

Talking About Climate In The Georgia U.S. Senate Races

Why Georgia Voters Need To Hear About Climate

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WHY CLIMATE ACTION IS A WINNING ISSUE IN GEORGIA

The politics of climate have changed and embracing bold climate action is a winning message. Climate change is a defining issue for key voting blocs – younger voters, voters of color, and suburban women strongly believe we need bold, climate action and a more just and equitable economy now. Voters also don't buy the Republican climate deniers' lies about climate action and are tired of putting oil and gas CEOs profits ahead of working families.

The climate crisis is here. Scientists around the globe are warning us if we don't heed the advice of experts and take action to address climate change, it may be too late to avoid catastrophic consequences. In Georgia, the impacts of climate change will mean [more droughts, stronger storms, rising sea levels, more flooding, hotter temperatures](#). The state's agriculture, its economy and people's health will all be hurt:

- Climate change [will cost](#) Georgia \$34.2 billion a year by the year 2100.
 - In the past decade, Georgia has [experienced](#) 35 climate-related disasters responsible for a total of \$405.6 billion in damages. 5 of the 35 climate-related disasters were hurricanes that totaled \$115 billion in damages and 258 deaths.
 - Currently, 310,000 Georgians are [vulnerable](#) to extreme heat.
- The effects of ozone pollution are disproportionately impacting minority communities in Georgia – a 2012 [report](#) found that in Metro Atlanta “low-pollution blocks have an average minority population of 25.4 percent, while the average minority population of the high-pollution blocks is nearly **double** at 44.2 percent.”

That is why it is critical to have a robust discussion about how we tackle the climate crisis and fight for environmental justice during this year's debates. Strong majorities of Georgians (and American voters) believe climate change is happening now and are worried about its effects. [58% of Georgians](#) believe both the President and Congress should do more to address climate change, as do [71% of American voters](#).

CANDIDATE BACKGROUNDS

CLASS II SEAT

David Perdue

Senator David Perdue is a climate skeptic who [argued](#) the scientific community was not in “total agreement about whether mankind has been a contributing factor” to climate change. He signed a letter urging Trump to exit the Paris Climate Agreement, voted to [block](#) the Clean Power Plan, and voted [against an amendment](#) to a bill on the Keystone XL pipeline that would have expressed that climate change is real, and that man-made pollution is a significant contributor to climate change. Perdue has spread misinformation about climate change and the Green New Deal, and has been [a top ally](#) to Trump in the Senate.

Jon Ossoff

Jon Ossoff, Perdue’s opponent in the fall, [supports](#) climate science and [vowed](#) to push for investments in renewable energy and infrastructure. Ossoff [does not support](#) the Green New Deal, but does [support](#) investments in a major infrastructure program that would help farm and coastal communities adapt, and in a [major](#) clean energy program.

CLASS III SEAT (SPECIAL ELECTION)

Kelly Loeffler

Senator Kelly Loeffler [rails against](#) the Green New Deal without providing her own solutions to climate change. Loeffler puts partisanship and personal gain first. In 2009, Loeffler’s company advocated for cap-and-trade regulation on greenhouse gas emissions, which they stood to benefit from financially, but in April she [opposed](#) extending tax incentives for renewables because they were “unfair.” Loeffler has [taken](#) \$51,000 from energy PACs and another \$25,500 from electric utility PACs since her appointment earlier this year, despite [her pledge](#) to spend \$20 million of her own money on the campaign. She previously was appointed to the Board of Directors of the utility Georgia Power.

Doug Collins

Rep. Doug Collins is a [climate denier](#) who does not believe human activity is contributing to climate change. Collins has voted to [block](#) the implementation of the Clean Power Plan, to [limit](#) the input of scientific advisory boards on EPA policies, to [limit](#) the use of public health studies to inform EPA policies, and to [prohibit](#) government agencies from considering the

costs of climate change, and to [gut](#) the environmental review process that requires input from people impacted by polluting projects.

Rev. Warnock

Reverend Raphael Warnock has [served](#) as the Senior Pastor at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, the former pulpit of Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr, since 2005. He was the youngest pastor selected to serve in that leadership role at the historic church. Rev. Warnock has demonstrated a commitment to sustainability, environmental justice and climate action as a pastor and community activist. In March 2019, he hosted an interfaith meeting on climate change at Ebenezer Baptist with former Vice President Al Gore and Reverend William Barber II. During his tenure, his church also started Project Green: Sustainable Ebenezer to get congregants involved with environmental projects. Warnock has also preached about environmental justice, working to not only get environmentalists to better understand the links between pollution, race and poverty, but to also get his congregants to see themselves as environmentalists. He supports massive [investments](#) in transitioning the economy to net-zero emissions by 2050 - and focusing those investments in communities of color.

