

Unethical Abrams:

by [William Perry](#) | May 17, 2018 | Text Duplicated from [Georgia Ethics Watchdogs Blog Report](#)

Stacey Abrams was once a public official I liked... A LOT! But what a disappointment she's turned out to be with both her leadership and ethics. She has more ethical challenges than any other statewide candidate. **She's become "Unethical Abrams"** to me — the Kasim Reed of statewide politics.

I'm tired of the voters of our state electing people to public office, only later to find out that they completely lack ethics. So with the primary election just days away, and many potential voters still undecided, here are **10 reasons why you should not vote for Stacey Abrams for Governor if you care about ethical behavior:**

**#1 Abrams reimbursed herself over \$84,000 from her campaign accounts without itemization of end recipients.** This means that she could have pocketed the money, which of course would be illegal. Last month I filed an [ethics complaint](#) with the state ethics commission. When asked about it, she stated "We complied very much so with all of the record-keeping that we were required to do. But if there is any discrepancy and any question, we will certainly provide additional information." It's been weeks, and she has still not disclosed where the money went. [See WSBTV's story.](#)

**#2 Abrams used campaign resources to sell her book, which she profits from personally.** Again, this is illegal and I filed an [ethics complaint](#) about it last month as well. This is illegal because candidates are not allowed to personally benefit from campaign funds. Abrams has been paid by her publisher already for the book, and she'll surely profit from its sales. It would be okay if the campaign received all proceeds from the book, but that's not the case. After claiming there was nothing wrong with what her staff was doing, all campaign web pages supporting the sale of the book were removed, and all staffers' social media tweets and posts were deleted. [Read the AJC story.](#)

**#3 Abrams lied on multiple occasions about her private business dealings with a business she is a partner in called NOWaccount, which did business with the State of Georgia, and Fulton County.** While this may not be illegal, lying about your private business dealings is likely something most voters consider unethical. On two separate occasions Abrams stated publicly that she "walled off" herself from dealings with the state – on [WABE 3/22/18](#) and at the [GABWA forum on 4/6/18](#) (1:20:28 mark). Yet the [meeting minutes](#) from the Development Authority of Fulton County for May 27, 2014 tell a different story. They state she not only attended, but "...Representative Stacey Abrams... appeared in connection with the request for a letter of inducement for the issuance of \$20,000,000 in taxable bonds". That's hardly walling herself off.

**#4 Abrams was not transparent about a second private business dealing with the state.** As Minority Leader in the State House, she never let her caucus know something very important! NOWaccount paid her hundreds of thousands of dollars and was engaged in an on-going business relationship with Gov. Deal's administration. Abrams at no point informed her caucus of this [business relationship](#) that could have compromised her judgment on critical votes, such as the devastating cuts to HOPE and cutting the

time-period for early voting in half – both of which the Governor wanted, and Abrams encouraged her caucus to support.

**#5 Abrams enriched herself with almost half a million dollars from part time work from her non-profits focused on voter registration.** As someone who helped register over 20,000 students during my time in college, and who has poured blood, sweat and tears into nonprofits for modest pay, this one really gets me! She claims that her [New Georgia Project](#), registered 200,000 voters (she used to claim “of color” but has recently dropped that term) between 2014 and 2016. However, she refused to be transparent and back that claim up with any documents or data, while national registration numbers in fact indicate that registration during these years was below average. Despite many questions and concerns about the effectiveness of this effort, Abrams paid herself \$427,500 over this two-year period for part time work!

