

Climate Change In The Georgia U.S. Senate Runoffs

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. Election day exit polling [shows](#) two-thirds of voters believe climate change to be a “serious threat,” and President-elect Joe Biden won the support of 7 in 10 such voters. The belief crosses party affiliation – with a 55% majority of moderate or liberal Republican voters, 75% of independents, and 88% of Democratic voters nationwide saying climate change is a serious problem. It is clear that 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. 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 January runoff election, [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 major investments in the [clean energy](#) economy and [infrastructure](#) to help farm and coastal communities adapt to climate change.

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, which has a long history of polluting marginalized communities across the state.

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. 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 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. Rev. 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.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

IF YOU SAY ONE THING

Marginalized communities across Georgia are dealing with a decades-long assault on their air, land and water by some of the biggest polluters in the nation. In typical fashion, corrupt Senators Kelly Loeffler and David Perdue have profited as their constituents grapple with toxic chemical waste, contaminated water supplies, and increased rates of cancer and other health defects.

KEY MESSAGE

Kelly Loeffler and David Perdue have not only failed to stand up for communities on the frontlines of the climate crisis, but in typical fashion they have gained from the very companies responsible for polluting Georgia's air, land and water.

Loeffler sat on the board of Southern Co.'s Georgia Power, the state's largest utility company that has a long history of polluting neighborhoods across the state home to predominantly Black and low-income Georgians.

Perdue has voted repeatedly against legislation linked to environmental justice concerns, while taking over \$80,000 in campaign donations from Southern Co. and its employees. He has also received at least \$62,300 from the poultry industry, which continues to contaminate local communities' soil, air and ground water. Perdue lives in an elite beachfront community that is reinforcing in preparation for sea-level rise while his constituents less than 10 miles away in Brunswick are still bearing the brunt of decades of environmental racism, including aging sewage infrastructure that is prone to flooding.

Rev. Raphael Warnock has centered environmental justice in his campaign, calling for polluters and utilities to be held accountable and the prioritization of marginalized communities in clean energy investments and green jobs training.

Jon Ossoff has similarly addressed the issue, voicing support for increased fines for spills and contamination and stricter controls on toxic chemicals, in addition to increased investments in environmental cleanup efforts.

GET THE FACTS

Environmental Justice Has Deep Roots In Georgia

- In the 1990s, residents in the predominantly Black neighborhood of Chosewood Park [fought](#) against plans to turn the former General Motors plant into junk yards and recycling facilities.
- The Newtown neighborhood of Gainesville, Ga., was formed as segregated housing for Black residents built on a landfill beside railroad tracks. In the 1950s and 1960s, the area became [home](#) to industries, including Purina and Cargill, that [resulted](#) in high rates of throat and mouth cancers, excessive cases of lupus, and a variety of respiratory ailments in residents.
- The Newtown Florist Club, a local community group, began its environmental justice work in 1978 by [asking](#) the state to look into Purina's sewage and grain dust pollution.
- Today, Newtown still bears the brunt of [pollution](#) from industrial facilities (Cargill, Purina), and poultry and waste processing plants (Fieldale Farms and Blaze Scrap Iron and Metals), as well as the CSX railroad line.

Georgia Power Co. (A Subsidiary Of Southern Company)

- Georgia Power is a [subsidiary](#) of Southern Company, which also owns power plants in Mississippi and Alabama.
- Georgia is one of the top coal ash-generating states, [producing](#) more than 6 million tons of coal ash annually, resulting in an myriad of pollution concerns for local communities.
 - Georgia Power is one of the [largest](#) producers of coal ash in the country. Most of Georgia's coal ash has been [generated](#) by the company's 11 coal-fired power plants stretching from Rome in the northwest part of the state to Brunswick on the coast.
 - A 2018 report [found](#) that Georgia Power owned 10 out of 11 coal-fired power plants that were leaking toxic coal ash into groundwater supplies.
 - For decades, Georgia Power [dumped](#) ash into ponds without a protective liner, reportedly leading to contaminants seeping into groundwater.