CLIMATE CHANGE TOUCHES EVERY ISSUE IN 2020

You don't have to wait for a question about climate change to highlight how climate change touches nearly every major issue that might come up in a political debate. Here are some examples of how you can talk about climate change in a variety of different contexts.

THE ECONOMY

Ignoring The Climate Crisis Will Harm Georgia's Economy:

- In the past decade, Georgia has [experienced](#) 37 climate-related disasters responsible for a total of \$246.1 billion in damages.
- Climate change [will cost](#) Georgia \$34.2 billion a year by the year 2100.
 - Outdoor recreation in Georgia [supports](#) 238,000 jobs and \$27.3 billion in consumer spending. In 2018, tourism [generated](#) \$66.2 billion in visitor spending and supported more than 471,000 jobs.
 - Georgia [agriculture](#) generated \$73 billion in 2019 and supported 392,400 jobs, and is consistently rated the best state in the nation for forestry.
 - By 2100, 40,000 homes in Georgia at an estimated worth of \$13 billion [will face flooding](#). Those homes at risk [currently contribute](#) around \$139 million in annual property tax revenue.
- Trump's clean cars rollback will [cost](#) Georgians over \$1 billion per year.

Investing In Clean Energy Future Means Good Jobs For Georgia:

- Georgia is [home](#) to nearly 83,806 clean energy jobs, a leader in the South.
- Georgia was [ranked](#) fifteenth in the nation for clean energy employment in 2019.

HEALTH CARE

Climate Change And Fossil Fuel Pollutants Give People Pre-Existing Conditions And Make Them More Vulnerable To COVID-19:

- New research on air pollution has found that [burning fossil fuel](#) causes 230,000 premature deaths in the US every year.
- Scientists and health experts from 35 academic institutions and United Nations agencies said that [children will suffer from a rise in infectious diseases, malnutrition and air pollution](#) if global warming continues on the current trajectory.
- The [American Lung Association](#) warns that pollution from vehicle exhaust and power plants can cause lung cancer, heart disease, and asthma attacks.
- Soot air pollution (PM2.5) causes severe health problems and it [increased by 5.5 percent](#) on average across the country between 2016 and 2018, after decreasing nearly 25 percent over the previous seven years.
 - Soot air pollution (PM2.5) [from power plants and vehicle exhaust](#) has been [linked to higher death rates](#) from COVID-19

JUSTICE & CIVIL RIGHTS

Environmental Justice Is Racial Justice:

- A 2012 [report](#) found that in Metro Atlanta, “Low-pollution blocks have an average minority population of 25.4 percent, while the average minority population of the high-pollution blocks is nearly double at 44.2 percent,” and that “blocks with a minority rate over 75 percent on average contain more than twice the number of pollution points as a block in which minorities make up less than 25 percent of the population.”
- Three counties in Georgia [received](#) “F” grades for ozone levels in 2019.
 - Ozone has been [linked](#) to asthma, and Black children are [four times](#) more likely to be admitted to the hospital and [ten times](#) more likely to die from asthma.
- The Atlanta-Athens-Clarke County-Sandy Springs metropolitan area was [ranked](#) 23rd in the nation for annual particle pollution in 2019.
- Communities of color in Georgia [continue to fight against](#) nuclear power plant expansion in an already heavily polluted area.

NATIONAL SECURITY

Climate Change Is A National Security Threat, Both Abroad And Right Here At Home:

- [National security experts](#) and the [Department of Defense](#) have published reports warning that climate change puts our national security at risk by destabilizing conflict zones.
- Our ability to respond to conflicts is also being impacted. A [2019 report](#) from the Department of Defense found that climate change is already [threatening mission-critical bases](#).
- Fort Gordon is [impacted](#) by current and potential future wildfires
- Warner Robins Air Force Base is [impacted](#) by current and potential future wildfires and current and potential future floods
- Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay is [impacted](#) by current and potential future floods, current and potential future drought, and future potential wildfires.

FOREIGN POLICY & TRADE

The U.S. Risks Falling Behind On Emerging Clean Energy Industries While The Rest Of The World Is Making Investments In Their Future:

The U.S. is already falling behind to China and Europe. In 2017, [nearly half](#) of the world's new renewable energy investment came from China, and the nation is the [world's largest producer](#) of solar panels, wind turbines, batteries and electric vehicles. In 2019, the U.S. added 13 GW of [solar installations](#), while Europe added 16.7 and the previous year, China added 44 GW.

