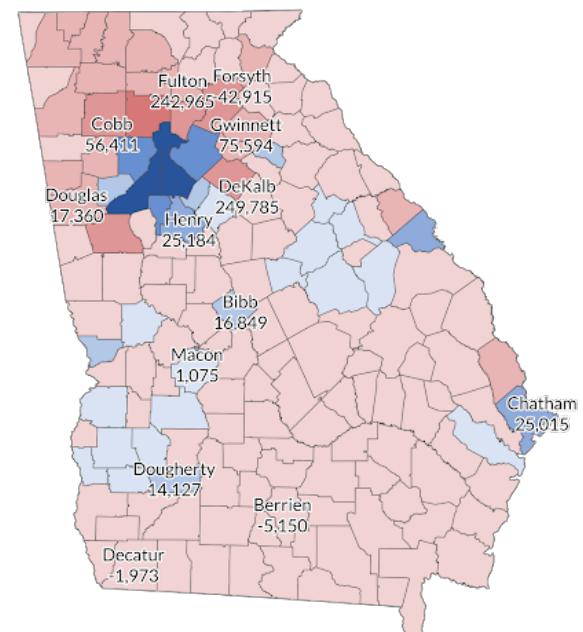
**Figure 30.** AAPI Turnout for 2020 General Election by County



**Figure 31.** Number of AAPI Voters by County



**Figure 32.** Margin by Which Joe Biden Won or Lost by County



Source: GA Secretary of State

Source: GA Secretary of State

Source: GA Secretary of State

## AAPi TURNOUT FOR 2021 RUNOFF ELECTION BY COUNTY

The following shows a breakdown of changes between the General and Runoff elections by county in the percentage of voters by voting method. It shows changes in the proportion of voters who voted-by-mail (i.e., absentee votes), voted early, and voted on election day between General and Runoff elections by county.

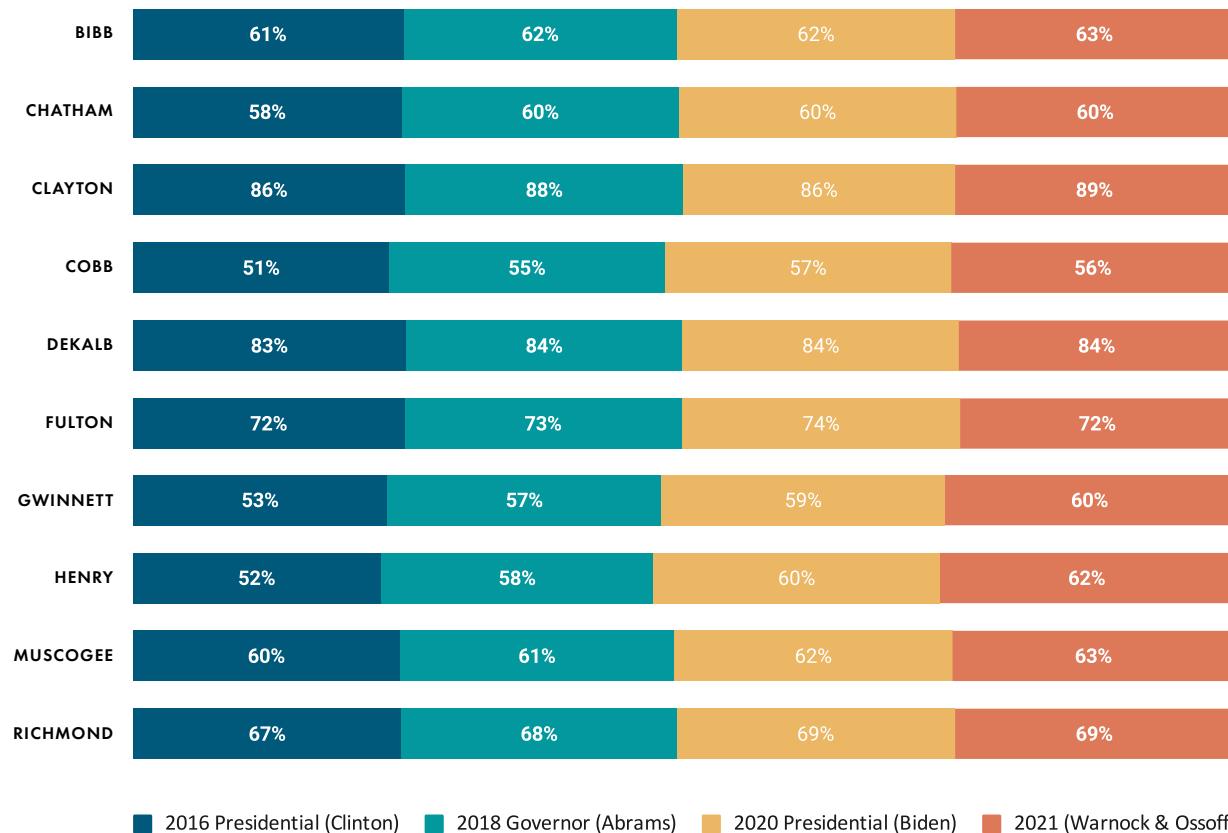
**Figure 33.** Change in Proportion of Voting Method Compared Between 2020 General and 2021 Runoff Elections In Major Counties

