



DSA VOTES

Atlanta DSA Voter Guide November 2024 General Election

Thank you for using our voter guide for Georgia's 2024 elections! This guide focuses on contests statewide and in the Metro-Atlanta area. We recommend voting early and making a plan to vote. You can use mvp.sos.ga.gov to find your polling place, see what elections you're voting in, preview your ballot, and confirm that your voting address and information are up-to-date.

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Introduction

This year, we have focused most of our energy on campaigning for our slate of endorsed candidates, Gabriel Sanchez and Devin Barrington-Ward. With these comrades elected, we aim to use their offices to continue and expand the struggle to build working-class power. In the meantime, there are also many other consequential elections taking place. Although most elections lack candidates aligned with socialist values, we still encourage voting for the candidates likely to do the least harm in office. Recommendation in this guide is **not** an endorsement, although we have included our current endorsed candidates in the guide.

Key Voting Information

To find **all the information you need to vote** (ballot information, your voting districts, polling location, early voting locations, vote by mail applications, etc), you can go to **Georgia's My Voter Page** and login with your name, birthday, and county of residence. The link is below:

<https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/s/>

General Election Dates

October 15 - Early voting begins

November 5 - Election day

November 25* - Latest date for early voting for runoffs to begin

December 3** - Runoff election day

*The date listed above is the final deadline for counties to begin early voting for a runoff. Please refer to your county's election office (linked below) to get accurate information for runoff early voting.

[GA County Election Office Finder](#)

**If no candidate in an election receives a majority (more than 50% of votes), then the top two candidates in the race will go to a runoff on December 3rd.

Our Endorsed Candidates

Devin Barrington-Ward

Atlanta City Council Post 3 At Large (Atlanta Citywide)



Atlanta DSA is proud to endorse our comrade Devin Barrington-Ward for Atlanta City Council Post 3 At-Large in the upcoming citywide special election.

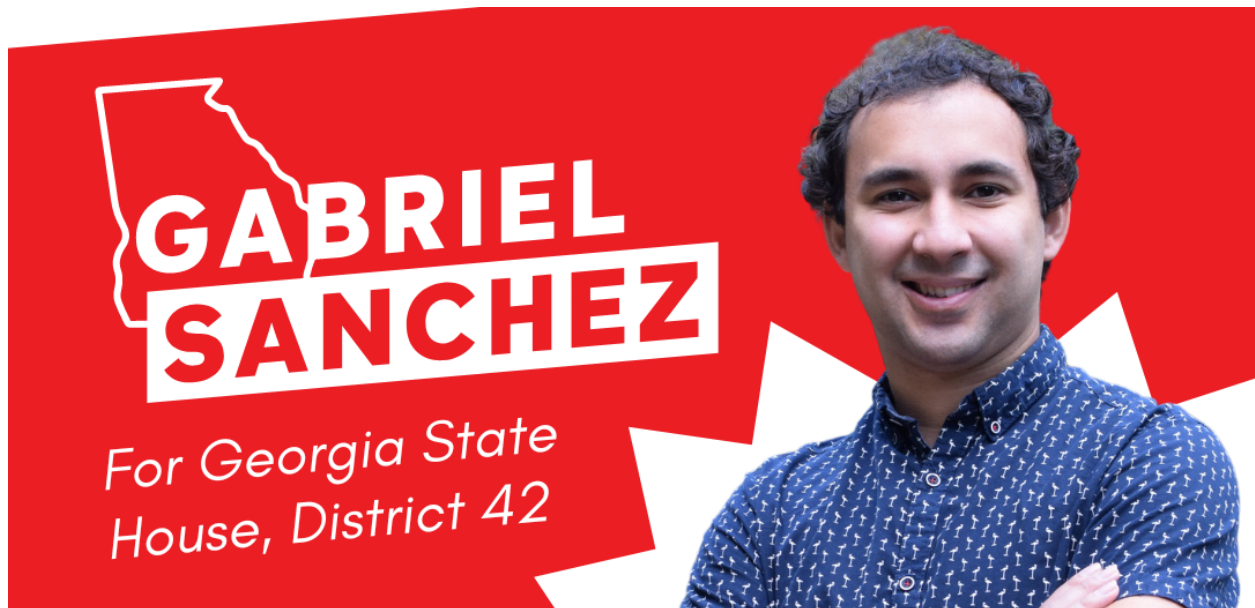
Atlanta has the highest income inequality in the US because corporations and billionaire elites are running the Mayor's office. As a vocal opponent of Cop City and an advocate for Palestinian liberation, Devin is running to bring our movement into City Hall. Together we're fighting for affordable social housing, walkable green infrastructure, and good union jobs for working families.

Devin is running in a special election to fill the vacancy created when Keisha Sean Waites resigned earlier this year to run for another office. The special election is being held concurrently with the presidential election, at the bottom of the ballot. Unlike most contests on the ballot this year, this special election is nonpartisan. Aside from Devin, there are four other candidates. Eshé Collins, Nicole Evans-Jones, and Duvwon Robinson are all liberal Democrats, while Amber Connor is a conservative pro-police advocate. Assuming no candidate clears 50% of the vote, the top two candidates will likely head to a runoff election on December 3rd.

