

Reverend Raphael Warnock

U.S. Senator *for* Georgia

Preventing Election Subversion Act of 2021

Since January, state legislators have introduced [over 210 bills in 41 states](#) that grant more power to state legislatures to politicize, criminalize, or interfere with elections. This effort places local elections officials at risk of partisan subversion, interference, or control. In fourteen states, including Georgia, these bills have been signed into law.

In Georgia, SB 202 allows partisan officials in the state legislature wide latitude to remove local election officials. Since the November 2020 elections, these officials have been [pressured](#) to overturn the election results, and have received [death threats](#) in response to their work upholding the integrity of our elections.

The *Preventing Election Subversion Act of 2021* will institute new safeguards to insulate state election administration from partisan pressure. It will limit the ability of state election board members to remove election officials to subvert an election; limit partisan poll observers' access in polling sites and during the ballot counting process to avoid interference with and harassment of election officials during the count; and stop unfounded mass challenges to voters' eligibility to register to vote or cast a ballot by requiring that challenges are supported by personal knowledge of each individual's ineligibility.

This legislation is introduced by U.S. Senators Reverend Raphael Warnock, Amy Klobuchar, Jeff Merkley, Mark Warner, and Jon Ossoff. House companion legislation is led by Representatives John Sarbanes, Nikema Williams, and Colin Allred.

This bill would:

- Limit arbitrary and unfounded removals of local election officials by permitting removals of local election officials only for inefficiency, neglect of duty, or malfeasance in office and provide a federal cause of action to enforce this standard;
- Allow a local election official who has responsibility for federal elections and who has been subjected to removal proceedings by a state board of elections to remove that proceeding to federal district court for redress;
- Make it a federal crime for any person, whether acting under color of law or otherwise, to intimidate, threaten, coerce, harass, or attempt to intimidate, threaten, coerce, or harass an election worker;
- Establish a minimum buffer zone to limit how close a poll observer may come within a voter or ballot at a polling location during an early vote period or on Election Day; and
- Require challenges to a voter's eligibility to register to vote or to cast a ballot, other than from an election official, to be supported by personal knowledge with respect to each individual challenged.