

The Carter Center Preliminary Statement on Georgia’s November 2022 Risk-Limiting Audit Process

Nov. 22, 2022

The Carter Center commends Georgia’s 159 counties on completion of the 2022 risk-limiting audit process. The audit examined the Georgia secretary of state race and confirmed the original reported result, the reelection of Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger.

The Carter Center, which has observed more than 110 elections in 39 countries, was the only nonpartisan organization observing the audit. The Center was credentialed by the Office of the Secretary of State to provide an impartial assessment of the implementation of the audit process and had the same access provided to political party monitors.¹ The Center’s observers reported that the process proceeded quickly and professionally in most of the counties observed. This is a credit to the hard work of Georgia’s election officials, who were simultaneously preparing for the Dec. 6 U.S. Senate runoff while conducting the audit.

On Nov. 17 and 18, The Carter Center sent approximately 40 nonpartisan observers to watch the process in 34 counties.² They systematically collected information on each step of the process, including reporting on ballot security and chain-of-custody, the work of the two-person audit boards and vote review panels to interpret and count votes, and the data entry process used to record audit results via the centralized reporting software.³ The Center’s observers were welcomed by election officials and were able to conduct their observation without hindrance.

This is a preliminary statement of their findings, based on observation on the audit days.⁴ A more detailed final report will be made public in the coming weeks.

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¹ Carter Center observers abide by the Center’s c observers.

² Barrow, Bartow, Bibb, Catoosa, Chatham, Cherokee, Clarke, Clayton, Cobb, Coffee, Columbia, Dekalb, Douglas, Fannin, Fayette, Floyd, Forsyth, Fulton, Gilmer, Glynn, Gwinnett, Hall, Henry, Jackson, Lowndes, Muscogee, Newton, Oconee, Paulding, Pickens, Polk, Richmond, Rockdale, Walton.

³ The open-source risk-limiting audit software ARLO was developed by VotingWorks, a nonpartisan, nonprofit election technology vendor, with support from the U.S. Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency. Voting Works provided assistance to the Office of the Secretary of State in the implementation of the audit.

⁴ The Carter Center did not observe the creation or validation

Since 2019, Georgia has been required by statute⁵ to conduct a risk-limiting audit of one statewide contest in every even-numbered election year. In 2020, the selected contest was the presidential race. Because of the very close margin of that contest and the timeline of the audit, the secretary of state chose to conduct a full hand count of *all* ballots, rather than just a sample of ballots, as RLAs typically use. The 2022 secretary of state contest was won by a much wider margin (Raffensperger garnered about 53% of the vote). This audit, conducted Nov. 17-18, 2022, was

