Georgia Sec. of State debunks election fraud claims in candid Rotary Club address

By

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Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger speaks to business leaders and elected officials Tuesday afternoon, September 26, at the White County Rotary Club meeting. (Jerry Neace/NowHabersham.com)

He came to White County to speak about the many [different programs his office runs](https://nowhabersham.com/raffensperger-outlines-efforts-to-keep-seniors-safe-promote-small-business/) for the people of Georgia, but there was no escaping the topic most people wanted to hear about: Georgia’s elections. Specifically, his handling of the 2020 presidential election and that infamous call with then President Donald Trump asking him to “find” 11,780 votes “because we won the state.”

Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger didn’t disappoint. Georgia’s top election official spent a portion of his time Tuesday at the White County Rotary Club sharing details of his office’s investigations into allegations of election fraud. The gist of his remarks was they found none.

Through numerous audits and recounts over the last three years, Secretary Raffensperger said his office concluded that there was no election fraud on a large scale as some alleged.

Thousands of voters ‘skipped’ the presidential race

Raffensperger explained that in the 2020 presidential election, approximately 28,000 Georgia voters “skipped” the presidential ballot altogether. Still, those same voters did vote down the ticket for other Republican candidates.

Georgia’s Republican congressional candidates received approximately 33,000 more votes than then-President Trump. Republican candidates who ran for state Senate and House seats received approximately 5% more votes than Trump.

Localizing those numbers, Raffensperger said that in White County, about 70 people did not vote for Trump but did vote down ballot.

Dead people voting

After the 2020 election, Trump and his allies alleged that 10,315 dead people voted in Georgia. After investigating that allegation over three years, the Secretary of State said his office could only find four who had voted.

In several of those instances, the individual voter had passed away, but their spouses received the absentee ballot, filled it out, and sent it back. Another instance involved an elderly person who moved away, but the address to receive their absentee ballot was not changed. The individual who bought the house received the absentee ballot, filled it out, and returned it. Then that individual voted again at their precinct.

Underage voting

The Georgia Secretary of State’s Office also investigated allegations that 66,000 underage voters cast ballots in the 2020 presidential election.

That conspiracy arose from apparent confusion over a state law allowing young adults to register to vote at the age of 17½, but not vote until they are 18.

According to Raffensperger, the people making those allegations were only looking at the year of registration and not the age of the individual when the vote was cast. He said that his office has the date of birth and the day-month-year of every registered voter in the state.

Election investigators determined there were no underage voters.

Non-registered voters

Another allegation that surfaced after the 2020 election claimed there were 2,400 non-registered voters who cast ballots. Again, Raffensperger said his office confirmed that every vote was from a registered voter.

A separate claim alleged over 2,000 felons cast ballots.

After investigating that allegation with the Board of Pardons and Parole, Raffensperger said the State Elections Office found only 74 were still under a felony sentence and were ineligible to vote.

Double-counting

One of the most widely circulated election conspiracy theories centered on claims that ballots were double-counted at a tabulation center in Fulton County’s State Farm Arena.

State Farm was the site where poll workers Ruby Freeman and her daughter Wandrea “Shaye” Moss worked. The two were maliciously maligned by Trump and many of his supporters over false allegations of fraud in counting the ballots.

Raffensperger said his office looked into the matter and reviewed all of the surveillance tapes and did not find any evidence that ballots were double-counted. The GBI conducted its own investigation into the matter and came to the same conclusion.

Secretary Raffensperger said that President Trump actually had someone “hand-picked” to look at the State Farm Arena claims. U.S. Attorney Bobby Christine was appointed to the Northern District of Georgia after U.S. Attorney BJ Pak resigned under pressure. Immediately after his appointment, Christine investigated the allegations that votes were double counted and said, “there was nothing there.”

Election integrity

The embattled Secretary of State and his family were threatened following the 2020 election and his refusal to overturn the results. Still, Raffensperger won the GOP nomination and defeated his Democratic opponent to win reelection two years later.

A key witness in the Congressional January 6 Committee hearings, Raffensperger has remained a steadfast proponent of election integrity.

“Election integrity, election security is my top priority,” he told the handful of Rotarians in Cleveland.

Despite the fact that no widespread election fraud was found in the state of Georgia stemming from the post-2020 presidential election investigations, Raffensperger still supported changes to the state’s voting laws. He said bills passed by the legislature requiring voter identification and election audits are meant to increase voter confidence in the process.

Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger visits with White County poll workers during his visit to the county on September 26, 2023. (Bryce Barrett/White County)

Raffensperger on Fulton DA, Dominion, and MAGA

Following the Rotary Club meeting, Raffensperger spent a few minutes with Now Habersham covering a range of topics.

He refused to comment on the ongoing election interference case now making its way through Fulton County Superior Court. Trump and 18 alleged co-conspirators were indicted earlier this year on racketeering and other charges. Asked his opinion of the case, the Secretary of State withheld comment, “due to it being an ongoing legal matter.”

Raffensperger defended the state’s use of Dominion voting machines. The process requires voters to vote on computer screens, then print their paper ballots to be scanned. Groups such as the Coalition for Good Governance have pushed in recent years to force the state to move to straight paper ballots.

“We implemented paper ballots in 2020,” he said, referring to the Dominion method. “We believe the best way to have an efficient, accurate election is to have the ballots scanned because it’s so much faster.”

Although threatened and maligned by many in Trump’s camp, Raffensperger refused to criticize MAGA. He said the group of Trump loyalists believe in conservative Republican principles including, “small, limited effective government” and getting “the maximum value for every tax dollar given to whoever that governing authority is.”

Asked if he has plans to run for higher office, Raffensperger told Now Habersham he’s focused on next year’s election.

“Right now I am focusing on the 2024 election. We expect that to be hotly contested. That’s why we’re doing security checks of all 159 counties. We need to get that under our belt.”