We're building a campaign that runs off people power, NOT corporate donations. To contribute or volunteer with the campaign, visit DevinForAtlanta.us to sign up.

Gabriel Sanchez

House District 42 (Smyrna, Cumberland, S. Marietta)



Atlanta DSA is proud to endorse our comrade [Gabriel Sanchez for Georgia State House](#). Gabriel is an activist, organizer, and champion for the working class who's running to fight for a Georgia that works for all of us, not just the rich and powerful.

Working families are struggling to make ends meet, while the rich keep getting richer. The GOP is pushing a racist, extremist agenda, and the corporate Democratic establishment enables them every step of the way. That's why Gabriel is running: to challenge the status quo and bring the working class into the halls of power.

Gabriel has shown up time and time again to fight for working people. As a long-time member of our chapter, he's walked the picket line with striking workers, campaigned for abortion rights, and advocated for a free Palestine. Last summer, Gabriel was a field captain for the Stop Cop City referendum campaign, where he organized volunteer canvassers to collect thousands of petition signatures. As a State Representative for District 42, he'll be a radical voice for change and a true champion for Democratic Socialism.

As a Democratic Socialist candidate, Gabriel is refusing money from corporations or their PACs. We're running a grassroots campaign of, by, and for working people – and we need your help to win this election. Sign up today to contribute or volunteer with our campaign at [SanchezForGeorgia.com!](#)

Partisan Elections

All Georgia voters will face, of course, a selection in the presidential election, as well as for the U.S. House. There are also elections for State Senate and State House for all voters, although many are uncontested.

When Republicans controlled the federal government under Trump, they passed tax cuts for the rich, repealed regulations to put profits before people, and installed a right-wing majority on the Supreme Court that overturned *Roe v. Wade* and continues to wreak havoc. The Republican legislature here in Georgia has banned abortion, made it harder for unions to organize, enacted school vouchers to privatize our education system, and forced local governments to hold more people on bail and collaborate with ICE. This year, a Trump victory would be catastrophic for the working class, both at home and abroad. A GOP trifecta government means mass deportations, a federal abortion ban, a national right-to-work law, Israel “finishing the job” in Gaza, attacks on queer and trans people, intense repression of the left, and a sharp turn to authoritarianism. Opposing the far right, as represented by the Republican Party under Trump’s neo-fascist leadership, is a necessity for the working class and for our movement.

Kamala Harris is failing to meet the moment. With Biden withdrawn from the election and Josh Shapiro rejected as VP, Harris had an opportunity to break with the current administration and put forward a bold positive agenda to excite and motivate working people to turn out and vote. Instead, she has capitulated to Trump's hateful rhetoric against immigrants, and appealed to imperialist warmongers like mass murderer Dick Cheney for support. The risk of a Trump presidency has grown because of her deliberate strategic choices, and if Trump wins, the blame will lie squarely with Kamala Harris and the Democratic Party establishment.

Both Presidential candidates oppose an arms embargo on Israel – the only policy that can bring an end to the ongoing genocide of Palestinians and prevent yet another horrific war in the Middle East. DSA only endorses candidates who align with our platform, which includes support for the Palestinian people against Israel's genocidal war in Gaza.

While there are no good Democratic Socialist choices for federal office, we still encourage voting to defeat the far right and stop Project 2025. Keeping the neo-fascist Republican Party out of power will provide more time and space to grow the left and build working-class power in the long term.

Recommendation: Tactically vote against all Republican candidates

County Elections

DeKalb County Commission District 3

Andrew Walter Bell, Nicole Massiah, Tommy “Tommy T” Travis, Jakequeline “Jake” Wells

This district covers about a fifth of DeKalb, in the county’s southwest, and is up because Larry Johnson resigned to run for county CEO. All candidates are running as Democrats. In forums with the candidates, former firefighter Jakequeline “Jake” Wells expressed the strongest support for confronting corporate landlords and creating more affordable housing in DeKalb County. She intends to propose the creation of a DeKalb County Housing Trust Fund, wants to give tax incentives for creating more affordable housing units, and plans to make it harder for corporate landlords to bundle and price gouge, so we feel she better represents working-class interests than the other options in this race.

Recommendation: Jakequeline "Jake" Wells

DeKalb County Commission District 7

Jacqueline Adams, LaDena Bolton, Demetrius McCoy, Kenneth Chung Royal

This “super” district covers roughly the eastern half of DeKalb and is up because Lorraine Cochran-Johnson resigned to run for county CEO, a race she won. All candidates are running as Democrats.

No recommendation

Gwinnett Soil & Water Conservation District Supervisor

Ellis Lamme, Matthew Ray Retter, David L. Witham

This is a low-profile office, and voters can select two candidates to elect. Lamme and Retter are incumbents (though Retter is not marked as an incumbent). Lamme has served on the District board since 2000 and is a former civil engineer. Retter is a real estate appraiser. Witham is employed as an IT analyst, but more notably, he is an activist with the Gwinnett County Republican Party.