Electric vehicles represent the future of the auto industry (the backbone of the U.S. economy), which we can't afford to cede to China ([the world's largest auto buyer](#)), and Europe ([the world leader in EV investment](#)).

- Led by government climate policy, Europe [attracted](#) \$71 billion in electric vehicles investment in 2019, outpacing China and the U.S.
- The Chinese government, which had [already invested](#) \$60 billion into electric vehicles before the pandemic, is placing electric vehicles at [the center](#) of their coronavirus recovery package with extensions to tax breaks for electric vehicles and an investment in growing the

number of charging stations by tenfold, all with an eye to [increase](#) electric vehicles from 5% of the market to 25% in the next 5 years.

- Researchers at CSIS [warn](#) that if China takes too much of a lead, it will threaten the U.S. ability to compete in the growing market.

IMMIGRATION

Unchecked Climate Change Will Only Increase Pressure On Our Borders:

- Poverty and violence in Central America are major factors [driving migration](#) to the United States.
- Drought and disasters driven by climate change will [continue to exacerbate](#) poor economic conditions that leave people in desperate situations with no options.
- [A recent scientific paper](#) predicts that the parts of the globe that best support human life and crops will shift more in the next 50 years than they have in the last 6,000 years, sparking [mass migrations](#) as people move to escape heat, hunger, and political chaos.

CONFRONTING THE CRISIS

IF YOU SAY ONE THING

The climate crisis is here, and it's already hurting Georgia's economy, health, and security. We cannot afford to wait any longer to act.

KEY MESSAGE

The climate crisis is here. We see it in the strange and severe weather that happens more frequently and causes more damage to Georgia communities. This isn't opinion – it's fact. It's also fact that we are running out of time to act. Scientists, experts, and economists say that if we don't take steps now to combat climate change, the damage may be irreversible. But climate denial by politicians like David Perdue, Kelly Loeffler, and Doug Collins is dooming our children to a future filled with droughts, extreme storms, food and water shortages, and more.

GET THE FACTS

- [66% of Georgians](#) believe in climate change, and [58% of the state's residents](#) are worried about climate change.
- [58% of Georgians](#) believe both the President and Congress should do more to address climate change.
- Climate change will [cost](#) Georgia \$34.2 billion a year by the year 2100.
- In the past decade, Georgia has [experienced](#) 35 climate-related disasters responsible for a total of \$405.6 billion in damages.
- Georgia has experienced a [hurricane](#) each of the past five years.
- By 2100, 40,000 homes in Georgia at an estimated worth of \$13 billion [will face flooding](#). Those homes at risk [currently contribute](#) around \$139 million in annual property tax revenue.
- Outdoor recreation in Georgia [supports](#) 238,000 jobs and \$27.3 billion in consumer spending. In 2018, tourism [generated](#) \$66.2 billion in visitor spending and supported more than 471,000 jobs.
- Georgia [agriculture](#) generated \$73 billion in 2019 and supported 392,400 jobs, and is consistently rated the best state in the nation for forestry.

COMPARE RECORDS

Sen. David Perdue:

- In 2015, David Perdue wrote an op-ed [claiming](#): “the scientific community is not in total agreement about whether mankind has been a contributing factor.”
- David Perdue voted [against an amendment](#) to a bill on the Keystone XL pipeline that would have expressed that climate change is real, and that man-made pollution is a significant contributor to climate change.
- David Perdue has [taken](#) a total of \$377,245 from the oil and gas industry since his election in 2014.
- Perdue's [Lifetime Score](#) of 3% from the League of Conservation Voters Scorecard, which tabulates the times he voted in favor of the environment in Congress, gives voters a holistic view of his terrible environmental record.
- For years, Perdue has willfully spread misinformation about the Green New Deal. He [repeated](#) the claim that the Green New Deal would cost \$9 trillion per year, a figure which comes from [a report](#) by AEI's Benjamin Zycher, an economist who has also [claimed](#) that extreme weather events are not getting worse, and [lobbied](#) the Trump administration to undermine the science of climate change.
 - He also parroted [claims](#) that the Green New Deal would ban airplanes, which is a rightwing conspiracy theory [originally spread](#) by One America News host Liz Wheeler, who has [also warned](#) her viewers about a plot to force people into dependency on the government through transgender penguins.
 - Perdue signed a [letter](#) to the Acting Director of the Office of Management and Budget urging him to permanently end all regulations that Trump had suspended during COVID-19.