- In 2015, Georgia Power closed Plant Mitchell in Albany, [leaving behind](#) 2 million tons of coal ash waste stored on-site. Surveys dating back to the 1980s showed contamination of groundwater from toxic waste generated by the plant.
- The state is home to the [largest](#) and [most polluting](#) coal-powered plant in the U.S., Georgia Power's Scherer coal power plant. The plant releases emissions [larger](#) than the entire nation of Kenya.
- In 2020, residents [filed](#) a lawsuit against Georgia Power Co. alleging the coal ash pond at Plant Scherer in rural Juliette was contaminating the community's well water. (Georgia Power has denied wrongdoing and the lawsuit is pending.)
- Coal ash waste from coal-fired plants could [contain](#) arsenic, boron, lead, mercury and other heavy metals that are toxic to humans and are [associated](#) with long-term health risks, including damage to the kidney, stomach and nervous system. Water testing near the Brunswick plant [found](#) toxins that may indicate pollution from coal ash.
- In the lawsuit, residents living near the plant [reported](#) health problems including cancer, cardiovascular and immune disorders because of tainted well water.
- Georgia Power plans to close its 29 coal ash ponds, but [does not plan](#) to bury the waste for all of them in lined landfills. Plant Scherer is one of five plants across the state at which Georgia Power has [proposed](#) leaving toxic ash in unlined pits.
- In 2019, the Southern Environmental Law Center [asked](#) regulators to stop Georgia Power's plans to store coal ash in place at five plants including Plant Scherer.
- Georgia Power has been [accused](#) by environmental experts, regulators and activists of buying property and land surrounding plants as a means of circumventing coal ash clean up requirements.
- The utility [required](#) those who it buys land from to sign waivers releasing the company from future legal responsibility and forbidding the sellers from voicing concerns about polluted drinking water wells.

- Local residents [expressed concern](#) that Georgia Power would simply leave its waste, along with the long-term risks of toxic chemicals affecting the community's well water.
- Communities of color in Georgia [continue to fight against](#) nuclear power plant expansion Shell Bluff, an already heavily polluted area of Burke County.
 - Shell Bluff in Burke County is [surrounded](#) by a nuclear weapons facility, an aging nuclear power plant and one of the most toxic waterways in the country.
 - Shell Bluff is home to the [Alvin W. Vogtle Electric Generating Plant](#). Owned largely by Georgia Power. Plant Vogtle's two nuclear reactors have generated electricity for the state since the 1980s.
 - Plans by Georgia Power to [expand](#) the Vogtle plant has raised concerns of increased contamination in an area that is already significantly polluted.
 - The nuclear facilities produce radioactive chemicals, including those linked to Down syndrome, that have [contaminated](#) local groundwater and the Savannah River for [over](#) 30 years.
 - Thanks to decades of nuclear waste pollution from the plant, the Savannah River is now the [third most polluted](#) river in the country.
 - Since the 1980s, Burke County residents have [experienced](#) a cancer epidemic. The Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League commissioned a [study](#) which found that cancer mortality in Burke County increased 25% from 1987 to 2003. For Black residents of Burke County, the rate increased by 30%. During the same time frame, the national average decreased by 4%.
 - In 2016, Georgia Power [proposed](#) constructing another nuclear power plant next to Stewart Detention Center, a private prison that houses U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement detainees.
 - Detainees and employees at Stewart Detention Center will be stuck with the [environmental toxins](#) that come with nuclear power plants.

Air Pollution

- Air pollution disproportionately impacts communities of color in Georgia.
 - 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.
 - In 2019, Augusta [recorded](#) worse levels of particle pollution than 2018, and Augusta, Macon and Warner-Robbins counties [witnessed](#) an uptick in days when short-term particle pollution reached unhealthy levels.
 - Upticks in short-term particle pollution were directly [linked](#) to weather patterns, such as drought, and high emissions from wood-burning devices.
 - The Atlanta-Athens-Clarke County-Sandy Springs metropolitan area was [ranked](#) 23rd in the nation for annual particle pollution in 2019.