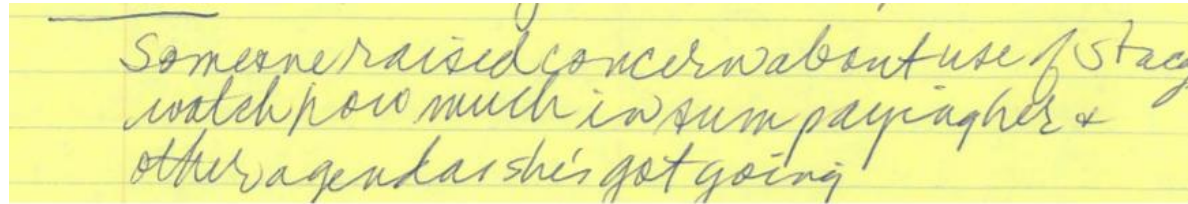
Moreover, the project majorly failed in its fundraising and registration goals, while in addition to making herself half a millionaire, she paid friends and other political allies another \$1.5 million of the \$3.6 million the effort raised. \$1.9 million makes for quite a friends and family plan!! Third Sector Development and the Voter Access Institute are her two non-profits behind the New Georgia Project. IRS Form 990’s from those two organizations over the two-year period show Abrams paid herself over \$117 per hour!

<b>Non-Profit Compensation To Abrams</b>			
<b>Non-Profit</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Average Work Hours</b>
Third Sector Development	2014	\$177,500	20
	2015	\$85,000	15
Voter Access Institute	2014	\$80,000	20
	2015	\$85,000	15
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$427,500</b>	<b>\$117.45 per hour</b>

**#6 Abrams claimed very high, and some false per diems as a State Representative.** She padded her state salary with more than \$150,000 in per diem payments (an allowance to cover meals and other expenses while working). In 2011, Abrams claimed more out-of-session expenses than any other Georgia House Member – while this is not illegal, it shows an abuse of taxpayer dollars. Also in 2011, she reported receiving per diem pay on the same day a lobbyist reported buying her a cab ride out of state, which violates House Ethics Rules, and forcing her to reimburse the state \$181. According to the Associated Press, “Rep. Stacey Abrams, the Democratic minority leader, received \$173 in daily pay plus mileage for working in Georgia on Nov. 20, 2011. That same day, a lobbyist reported buying Abrams a \$6 cab ride in Miami. When asked about the discrepancy, Abrams reviewed her calendar and said she made a mistake. Abrams has reimbursed the state \$181 for the pay she collected on Nov. 20 because lawmakers cannot claim flat-rate pay for out-of-state work.” [Associated Press, 9/6/12]

**#7 Abrams asked for and received a sweetheart deal after working for the City of Atlanta that would make even [Kasim Reed’s cabinet](#) jealous.** With the shock of large bonuses and payouts to staffers of former Mayor Kasim Reed in the limelight, it seems Kasim wasn’t the first to make such a move. Months

after leaving city employment, Abrams was paid \$62,000 in taxpayer money as a consultant on The BeltLine Project in 2006 and 2007. Even then, someone apparently raised a concern about her pay and “other agendas”. According to this handwritten note in open records from Atlanta BeltLine dated 9/26, “Someone raised concern about use of Stacey, watch how much in sum paying her and other agendas she’s got going.”



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She even bragged about this questionable use of taxpayer funds... according to an interview in [Reflections on Georgia Politics with Bob Short](#), Abrams said, “When I left the City of Atlanta to run for office, I had to figure out a way to afford my house and I started a consulting firm. I had created a couple of opportunities for the city and they hired me to come on board. And when I got ready to leave, they said, you’re not leaving without telling us how this works and so they hired me and I negotiated a pretty good price for myself and built a reputation as someone who understood the intersection of public and private enterprise when it comes to particularly public/private development.”

**#8 Abrams’ business has liens for unpaid unemployment contributions.** Her nonprofit discussed earlier, Third Sector Development had four liens totaling \$13,000 from the Georgia Department of Labor for unpaid unemployment contributions from 2014 through 2016 as [reported in the AJC](#). Additionally, in 2010 she had a federal tax lien for \$29,795 which she claims was filed in error.