COUNTY	CHANGE IN VOTE-BY-MAIL (ABSENTEE VOTERS)	CHANGE IN EARLY VOTE	CHANGE IN ELECTION DAY VOTE
Berrien	-1.9%	-10.8%	+12.8%
Bibb	-2.2%	-7.3%	+9.5%
Chatham	-1.0%	-8.4%	+9.4%
Cobb	-2.2%	-12.5%	+14.6%
Decatur	-1.4%	-12.0%	+13.3%
DeKalb	-2.5%	-3.4%	+5.9%
Dougherty	-2.5%	-1.5%	+4.3%
Douglas	-3.0%	-3.0%	+6.0%
Forsyth	-3.2%	-10.8%	+13.9%
Fulton	-5.1%	-4.6%	+9.5%
Gwinnett	-2.5%	-6.2%	+8.6%
Henry	-4.5%	-5.7%	+10.0%
Macon	-1.3%	-3.5%	+4.7%

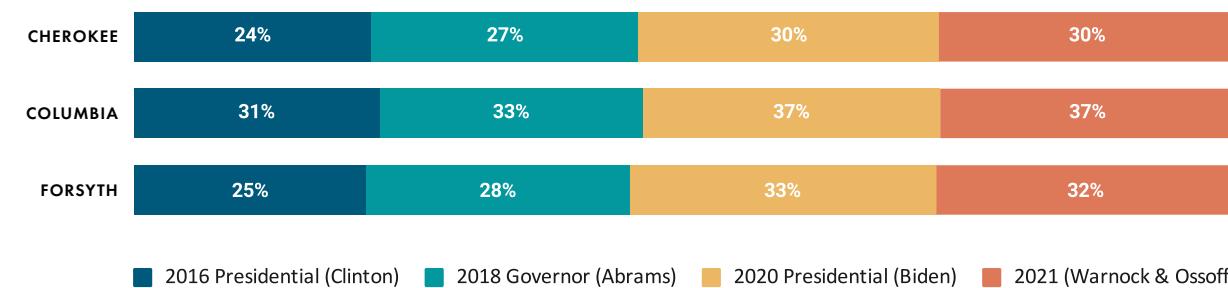
Note: Numbers with (-) show a decrease in the 2021 Runoff election compared to 2020 General elections. Numbers with (+) show an increase in the 2021 Runoff election compared to 2020.

Source: OpenElections

**Figure 34.** Partisan Trends in Key Democratic-Leaning Counties



**Figure 35.** Partisan Trends in Key Republican-Leaning Counties



Source: Georgia Secretary of State

## PARTISAN TRENDS

EVEN IN KEY REPUBLICAN-LEANING COUNTIES, THE VOTES FOR DEMOCRATS HAVE INCREASED.

## GAINS AND LOSSES OF DEMOCRATIC VOTES

The following table shows the gains and losses for Democratic votes in key counties. There were considerable gains for Democrats in four key counties which include three Republican leaning counties — Cherokee (+6.3%), Columbia (+6.4%), and Forsyth (+8.0%) counties.

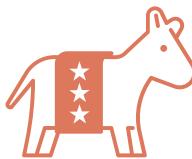
**Figure 36.** Changes of Democratic Votes by County

COUNTY	OSHOFF RUNOFF VS BIDEN	WARNOCK RUNOFF VS BIDEN	OSHOFF RUNOFF VS GENERAL	BIDEN VS ABRAMS	BIDEN VS CLINTON
Bibb	+0.4%	+0.7%	+1.4%	+0.6%	+1.6%
Chatham	+0.1%	+0.3%	0.7%	-0.1%	+1.8%
Cherokee	-0.7%	-0.1%	+0.7%	+3.3%	+6.3%
Clayton	+2.6%	+2.8%	+2.1%	-2.4%	-0.3%
Cobb	-1.3%	-0.5%	+0.6%	+2.4%	+6.1%
Columbia	-0.2%	-0.1%	+1.1%	+4.1%	+6.4%
DeKalb	-0.7%	-0.1%	+0.6%	-0.1%	+1.1%
Forsyth	-1.1%	-0.4%	+0.6%	+4.7%	+8.0%
Fulton	-1.8%	-0.9%	+0.4%	+0.4%	+1.9%
Henry	+1.8%	+2.1%	+2.0%	+2.6%	+8.0%
Muscogee	+0.5%	+0.8%	+1.6%	+1.0%	+2.6%
Richmond	+0.5%	+0.7%	+1.6%	+0.5%	+2.2%

Note: Gains are marked by (+) and losses are marked by (-).

