



— FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE —

**7 Young Men of Color Call for Fulton County Commission
to Fund Elections & Minority Business Bailouts**
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Monday, July 12 at 10AM — Seven millennial candidates running for local office this November unite to call on the Fulton County Commission to pass legislation for the American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding and full staffing for 2021 Elections. They will hold a **Press Conference and Rally Monday, June 12 at 10AM in front of the Fulton County Government Center at 141 Pryor St SW, 30303.**

Last week, Fulton Elections Director Richard Barron sent a [memo to Fulton cities](#) warning the Elections Board did not have adequate staffing to conduct 2021 municipal elections. At its June and July meetings, the Fulton County Commission failed to renew the Elections Board's contract with Happy Faces Inc., which provides staffing for elections. Democratic Commissioners Marvin Arrington, Jr. and Robb Pitts went missing when votes to approve staffing were called.

Fulton's Board of Elections oversees elections for the majority of Fulton cities, including its two largest — Atlanta and South Fulton — which have Mayoral races this year. Councilmen-turned-Mayoral candidates Antonio Brown (Atlanta) and khalid kamau (South Fulton) are joining Atlanta City Council Candidates (l. to r.) Rogelio Arcila, Larry Carter II, Antonio Lewis, Jereme Sharpe and Devin Barrington Ward to demand 2021 municipal elections are adequately staffed.

“Underfunding elections is backdoor voter suppression,” says Brown. “When bills like SB 202 pose an existential threat to Black and Brown voting rights, we need to be increasing, not decreasing funding and staffing for elections,” concurs Councilman khalid. Provisions in 98-page, [Senate Bill \(SB\) 202](#) passed by Georgia's Republican-controlled legislature in March allow for a state takeover of Fulton's Board of Elections if the state deems it “dysfunctional.” **The Commission will vote on Elections Staffing this Wednesday, July 14 at 10AM.**

The seven young men are also calling for the County Commission to spend the bulk of the American Rescue Plan funds on rent and mortgage assistance and bailouts for minority-owned businesses disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. “This \$206 million came from the pockets of the People of Fulton County, and they need that money back to pay their rent and mortgages.” says Atlanta City Council candidate Devin Barrington Ward, who stopped the Fulton Commission from spending [\\$23 million in CARES Act funds on expansion of the County Jail](#) in 2020.

“We have to get to the point where we put the People over politics,” says Larry Carter II, a candidate for Atlanta City Council attending the rally with his opponent Rogelio Arcila, who could become Atlanta's first Latinx councilmember. The two men are both hoping to unseat a 28-year incumbent for District 4, which includes the Atlanta University Center and the Historic West End. “To see these young brothers come together before they are even elected is inspiring,” says Fulton Commissioner Khadijah Abdur-Rahman.