Jon Ossoff:

- Jon Ossoff [writes](#): “The health of the environment is vital to our own health, prosperity, and security. In the Senate, I'll make energy and environmental policy on the basis of scientific evidence — not lobbying by polluters. We face an urgent environmental crisis as out-of-control pollution is fast changing the climate, destroying ecosystems, killing off species, and

damaging human health. The scientific consensus is unambiguous: if pollution from fossil fuel combustion is not controlled, the consequences will be dire.”

- Ossoff plan is to [support](#) investments in a major infrastructure program that would help farm and coastal communities adapt, and in a [historic](#) clean energy program. He also plans to “to reverse the Trump Administration’s rollbacks of clean air, clean water, and fuel economy standards — and then to strengthen them.”

Rev. Raphael Warnock:

- Rev. Warnock said in a [press release](#): “As a person of faith, I can think of nothing more important than honoring and protecting the only home we’ve been blessed with, for ourselves and our children. Too often, fossil fuel lobbyists and politicians have taken advantage of the revolving door between corporate boardrooms and political backrooms so much that we cannot tell the difference between the two. I know we will flip this seat and ensure that environmental justice is a priority in Washington.”
 - “I am running against two people who don’t know the difference between climate change and weather,” [said](#) Warnock of his stance on climate change.
 - Since 2005, Rev. Warnock has [served](#) as the Senior Pastor at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, the former pulpit of Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. In March 2019, he hosted an interfaith meeting on climate change at Ebenezer Baptist with former Vice President Al Gore and Reverend William Barber II.

Rep. Doug Collins:

- Collins’s [Lifetime Score](#) of 3% from the League of Conservation Voters Scorecard, which tabulates the times he voted in favor of the environment in Congress, gives voters a holistic view of his terrible environmental record.
- Collins told [AJC](#) that: “Democrat ideas like Ocasio-Cortez’s Green New Deal will do nothing but destroy our economy and sink us into debt with little to show for it in the great outdoors. While Congress should be mindful of the impact human activity has on our surroundings, it should not take the drastic steps lauded by radical environmentalists especially when doing so would put our country at a competitive disadvantage with countries like China, which has made virtually no efforts to curb domestic pollution.”

Senator Kelly Loeffler:

- When asked what, if anything, Congress should do to address climate change, Loeffler [wrote](#): “AOC and the Democrats’ radical Green New Deal proposal is absolutely ridiculous. This socialist plan would crush the American Dream by killing millions of jobs in our energy industry, bankrupting our economy, and expanding the Washington bureaucracy until it suffocates free markets and individual choice. It’s not the future I want for Georgia’s children, or any American. I support common-sense solutions to ensure our families always have access to clean air and water – but I will never stand for socialist policies that will wreck our economy and put Georgians out of work.”
 - Loeffler signed a [letter](#) to the Acting Director of the Office of Management and Budget urging him to permanently end all regulations that Trump had suspended during COVID-19.
 - Loeffler has [taken](#) \$51,000 from energy PACs and another \$25,500 from electric utility PACs since her appointment earlier this year, despite [her pledge](#) to spend \$20 million of her own money on the campaign. She previously was [appointed](#) to the Board of Directors of the utility Georgia Power.

GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

IF YOU SAY ONE THING

We have a responsibility to leave a better world for our children and grandchildren, and David Perdue, Kelly Loeffler, and Doug Collins are threatening our nation's role as a global leader on climate and clean energy.

KEY MESSAGE

We have a responsibility to leave a better world for our children and grandchildren, but under the policies of Donald Trump and his allies like Senators David Perdue and Kelly Loeffler, we've fallen behind. This threatens our economy and national security. There are ambitious investments we should make that will help us meet the scale of this challenge and lead the world in building an equitable, clean energy economy.

GET THE FACTS

- The U.S. is already falling behind as other nations, including China and countries in Europe, move forward on clean energy jobs of the future. China is [already](#) the world's largest producer of solar panels, and last year European nations [installed](#) more solar infrastructure than the U.S.
- Electric vehicles represent the future of the auto industry (the backbone of the U.S. economy), which we can't afford to cede to China ([the world's largest auto buyer](#)), and Europe ([the world leader in EV investment](#)).
 - Led by government climate policy, Europe [attracted](#) \$71 billion in electric vehicles investment in 2019, outpacing China and the U.S.
 - The Chinese government, which had [already invested](#) \$60 billion into electric vehicles before the pandemic, is placing electric vehicles at [the center](#) of their coronavirus recovery package with extensions to tax breaks for electric vehicles and an investment in growing the number of charging stations by tenfold, all with an eye to [increase](#) electric vehicles from 5% of the market to 25% in the next 5 years.
 - Researchers at CSIS [warn](#) that if China takes too much of a lead, it will threaten the U.S. ability to compete in the growing market.