Source: Georgia Secretary of State

## CHANGES IN AAPI VOTES

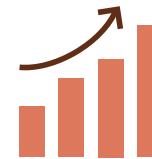


### MORE AAPI VOTERS VOTED FOR DEMOCRATS IN GENERAL

In the 2020 General election, about 57.9% and in the 2021 Runoff election. About 58.1% of AAPI voters voted for Democrats. Overall, the Georgia Secretary of State reports that 126,815 AAPI voters cast a ballot in the 2020 General election and Biden won by 11,779 votes.

In addition, in the 2021 Runoff elections, 106,762 AAPI voters participated. Warnock won by 93,272 votes and Ossoff won by 54,944 votes.

**AAPIs in Georgia moved from being in the margins to being the margin of victory.**



### FORSYTH COUNTY HAD A RECORD-BREAKING INCREASE IN AAPI VOTER TURNOUT

In the 2020 General Election, AAPI voter turnout in Forsyth County was 79.8%. As previously mentioned, Forsyth County had the largest AAPI growth between 2010 and 2020 Census (11.8% increase). The following is a comparison of AAPI voter turnout for each key county and the margin of victory.

Based on the size of registered voters and voter turnout, **continued work in Gwinnett, Fulton, Cobb, and DeKalb counties will be critical in future elections** as well as work in Clayton, Chatham, Columbia, and Henry counties.

**Figure 37.** AAPI Voter Turnout and Margin of Victory by County

COUNTY	2020 GENERAL ELECTION		2021 RUNOFF ELECTION		
	AAPI TURNOUT	MARGIN OF VICTORY	AAPI TURNOUT	MARGIN OF VICTORY (WARNOCK)	MARGIN OF VICTORY (OSSOFF)
Berrien	46.5%	-5,150	54%	-4,394	-4,397
Bibb	59.3%	16,849	54.3%	16,417	15,969
Chatham	55.1%	25,015	53.1%	23,843	23,372
Cobb	71.2%	56,411	63.4%	49,162	43,356
Decatur	61.1%	-1,973	56%	-1,805	-1,792
DeKalb	64.6%	249,785	60.3%	238,423	233,993
Dougherty	48.6%	14,127	47%	13,473	13,399
Douglas	60.8%	17,360	57.6%	18,887	18,428
Forsyth	79.8%	-42,915	66.5%	-39,764	-41,327
Fulton	69.1%	242,965	56.9%	220,361	211,925
Gwinnett	62.4%	75,594	58.8%	78,600	74,783
Henry	60.4%	25,184	59.7%	27,752	27,090
Macon	64.4%	1,075	56.9%	1,094	1,065

Note: Numbers with (-) indicate losses and represent counties that were Republican-leaning.

Source: Georgia Secretary of State

## TOP CITIES FOR AAPI POPULATION

**Asian Americans live in cities throughout Georgia.** Johns Creek, Atlanta, and Alpharetta are the top three cities with the largest populations of AAPI residents.

According to 2020 Census data, Sugar Hill and Suwanee City were the cities with the fastest growing Asian American populations growing 9.01% and 7.34% respectively.

**Figure 38.** Top Cities With AAPI Population

CITY	COUNT
Johns Creek	24,603
Atlanta	22,208
Alpharetta	13,181
Sandy Springs	10,160
Dunwoody	8,839
Duluth	7,929
Milton	6,446
Savannah	5,610
Columbus	5,546
Suwanee	5,250
Roswell	4,626

*Source: 2020 Census*

# WINNING EXPANDED LANGUAGE ACCESS FOR

## VOTERS IN DEKALB, COBB, AND GWINNETT COUNTY

In 2020, DeKalb County became the first county in Georgia to offer an officially translated ballot in an Asian language, and in doing so, it became the first county to voluntarily take steps beyond those required by the federal Voting Rights Act to expand meaningful language access.

A few months later, Cobb County announced the first ever officially translated composite ballot in an Asian language (Korean) and Spanish.

In January 2022, Gwinnett County commissioners approved a budget to include translated sample ballots and voter outreach materials in Chinese, Korean and Vietnamese. Actual election ballots are still only offered in English and Spanish per federal requirements.

This campaign was led by local community leaders and organizations like Advancing Justice-Atlanta and supported by more than 30 voting rights organizations.



*"At a time when widespread voter suppression tactics are attempting to silence our electoral power, we welcome the addition of sample ballots in four Asian languages as an important step to protecting our democracy for limited-English proficient voters. At the same time, Georgia leaders must do more."*

**PHI NGUYEN**  
Executive Director,  
Advancing Justice-Atlanta

# CONCLUSION

**AAPI voters are uniting to claim their place and advance their political power in Georgia.** As we offer this glimpse into the future of AAPI voting power, meaningful investments are critical to organizing Asian American communities and building solidarity with other Black and Brown voters in Georgia. Investing in AAPIs will strengthen the powerful coalition necessary to sustain our recent wins and continue to drive Georgia forward.

**Join us as we fight for a more progressive Georgia.**