**#9 Abrams personally loaned her campaign \$50,000 while she owes the IRS \$54,000.** I would think that while running for Governor, especially after making yourself a half millionaire from nonprofits and work as a public official in addition to getting \$150,000 for a book deal, you would want to settle unpaid taxes. But apparently not if you are Abrams, instead, she loaned her campaign \$50k! [According to the AJC](#), she deferred her tax payments and worked out a payment plan for 2015 and 2016. She claimed financial hardship while working to support her family. Again, she raked in almost half a million from her nonprofits alone in 2014 and 2015 – what kind of hardship could her family have? And what decisions will she make with your taxpayer dollars if she’s elected Governor?

**#10 Abrams has a pattern of inaccurate reporting on her personal financial disclosures and campaign finance reports.** Public officials have to file Personal Financial Disclosure reports so citizens can see their business interests to know if they have conflicts of interest. Abrams reports have to be repeatedly amended because of “mistakes” – she apparently forgets about hundreds of thousands of dollars she’s earned from companies she owns or serves as a partner, or board of directors she has served on. She also has a history of mistakes on her campaign finance reports. Again, while not illegal, it certainly shows at the very least, troubling incompetency, or most likely clear attempts to avoid transparency. Here are a few examples:

– In 2015, the year she received \$85,000 and the year after she received \$177,500 (2014) in payments as CEO of Third Sector Development, she filed amended her report from 2005 through 2015 to add this

role.

– In 2016, she amended her Personal Financial Disclosures for years 2011-2015 to include her role as advisor to GeorgiaNEXT, Inc.

– In 2016, she amended her 2013 Personal Financial Disclosure to include her direct ownership in Myrina Strategies.

– Over the years, she apparently forgot she served on the board of directors of the Georgia Lawyer Chapter of the American Constitution Society for Law and Policy, Faith in Community Ministries, Board of Visitors for Emory University, Branan Towers Senior Facility of Wesley Woods Foundation, Health Students Taking Action Together and NOW Corp USA. And while she reported service on the following boards some years, she didn't disclose service in all years she served on the boards of The Atlanta Metropolitan State College Foundation and The Georgia Partnership For Excellence In Education.

– An AJC investigation in 2015 found she had a \$3,403 discrepancy in her Financial Disclosure Reports. [Atlanta Journal-Constitution, 11/29/15]

So there you have it — 10 instances of unethical behavior by Candidate for Governor Stacey Abrams. I challenge anyone to find a candidate for statewide office this year with more documented examples.

## Summary of Ethical Issues involving Secretary of State (SOS) Brian Kemp

Compiled by VoterGA | August 4, 2018 |

**#1 Sec. Kemp lied when he said that he would “lead the charge” to replace our voting systems at the 2010 Georgia Christian Alliance debate.** Three weeks later, when Rep. Tim Bearden introduced HB1215 to replace the system, Sec. Kemp completely reversed his position and refused to advocate for the bill. He has continued to maintain our current outdated, vulnerable voting system throughout his tenure.

**#2 Sec. Kemp illegally added promotional language to the ballot for a 2012 TSPLOST referendum in an attempt to get the referendum passed even though it directly violated Georgia law.** The impartial legally mandated language was set by the Georgia legislature. Kemp was never able to provide the legal authority for the changes he made despite being requested to do so by a Traffic Truth attorney. [See Story and Evidence](#)

**#3 Sec. Kemp used the Georgia SOS agency web site to promote his gubernatorial campaign in direct violation of Georgia law.** Kemp had Facebook, Twitter and personal web site links programmed into Georgia’s SOS web site home page at taxpayer links so that visitors would be redirected directly to his campaign social media pages and web site. Georgia law prohibits an agency from giving anything of value to a candidate, however, Kemp left the links up for several more months. [See Story and Video](#)

**#3 Sec. Kemp used the Georgia SOS agency web site to promote his gubernatorial campaign in direct violation of Georgia law.** Kemp had Facebook, Twitter and personal web site links programmed into Georgia’s SOS web site home page at taxpayer expense so that visitors would be redirected directly to his campaign social media pages and web site when they click on the links. Georgia law prohibits an agency from giving anything of value to a candidate, however, Kemp left the links up for several more months after they were discovered. [See Story](#)