- At the start of the Trump administration, exiting the Paris climate agreement was a high priority on the wish lists of coal baron [Bob Murray](#) and the oil billionaire [Koch brothers](#).
- Trump [cherry picked](#) jobs data from a faulty study to justify leaving the Paris Agreement.
- Remaining in the Paris climate agreement would actually [save](#) the U.S. over half a trillion dollars annually, while doing nothing on climate change comes at an annual cost of \$698.77 billion.
- [Researchers found](#) that honoring the Paris Agreement would create 24 million jobs around the world by 2030 by growing the renewables sector and related industries.
 - The study also found that if left unchecked, [climate change will destroy jobs](#).
- Major employers, including GE, Disney, and Apple [disagreed](#) with Trump's 2017 decision to withdraw the U.S. from the agreement, arguing that staying in would create jobs by spurring investment, increasing American competitiveness in and access to international markets, encouraging innovation, and reducing business risk associated with climate change.
 - In late 2019, they joined with the Chair of the International Committee of AFL-CIO in a [letter](#) re-asserting their support.
- At least 290 cities and counties, 10 states, and 2,275 businesses have said they are “still in” and [pledged to stick to the goals](#) of the Paris agreement.
 - 17 businesses, 3 universities, and 2 cultural institutions in Georgia have signed on to the goals of the agreement, including Ambata Capital, LLC, Distinction Management Group, Atkins & Associates, Attorneys-at-Law, LLC. and Spelman College.
 - 3 Georgia cities have signed on, including Atlanta, Augusta, and Clarkson.

COMPARE RECORDS

Sen. David Perdue:

- David Perdue signed a [letter](#) urging Trump to exit the Paris Climate Agreement.

Jon Ossoff:

- Jon Ossoff [supports](#) rejoining the Paris Agreement: “I’ll push for America to immediately re-enter the Paris Climate Accords — and then to lead negotiation of an even more ambitious climate treaty.”

Rev. Raphael Warnock:

- Rev. Warnock [supports](#) reentering the Paris Climate Agreement: he “believes that solutions to climate change are moral issues and that we can act on the consensus that already exists among Americans by ignoring Washington special interests and putting effective, common sense policies in place. Starting with rejoining the Paris Climate Accords and restoring America’s place as a leader in the fight for climate justice we can achieve this.”

Rep. Doug Collins:

- Doug Collins voted to [support](#) Trump exiting from the Paris Climate Agreement, and [posted](#) to Facebook implying it was a conspiracy to advantage China.
 - Collins [told the Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#): “While Congress should be mindful of the impact human activity has on our surroundings, it should not take the drastic steps lauded by radical environmentalists especially when doing so would put our country at a competitive disadvantage with countries like China, which has made virtually no efforts to curb domestic pollution.”

CLEAN ENERGY JOBS

IF YOU SAY ONE THING

Georgia is a leader on clean energy jobs in the South, but politicians like David Perdue threaten these vital jobs even during a recession to appease their fossil fuel donors.

KEY MESSAGE

Amidst the historic economic collapse caused by COVID-19, Americans are looking now more than ever for politicians to support fast-growing job-creating industries like the clean energy industry. Senators Perdue and Loeffler tout their private-sector credentials as evidence that they will create jobs for Georgia, yet under their watch Trump killed 28,900 jobs in Georgia by ending the Clean Power Plan and destroyed a further 27,353 Georgia clean energy jobs with his incompetent response to COVID-19.

GET THE FACTS

- Georgia is [home](#) to nearly 83,806 clean energy jobs, a leader in the South.
- Georgia was [ranked](#) fifteenth in the nation for clean energy employment in 2019.
- Georgia [lost](#) 27,353 clean energy jobs in 2020 due to Trump's incompetence.
- The Clean Power Plan would have created [560,000 new clean energy jobs](#), including 28,900 jobs in Georgia
- Hourly wages for clean energy jobs [exceed](#) national averages by 8 to 19%, the clean energy economy offers more [opportunities](#) for low and middle-skilled workers than the national economy, and educational barriers to entry are [lower](#) in clean energy jobs, even in high paying positions.
- Most clean energy jobs are [local by nature](#), and clean energy companies support a range of secondary jobs in their local areas.
- Wind energy is [cheaper](#) than natural gas, and in 2018, the [sector alone](#) paid \$1 billion to state and local governments and private landowners in tax and lease payments, and supported a supply chain of 500 factories in 42 states employing 24,000 workers.