Recommendation: Vote for both Ellis Lamme and Matthew Ray Retter

Ballot Questions

Proposed Constitutional Amendment 1

Provides for a general law state-wide homestead exemption that may differentiate among political subdivisions

This amendment would provide a property tax exemption for homeowners. Under the proposed exemption, the assessed value of a home could not increase faster than the overall rate of inflation. The enabling resolution, [HR 1022](#), passed the Senate 42-11 and the House 171-0, with all Nay votes coming from Democrats. It is a response to rapid increases some homeowners have seen in their homes' assessed values, resulting in large jumps in their property tax bills. This measure has been compared to California's Prop 13, an infamous restriction on property taxes that has caused the state various budgetary issues. Local governments would have only a few months to opt out of the exemption. Atlanta Civic Circle [reports](#) that the measure would likely benefit the wealthy most. While it would help some low-income homeowners, this measure takes a sledgehammer to a nail.

Recommendation: Vote NO

Proposed Constitutional Amendment 2

Provides for a state-wide Georgia Tax Court

Currently, disputes with the Georgia Department of Revenue are handled by a tax tribunal under the executive branch. The tribunal is independent from the Department of Revenue, but some have nevertheless raised separation of powers concerns. This amendment would create a statewide Tax Court, with judges appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Senate and House Judiciary Committees. Appeals from the tribunal currently go to Fulton County's superior court, which is elected by Fulton voters, while appeals from the proposed Tax Court would go directly to the Republican-stacked Court of Appeals. (There are also a number of Republican judges in Fulton, but they are not nearly as dominant.) The enabling resolution, [HR 598](#), was approved 165-0 in the House and 49-1 in the Senate, with the 1 no vote coming from Sen. Colton Moore, noted for his far-right views on many issues.

No recommendation

Statewide Referendum Question A

Raises amount of tangible personal property tax exemption from \$7,500 to \$20,000

This bill ([HB 808](#)) would, as the ballot language indicates, increase the property tax exemption for tangible personal property from \$7,500 to \$20,000. It passed the House 125-42 with many Democrats opposed. In the Senate, it initially failed, receiving 33 votes in favor and 18 against (the bill required $\frac{2}{3}$ support). All opposition was from Democrats. However, in a second vote, the Senate passed the bill 51-0.

Personal property tax is, generally speaking, a tax paid on individual property that generates income. As such, it is most frequently paid by people who are self-employed and/or own small businesses. While we are not unsympathetic to these individuals, this change is not particularly compelling.

Recommendation: Vote NO

Cobb M-SPLOST & Gwinnett Transit SPLOST

Voters in Cobb and Gwinnett counties will both have the chance to approve major expansions of transit through long-term sales tax funding. Unfortunately, although sales taxes are regressive, they are the primary mechanism available to local governments to fund transit (and other priorities) under Georgia law.

The [Cobb measure](#) would impose an additional 1% sales tax for thirty years, which is expected to raise nearly 11 billion dollars, and would also authorize the county to issue nearly a billion dollars in bonded debt. Of the \$11 billion, the county expects to spend nearly \$6 billion on bus rapid transit (BRT, with seven routes) and arterial rapid transit (ART, with three routes), \$2.8 billion on local, rapid, and commuter service (twelve bus routes, 3-4 rapid routes, and four commuter routes), \$2 billion on vehicles, facilities, and amenities, and another \$2 billion on microtransit (14 zones, covering the entire county), with the remainder going to miscellaneous operational and technological improvements, pedestrian and bike access improvements, and the construction of six transit facilities. [Within the first five years](#), the county expects to offer microtransit in all cities, double bus frequency (to twice an hour) and provide two additional hours of bus service, and introduce two BRT routes.

The [Gwinnett measure](#) would also impose an additional 1% sales tax for thirty years, although it would not authorize any debt. The program is expected to raise \$12.4 billion, but with other sources (primarily federal funding), the county expects to dedicate \$17 billion to transit expansion over the 30-year period. This includes nearly \$6 billion on microtransit (25 zones, covering the entire county), \$3 billion on “rapid ride” BRT (one route), \$2.5 billion on “quick ride”/“BRT lite” (eight routes), \$3.5 billion on “county ride” fixed-route regular bus services (18 routes), and \$0.5 billion on two airport ride routes. 19 transit facilities would be constructed at an expected cost of under \$200 million. The BRT route would run from Lawrenceville all the way to the Doraville MARTA station.

While some improvements, including the BRT and quick ride, would take several years, the county expects to begin 11 County Ride routes, 17 of 25 microtransit zones, and both airport ride routes by 2027.

These plans are not perfect. They would not expand MARTA, and they include no rail transit whatsoever. They are funded primarily by sales taxes. But Cobb and Gwinnett, like the whole Atlanta region, are growing rapidly, and the 1.7 million people who live in the two counties would greatly benefit from expanded transit. Both plans are serious attempts to address this need, and we urge voters to approve them.

Recommendation: Vote YES on Cobb M-SPLOST & Gwinnett Transit SPLOST