**#4 Sec. Kemp used the My Voter Mobile Application to promote his gubernatorial campaign in direct violation of Georgia law.** Kemp had Facebook and Twitter links programmed into Georgia’s My Voter Mobile Application at taxpayer expense so that visitors would be redirected directly to his campaign social media pages when they click on the links. Georgia law prohibits an agency from giving anything of value to a candidate but Kemp left the links up for over a year after the SOS web site links were discovered. [See Story](#)

**#5 Sec. Kemp allowed Georgia election data to be exposed on the internet, avoided investigating to determine who may have hacked into our exposed server, failed to ensure the elections data was backed up and allowed the elections data to be destroyed while a lawsuit was pending.** Georgia election data was exposed for hacking to anyone on the internet for years. When it was discovered, Kemp made no forensic effort to determine who may have hacked into the server. When the lack of a backup was discovered Kemp made no effort to ensure that a backup was taken. He then allowed the data to be destroyed despite a pending lawsuit that sought to obtain a copy for litigation purposes [See VoterGA Audit](#)

**#6 Sec. Kemp's office produced a superficial, bogus two page report claiming that the destruction of Georgia's election data was "standard procedure"** Kemp's legal counsel produced the report at Kemp's request just four days after Kemp had claimed that the action represented: *"reckless behavior"*, *"inexcusable conduct"*, *"gross incompetence"* and *"undeniable ineptitude"* The VoterGA Audit explains why the data destruction is not standard procedure. Sec. Kemp later hired the KSU CES operational Director responsible into the SOS office. [See Story](#) and [See VoterGA Audit](#)

**#7 Sec. Kemp defaulted on his share of a \$700,000 personal loan guarantee and is being sued for non-payment.** Kemp was deposed as a defendant in the lawsuit on July 25<sup>th</sup>, the very day after he won the runoff. [See Story](#)

**#8 Sec. Kemp's took \$300,000 in illegal campaign contributions which he was forced to return.** Kemp took the money from business and owners who he regulates as the SOS all in violation of Georgia law. [See Story](#)

**#9 A Georgia Republican Senator asked a U.S. attorney to investigate Sec. Kemp for his inaction regarding 25 massage parlors accused of sexual molestation, including one who held a fundraiser for him** Kemp's office regulates massage parlors but took no licensing action on 25 of 26 parlors or therapists accused of sexual molestation. An owner of a Massage Envy accused in two cases held a fundraiser for him. [See Story](#)

**#10 Sec. Kemp's personally threatened an elector in direct violation of Georgia law that prohibits intimidation of electors.** Sec. Kemp posted on his social media Twitter feed a picture of a Georgia elector with text that included the statement: *"I stopped left-wing radicals from undermining our elections and Georgia Values. This Democracy Spring activist – who wants to recall me - is next"*. [See Criminal Complaint #4](#)

**#11 Sec. Kemp demonstrated what appears to be multiple willful and intentional violations of Georgia law and thus violated his oath of office.** The provable facts shown in supporting detail of the ethical issues cited in #1, #2, #3, #4, #5, and #9 illustrate a systemic pattern of disrespect for Georgia law that clearly rises to a violation oath of office taken. [See Criminal Complaint #5](#)

**#12 An analysis indicates that Sec. Kemp lied 20 times including 6 false statements in 3 minutes while accusing his opponent of lying or being untrustworthy 21 times during his July 12<sup>th</sup> Atlanta Press Club Runoff debate.** The [analysis](#) shows that 14 of the 21 times Kemp accused Lt. Gov. Casey Cagle of lying Kemp was actually making a mostly false statement. In addition, a [fact sheet](#) shows that Kemp made 6 additional false statements about our voting system in a 3 minute span during the debate. [See story](#)