- Clean energy companies [hire](#) a greater percentage of veterans than the national average, with veterans [filling](#) around 10% of the nation's advanced clean energy jobs. Clean energy also [employs](#) more veterans than the oil and gas industry.
- The renewable energy sector is [more diverse](#) than the workforce overall: it is less white, employs more workers who identify as Hispanic or Latinx, and employs 3 to 5 times more workers who identify as two or more races than the national average.
- Clean energy jobs provide a [long-proven](#) path to stability and reintegration for formerly incarcerated citizens, who were [unemployed](#) at a rate of 27% in 2018 and face over 45,000 legal [barriers](#) to reintegration.
- Electric vehicles represent the future of the auto industry (the backbone of the U.S. economy), which we can't afford to cede to China ([the world's largest auto buyer](#)), and Europe ([the world leader in EV investment](#)).
- Led by government climate policy, Europe [attracted](#) \$71 billion in electric vehicles investment in 2019, outpacing China and the U.S.
- The Chinese government, which had [already invested](#) \$60 billion into electric vehicles before the pandemic, is placing electric vehicles at [the center](#) of their coronavirus recovery package with extensions to tax breaks for electric vehicles and an investment in growing the number of charging stations by tenfold, all with an eye to [increase](#) electric vehicles from 5% of the market to 25% in the next 5 years.
- Researchers at CSIS [warn](#) that if China takes too much of a lead, it will threaten the U.S. ability to compete in the growing market.
 - The U.S. hit 1 million [electric vehicles sales](#) in 2018.

COMPARE RECORDS

Sen. David Perdue:

- In the Senate, Perdue [voted against](#) clean energy investments twice, and [against](#) industry-growing [standards](#) for energy efficiency and renewable energy twice.
- In 2019, solar firms [sought help](#) from both Georgia Senate offices with regard to solar tariffs, but Perdue's office did not weigh in on the decisions.

- In a 2014 [voter guide](#), David Perdue 'Strongly Disagree[d]' with the statement that: "Governments should pay to develop wind and solar energy solutions when these are not economically feasible."
- In 2014, Perdue ran on [opening](#) up more oil and gas drilling and building more pipelines.

Jon Ossoff:

- In an interview with the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Ossoff [stated](#): "I'll push for a historic and ambitious American infrastructure and clean-energy program that includes big, overdue investments in renewable energy, energy efficiency, transit and transportation, public health, emergency response and environmental cleanup. These investments will create job training and employment opportunities for millions of American workers and demand for products made by American businesses. They will revitalize our economy and lay the foundations for decades of prosperity, environmental sustainability and health."

Rev. Raphael Warnock:

- [Rev. Warnock](#) "believes in working toward a clean economy that will create jobs, reduce pollution, and produce a world that our children can inherit. Clean energy has become one of the fastest growing sources of new jobs in America. As the global green energy economy develops, Reverend Warnock will work hard to ensure that no working Georgians are left behind in our transition to sustainable energy. And he will push to ensure that those that overwhelmingly bear the brunt of intensifying climate change are prioritized in access to training and education to partake in profits."
 - If elected, Rev. Warnock [would](#): "Prepare Georgia's coastline for rising sea-levels with investments in green infrastructure, structural reinforcement and climate science; Push for investment in resources, infrastructure, and education in communities of color to benefit in energy cost savings; Advocate for marginalized people to receive training and education to participate in the green new economy and jobs; Encourage investment in clean energy and commit to transitioning to a clean economy by 2050."

Rep. Doug Collins:

- Doug Collins [voted](#) against clean energy funding, R&D, and tax incentives 14 times in Congress.

Sen. Kelly Loeffler:

- In April, Loeffler [urged](#) Majority Leader Mitch McConnell to reject extensions for renewable energy tax incentives on the grounds they provided an unfair advantage.
 - When Democrats tried to include clean energy relief in the COVID-19 stimulus package, Loeffler [said](#) “[House Speaker] Nancy Pelosi [D-Calif.] and [Senate Minority Leader] Chuck Schumer [D-N.Y.] are putting solar panels ahead of people.”
 - In an interview with the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Kelly Loeffler [stated](#): “AOC and the Democrats’ radical Green New Deal proposal is absolutely ridiculous. This socialist plan would crush the American Dream by killing millions of jobs in our energy industry, bankrupting our economy, and expanding the Washington bureaucracy until it suffocates free markets and individual choice. It’s not the future I want for Georgia’s children, or any American. I support common-sense solutions to ensure our families always have access to clean air and water – but I will never stand for socialist policies that will wreck our economy and put Georgians out of work.”
 - In 2009, the company Kelly Loeffler ran with her husband [advocated](#) for cap-and-trade regulations on greenhouse gas emissions, which they stood to benefit from by creating a market for carbon offsets. She is happy to support such legislation when it will most benefit her personally.

