

GA6's Biggest Secret: Handel's Head Investigator Framed Voting Machine Tech

ATLANTA GA – As the campaigns trade trivial barbs about the record of each candidate in the 6th District Special Election (GA6), focus on **more serious evidence of corruption** can be lost. One example of a lesser known case that damaged innocent lives involves the [framing](#) of Lowndes County voting machine technician Laura Gallegos.

After Karen Handel became Secretary of State in 2007, she created an “Inspector General” function and hired Shawn LaGrua to head it. LaGrua was previously a Dekalb Assistant District Attorney (DA) when she initiated a **highly politicized, unauthorized investigation** of well-respected Dekalb investigator Mark Antinozzi. Antinozzi worked for the Solicitor General who resigned to run against LaGrua’s boss, the Dekalb DA.

In 2008, Lowndes Co. Elections Director (ED) Deb Cox certified 947 test votes that her assistant accumulated into live election results despite a warning displayed by the software. The mistake was caught by the office of former state ED Wesley Tailor. The inability to prevent test and live votes from being mixed is a **system security flaw that has been known since 2002**. That was when Cobb Co. election officials accumulated 3,256 test votes into live election results before finding their error and correcting it.

Cox could have taken a slap on the wrist and Handel could have asked the vendor to improve voting system security. Instead, LaGrua’s office charged Gallegos with improper testing as the cause of the mistake. **Gallegos was not present for the accumulation or certification** that is the responsibility of the ED who is a superintendent in Georgia law. [[O.C.G.A. § 21-2-70.9](#)], [[O.C.G.A. § 21-2-493\(b\)](#)]

I spent about 100 personal hours and volunteered as an expert witness to try and help Mrs. Gallegos. [Her charges were dismissed](#) but she [lost](#) her job, suffered a property foreclosure and paid thousands of dollars in attorney fees.

A comprehensive March 2010 [impeachment resolution](#) filed against LaGrua by a fellow Republican **fully documents** how malicious the attacks on Antinozzi and Gallegos were. [[HR1714](#)] House Judiciary Committee Chairman Wendell Willard, a close friend of Karen Handel, **never held an impeachment hearing** although five people requested to testify.

LaGrua was continually defended by Handel, who once worked as Deputy Chief of Staff to Gov. Sonny Perdue. In December 2009, LaGrua’s conduct was made known to Perdue and he immediately **appointed LaGrua as a Fulton County Superior Court Judge**. LaGrua took to the bench in July of 2010 and issued two orders in the recent 6th District Special Election on April 18th. LaGrua was also assigned to hear the pending [GA6 paper ballot lawsuit](#). She recused herself when the plaintiffs raised her conflicts of interest.