Toxic Chemicals

- 14 out of Georgia's 22 EPA [superfund sites](#) are in cities where a majority of the population is Black.
- Georgia is home to industrial and chemical plants that have long polluted local communities.
 - The [predominantly Black](#) city of Brunswick is home to [four](#) EPA Superfund sites within its 25 square mile radius.
 - Pollution from the former LCP Chemicals plant in Brunswick [continues](#) to impact the coastal Georgia community, including the fishing industry.
 - 99% of Brunswick properties are in flood zones and during several recent storms, Brunswick residents saw [raw sewage](#) flow into their homes and streets. Due to the aging sewer system, the people living in Brunswick, more than half of whom are Black, were unable to shower or flush toilets for days after some storms.
 - In 2019, Honeywell International [paid](#) the state \$4 million for environmental cleanup of the former LCP Chemicals plant, which

[polluted](#) nearby marshland and waterways with mercury, petroleum, and PCBs.

- In 2016, Honeywell and Georgia Power Co. [agreed](#) to pay the EPA \$29 million to clean up 760 acres of polluted marshland at the LCP Chemicals Superfund Site.
- From the 1920s to 1994, the site was home to [several industrial facilities](#), including an oil refinery, a paint manufacturing company, a power plant and a chlor-alkali plant. These plants were operated by Atlantic Refining Company, Georgia Power Company, Dixie Paints and Varnish Company, Allied Chemical Inc. (now Honeywell International, Inc.), and LCP Chemicals-Georgia (a subsidiary of Hanlin Group).
- The site was placed on the Superfund program's [National Priorities List](#) in 1996 because of contaminated groundwater, soil and sediment from facility operations.

Clean Water Issues

- Pollution in Atlanta's Proctor Creek [exposes](#) residents to sewage waste and harmful pathogens.
 - The communities around Proctor Creek in West Atlanta [suffer](#) from recurring flooding and sewer overflows, which puts them at risk of being exposed to harmful pathogens.
 - In the 1900s, residents successfully brought [legal action](#) against a furnace company that was dumping trash into Proctor Creek rather than burning it.
- Pollution from poultry plants affects Georgia's waterways and local communities' health and access to drinking water.
 - Rural Georgia is [home](#) to the most poultry plants of any state in the country and is the nation's largest supplier of broiler chickens.
 - Poultry plant workers, a majority of which are people of color and immigrants, are [exposed](#) to air pollution, carcinogens, and water pollution coming from both the animals and the machinery used in processing.
 - Plant pollutants contaminate the soil, air, and ground water of the surrounding communities. Contaminants from poultry plants have

been [linked to](#) health complications including asthma, heart disease, superbug resistance, lung disease, and cancer.

- Poultry plants have an [extensive record](#) of polluting waterways in Gainesville.
- The Flat Creek tributary that flows through Gainesville before entering Lake Lanier is [polluted](#) with high levels of bacteria, including E. coli. Pilgrim's Pride and Mar-Jac Poultry plants have frequently [violated](#) the Clean Water Act by dumping pollutants into the creek.
- Flat Creek is considered an impaired waterway by Georgia's Environmental Protection Division because of high levels of [fecal coliform bacteria](#).
- In July 2014, a local environmental group and the city of Gainesville [found](#) Mar-Jac's poultry plant was illegally discharging bloody water and chicken guts into the creek from the facility's stormwater outfall.
- Flat Creek and Lake Lanier are part of the Chattahoochee River basin, which [supplies](#) water to much of metro Atlanta, [providing](#) drinking water for 4 million people and hosting 7.5 million visitors annually.
- Drinking water contaminated with the bacteria can [cause](#) diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, cramps and other gastro-related distresses. Exposure can cause rashes and other skin problems.

COMPARE RECORDS

Sen. David Perdue

- Perdue has [received](#) a total of \$84,010 from Southern Co. and its employees for both his 2014 and 2020 Senate races.
 - In 2014, Perdue [received](#) \$37,050 from the company and its employees, including \$15,000 from the company's PAC. For his re-election bid, Perdue received \$46,960 from Southern Co. and its employees.
- Perdue [received](#) at least \$62,300 from the poultry industry in both his 2014 and 2020 Senate races.