COST OF DOING NOTHING

IF YOU SAY ONE THING

Republicans are comfortable exaggerating the cost of the Green New Deal, yet we never hear them speak on the cost of ignoring climate change, which is far higher.

KEY MESSAGE

When asked about climate change, Georgia's Republican candidates for Senate love to criticize the (exaggerated) cost of the Green New Deal. But they have no thoughts of their own on how to mitigate the costs of doing nothing about climate change, which are far

higher: sea levels are expected to rise 1-4 feet in Georgia over the next 100 years, putting 40,000 homes and \$13 billion in real estate in the direct path of flooding. Georgia has had a hurricane per year for each of the past 5 years, totaling \$115 billion in damages and 258 deaths – a preview of the more frequent and intense storms to come if nothing is done to address the climate crisis.

GET THE FACTS

- Climate change will [cost](#) Georgia \$34.2 billion a year by the year 2100.
- Trump's clean cars rollback will [cost](#) Georgians over \$1 billion per year.
- Outdoor recreation in Georgia [supports](#) 238,000 jobs and \$27.3 billion in consumer spending. In 2018, tourism [generated](#) \$66.2 billion in visitor spending and supported more than 471,000 jobs. Climate-related disasters threaten this essential revenue.
- By 2100, 40,000 homes in Georgia at an estimated worth of \$13 billion [will face flooding](#). Those homes at risk [currently contribute](#) around \$139 million in annual property tax revenue.
 - Sea levels are [expected](#) to rise 1-4 ft. in Georgia over the next century—faster than the rest of the country due to land sinking.
- In the past decade, Georgia [has experienced](#) 37 climate-related disasters responsible for over a billion dollars' worth of damages.
- Since Trump assumed the office of the presidency, Georgia has [experienced](#) 13 climate-related disasters responsible for over a billion dollars' worth of damages.
- Research shows climate change is threatening Georgians and costing the state billions of dollars:
 - The 2020 Atlantic hurricane season has been one of the most active in recent history and broken records with at 26 names storms to date. In the past decade, Georgia [experienced](#) 5 hurricanes, totaling \$115 billion in damages and 258 deaths.
- In addition to hurricanes, Georgians face severe storms and flooding due to climate change:
 - [Severe storms have been linked to climate change](#), as hotter air carries more moisture, leading to more frequent and more intense storms.

- Studies show one-third of the lower 48 states [face flooding risks](#) due to severe storms. AccuWeather also [forecasts an above average](#) number of tornadoes in 2020.
- In the past decade, Georgia has [experienced](#) 2 floods costing a total of \$4.7 billion in damages and resulting in 64 deaths.
- In the past decade, Georgia has [experienced](#) 16 severe storms costing a total of \$31.3 billion in damages and resulting in 185 deaths.
- In Georgia, climate change is also [increasing](#) the severity, frequency and extent of wildfires, and spurring an increase in drought conditions:
 - In the last decade Georgia [experienced](#) one wildfire that caused a total of \$2.6 billion in damages and 21 deaths.
- In the last decade, [Georgia experienced three droughts](#) that caused a total of \$52 billion in damages and 218 deaths.

Agriculture

- In 2019, agriculture [generated](#) over \$73 billion in gross state product and employed 392,400 workers in Georgia.
- According to the US Department of Agriculture, a record-breaking [19.4 million acres](#) went unplanted in 2019 because of heavy rainfall and flooding that prevented farmers from planting.
 - The report was released in August of 2019, when at the same time in 2018, only 2.14 million acres had gone unplanted.
- [Farm bankruptcies surged in 2019](#), up 24% from the previous year following a combination of two years of adverse planting, growing and harvesting conditions and Trump's trade wars.
- Optimal [planting zones](#) for different species of plants are already shifting north and will continue to [shift further away](#) in the coming decades.
- Our warming climate can even lead to [unexpected cold snaps](#) by disrupting the polar vortex.
 - The National Climate Assessment [found](#) that "the changing climate is expected to severely alter growing seasons for the fruit, which relies on steady cold during the winter followed by warmth in the spring and summer." The Peach State typically generates 130 million pounds

of peaches every year, worth in excess of \$30 million, which climate change threatens.

