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Kemp Hired KSU CES Director after Elections Servers Wiped

ATLANTA GA – **Just a week after the Director** of the Center for Election Systems (CES) at Kennesaw State University **allowed data on CES servers to be magnetically deleted without a backup**, Secretary of State (SOS) **Brian Kemp offered to hire him**. The final destruction of election related data and employment offer occurred in August of 2017. Director Michael Barnes was **transferred to the SOS office** later in January when Brian Kemp moved CES functions in house.

Secretary Kemp on boarded the CES Director despite assailing CES for intolerable actions on his social media sites just two months earlier. Kemp posted on October 26th, 2017 in his Facebook [account](#) and Twitter [feed](#) that CES actions in wiping the primary election server after a lawsuit was filed constituted **“reckless behavior”, “inexcusable conduct”, “gross incompetence” and “undeniable ineptitude”**.

Sec. Kemp opened an investigation into the election server wipe but four days later the resulting two-page [SOS report](#) concluded that it was **“standard procedure”**. A VoterGA [audit](#) ridiculed that October 30th report as superficial and **“not credible”**. It cited both Barnes and former Executive Director Merle King as those most responsible for the **“inexcusable conduct”** identified by Kemp.

Barnes was the original CES Assistant Director in 2002 when he was hired despite having **no** information technology experience. CES provided voter data, elections databases and supporting files to counties for each election, several of which were controversial. The detailed VoterGA [audit](#) released on April 30th found that:

- CES allowed critical elections data to be exposed on a public web server
- CES did not conduct a breach assessment to identify impacts of exposures
- CES failed to maintain proper backups of the election data
- CES allowed the data to be destroyed without a backup
- CES failed to comply with SOS data retention policies
- Brian Kemp failed to follow standard SOS election investigative procedures

The audit report triggered a group of Georgia citizens to submit **a series of criminal complaints** against Kemp on May 17th. One contends he is criminally negligent in overseeing the **“inexcusable conduct”** he acknowledged at CES. Five complaints with facts, exhibits and legal citations are included in a [petition](#) to the Fulton County Public Integrity Unit. Petitioners are requesting assistance to present a Grand Jury with evidence to determine if Kemp’s conduct violated Georgia law.