

Secretary Kemp issued the following statement yesterday afternoon: "The Secretary of State's office had no involvement in this decision, and we would never direct someone to take such action. This pattern of reckless behavior is exactly why we are ending our relationship with KSU and the Center for Elections Systems and moving functionality in-house. Not only did KSU officials fail to notify us of the server's vulnerabilities when they first learned of the problem, they failed again to notify us when they decided to wipe the compromised server and the back-up server. We will not stand for this kind of inexcusable conduct or gross incompetence. Earlier today, we opened an internal investigation on this new incident at KSU. Those responsible at KSU should be held accountable for their actions. The Secretary of State's office is also coordinating with FBI officials to get our own copy of the data that was erased at KSU. Despite the undeniable ineptitude at KSU's Center for Elections Systems, Georgia's elections are safe and our systems remain secure. As Secretary of State, I will continue to lead around the clock efforts to keep it that way."

Our current contract with the KSU Center for Elections Systems ends June 30, 2018, but it can be canceled upon 90 days' written notice by one party. It can also be amended by mutual, written consent.

The contract is for \$815,320.00, and it outlines the following duties:

- * Ballot building support
- * ExpressPoll book building and support
- * Acceptance testing and certification of voting systems
- * Technical and training support for Georgia's election systems

This agreement has been in place for at least fifteen years under both Democrat and Republican secretaries of state. The Center is not an extension of the Secretary of State's Office; rather, it is a vendor with which previous agency officials contracted to assist local officials across the state in the administration of elections. We are still finalizing details as we work to move the Center's functionality in-house. We will share information as it becomes available.

All on background--

The KSU Center for Elections Systems does not play a role in our law enforcement activities, maintenance of the voter registration database, qualifying of candidates, certification of election results, publication of election night results, or the safeguarding of voter data.

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We were not asking KSU officials to move mountains, but we would have appreciated some notice that these servers, which had been taken and analyzed by the FBI, would be wiped clean. We are coordinating with FBI officials to get our own copy of the server data, which - thankfully - law enforcement retained in light of KSU's unilateral decision to destroy it. We have not gotten a copy yet. As we have stated all along in this litigation, the plaintiffs' claims are meritless. They are

peddling in conspiracy theories, and the facts readily undermine their case. To put it as simply as possible, we have zero, nada, nil evidence that Georgia's voting equipment has ever been manipulated. The vote counts from previous elections are accurate. None of the unfortunate events which have occurred at KSU affected the election results in previous contests.

Our voting system is secure, but it needs replacement. Our duty to Georgia voters dictates that we investigate alternatives. It is not, however, an action that can be taken independently by this Secretary of State or a future one absent a major change in the law. We need a substantial appropriation - millions and millions of dollars - from the General Assembly and buy-in from the Governor's Office to make this change. In the meantime, we are duty-bound to uphold Georgia law, as written by the legislature, and best utilize the equipment that we have been afforded. So far, we have gotten excellent feedback from voters in Conyers as part of our pilot project using machines with a verified paper trail. We remain dedicated to ensuring secure, accessible, and fair elections for all Georgia voters.

Candice Broce
Press Secretary