

**Bulletin**  
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## **Ban on Sending Ballot Applications to Voters Fails**

ATLANTA GA – An attempt to **ban state and county election officials from sending unsolicited mail-in ballot applications to voters** failed Friday against staunch opposition. The language appeared in a mysterious amendment to [SB463](#) when [heard](#) in the House Government Affairs Committee Thursday, at 8am. [52:00]

After being pressed continually by Rep. Renitta Shannon to identify the author of the amendment, Chairman Shaw Blackmon reluctantly said he would own it but it was obvious the amendment came from House Speaker David Ralston and bill author, Sen. John Kennedy, was compelled to accept it after Senate passage.

Amendment AM470019 contained the following addition to the [bill text](#):  
*"The Secretary of State, the State Election Board, a county registrar, the governing authority of a municipality, an absentee ballot clerk, or any other designated official performing the duties set forth in this article shall not distribute or send unsolicited absentee ballot applications to electors."*

When faced with precinct space limitations due to virus distancing guidelines and new equipment privacy concerns, Secretary of State (SOS) Brad Raffensperger decided to send mail-in ballot applications to all Georgia voters for the June 9 primary. The reduced complexity to apply for mail-in ballots increased mail-in voting from about 10% to around 40% of the total votes cast. Mail-in voters were able to avoid the long lines that delayed Election Day and early voters for hours.

However, many counties were unable to process the mail-in applications in a timely manner, especially when applications were received via Email. Some voters did not receive their ballots in time and were forced to go to the polls to vote on Election Day anyway. Chairman Blackmon cited these problems and the future creation of a statewide application portal to justify the ban imposed by AM470019.

Based on current and previous voting patterns, the ban would likely result in about 30% more Georgia voters making selections on new unverifiable voting equipment that accumulates votes hidden in encrypted QR codes the voter cannot read.

Georgia's mail-in voting processes are more secure than most states. Georgia does not allow ballot harvesting and counties compare the signature of a mail-in ballot applicant to the signature on file for the voter before sending the actual mail-in ballot to that voter. The signature on the ballot is also compared to the signature on file when the ballot is returned. The State Election Board has seen very few cases of misrepresentation in mail-in ballot applications during the past 15 years.