- According to the [Times Free Press](#), “A late freeze in March 2017 ruined the vast majority of Georgia's peach crop and caused more than \$1 billion in damage to peaches and other fruit crops, the report notes. Climate experts worry that could become a more regular occurrence if nothing is done to combat the problem.”
- Scientists are [working](#) to genetically engineer peaches that are more resilient to climate change, but “for now, the problem remains bigger than any workable solution.”
- In 2018, Hurricane Michael [destroyed](#) between \$2.3 billion and \$2.8 billion of crops in Georgia, including \$800 million in cotton losses and losses in pecans, peanuts, sweet corn, cucumbers and soybeans. On a visit to the state, Trump said: “It's too bad, what happened to you guys.”
- Changing precipitation patterns due to climate change may result in excess water and flooding during off seasons and planting seasons, but [limited water](#) during critical crop growth periods.
- Changes to growing seasons in some areas will also mean [insects spawning multiple generations per season](#) and producing more generations per year. In addition to adding more insects to the environment, this can lead to pests developing greater resistance to insecticides.
- Changing winter temperature and humidity will require [adapting grain storage](#).
- According to the [2018 National Climate Assessment](#), “Increased evaporation rates caused by high temperatures, in association with drought, will exacerbate plant stress, yield reduction, fire risks, and depletion of surface and groundwater resources.”
- [Dairy cows](#) are particularly sensitive to heat stress, as it negatively affects their appetite, rumen fermentation, and lactation yield. In 2010, heat stress was estimated to have lowered annual U.S. dairy production by \$1.2 billion.
- [Researchers found](#) that air pollution from wildfires can substantially reduce plant productivity even hundreds of kilometers away from the direct impact zone of a wildfire.

- Air pollution from nearby wildfires has made working in the fields during harvest time [even more dangerous](#) for farmworkers.
- If elected, Rev. Warnock [plans](#) to push for resources that help Georgia farmers adopt more sustainable and regenerative practices and ensure that farmers have a seat at the table and an economic incentive as we address climate change.

Extreme Heat and Drought

- National Weather Service [outlook](#) forecasts 40 to 50% chance of higher than average temperatures in Georgia September through November 2020.
- In the last decade, [Georgia experienced three droughts](#) that caused a total of \$52 billion in damages and 218 deaths.
- Currently, 310,000 Georgians are [vulnerable](#) to extreme heat.
- Currently, Georgia [experiences](#) an average of 20 extreme heat days per year. If climate change proceeds unabated, the state is [expected](#) to experience more than 90 extreme heat days per year by 2050.

Wildfire

- [Studies show](#) climate change is increasing the severity, frequency, and extent of wildfires.
- In 2016, Georgia [experienced](#) a wildfire that caused a total of \$2.6 billion in damages and 21 deaths.

Hurricanes

- In the past decade, Georgia [experienced](#) 5 hurricanes, totaling \$115 billion in damages and 258 deaths.
 - Georgia has experienced a hurricane each of the past 5 years.

Flooding

- In the past decade, Georgia has [experienced](#) 2 floods costing a total of \$4.7 billion in damages and resulting in 64 deaths.
- In the past decade, Georgia has [experienced](#) 16 severe storms costing a total of \$31.3 billion in damages and resulting in 185 deaths.

Clean Water

- Doug Collins [voted](#) 5 times to undermine clean water protections.
- Perdue and Loeffler are two of Trump's closest allies in the Senate, and Collins. All of them have enabled his agenda to destroy clean water protections in order to support his fossil fuel donors.
- A 2017 [report](#) showed Georgia's drinking water was among the least safe in the nation, but Trump's anti-science attitude led him to block action to make polluters pay for cleaning up toxic chemicals that have been [found](#) in water supplies [across the state](#). These chemicals, called PFAS are [linked](#) to kidney and testicular cancer, hypertension and other diseases.
- Trump's close relationship with the coal industry has resulted in looser rules for dumping toxic coal ash. Coal ash contains chemicals [linked](#) to cancer, neurological damage, and other health impacts and is stored in sites at risk of spilling into nearby rivers and lakes under flood conditions.
- Perdue and Loeffler signed a [letter](#) to the Acting Director of the Office of Management and Budget urging him to permanently end all regulations that Trump had suspended during COVID-19.
- Coal ash from a Georgia Power facility [leaked](#) into Lake Juliette and the town's groundwater, releasing unsafe levels of chemicals linked to cancer and organ failures.

Air Pollution

- In 2019, [three counties](#) in Georgia received F grades for their number of days of unhealthy ozone levels, and the Atlanta metropolitan area was ranked [23rd in the nation](#) for annual particle pollution.