- This amount includes maximum \$5,600 contributions from the Vice President of Crider Poultry, the President of Tip Top Poultry, the owner of Fieldale Farms, the President of Fieldale Farms, and the President of Harrison Poultry. Perdue has also received over \$13,000 from Claxton Poultry's President Mikell Fries, who was [indicted](#) for price fixing earlier this year, and his wife. (Fries denies wrongdoing and the case is pending.)
- Perdue [lives](#) in an elite beachfront community that is reinforcing in preparation for sea-level rise, while his constituents less than 10 miles away in Brunswick are dealing with the effects of decades of environmental racism, including aging sewage infrastructure that is prone to flooding.
- Perdue [voted](#) to block local input about public lands decisions and against legislation to [close](#) a loophole exempting tar sands producers from paying into the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund.
- Perdue has [taken](#) several [votes against](#) clean water protections, including a vote [against](#) closing a loophole exempting fracking from regulation under the Safe Drinking Water Act.
- Perdue [voted](#) to block the Department of the Interior's Stream Protection Rule, which protected the drinking water and public health of communities living near coal mining operations.
 - The [stream protection rule](#) set commonsense requirements for coal mining to better protect groundwater, surface water, and ecosystems from toxic coal mining waste, which has been linked to increased rates of cancer, birth defects, and other health problems. The rule protected 6,000 miles of streams and 52,000 acres of forests.

Jon Ossoff:

- Ossoff has [pledged](#) to make environmental policy “on the basis of scientific evidence - not the lobbying of polluters.”
- Ossoff [vowed](#) to push for increased fines for spills and contamination, and stricter controls on toxic chemicals.
- Ossoff [supported](#) investments in environmental cleanup efforts.
- Ossoff [vowed](#) to fight for Americans demanding “a healthy environment, clean air, and clean water.”

Rev. Raphael Warnock:

- In a [video](#) for NowThis, Rev. Warnock discussed his environmental justice platform and his push to merge the movements for civil rights and climate action:
 - “I often say to the folks who are very focused on environmental issues that ‘you’re absolutely right in your passion and commitment, but you really need to be talking also a little bit more about racial justice, about civil rights.’ And I often say to my friends in the civil rights community who are focused on racial justice ‘y’all need to be talking more about the environment.’ If you’re focused on civil rights, what right could be more basic than the ability to breathe clean air and have access to clean water?”
- Rev. Warnock [said](#) putting “profits over people” drives environmental racism, leading to “devastating and deadly impact on communities of color and communities in general.”
- Rev. Warnock [noted](#) that “race, more than anything else, is still the most likely predictor of where a toxic dump will be located.”
- Rev. Warnock [spoke](#) about the disproportionate impact air pollution has on the health outcomes of communities of color:
 - “Communities that are poor and vulnerable receive the brunt, which is why Black children are 4 times more likely to be hospitalized with asthma, and if they have asthma they’re 10 times more likely to die because they are more likely to be located in places where the ozone levels are so high that it literally is a danger to their health and their well-being.”
- Rev. Warnock [urged](#) action on environmental justice issues:
 - “The people who receive the least amount of financial reward for the environmental hazards that happen are the ones that receive the brunt of the damage, and it is that contradiction that demands that all of us cry out.”
- Rev. Warnock [stressed](#) the importance of prioritizing disadvantaged communities in clean energy investments, [including](#) green jobs training programs.
- Rev. Warnock [vowed](#) to “hold polluters and utility companies accountable” and [said](#) he would “fight to ensure that environmental justice is a priority in Washington.”

- Rev. Warnock [recognizes](#) that marginalized communities bear the brunt, and will continue to bear the brunt, of the climate crisis.
- Rev. Warnock has [preached](#) about the connections between pollution, race and poverty, and has been [vocal](#) about the interconnectedness of climate and racial justice.
- Rev. Warnock [called](#) for “restoring America’s place as a leader in the fight for climate justice.”

Sen. Kelly Loeffler:

- Loeffler was [elected](#) to Georgia Power’s Board of Directors in October 2019. Georgia Power is a subsidiary of Southern Company.
- Loeffler has [received](#) a total of \$13,175 from Southern Co. and its employees, including \$7,500 from the company’s PAC.
 - Loeffler has [received](#) at least \$107,592 in energy sector donations.
- Georgia Power has a long history of polluting neighborhoods across the state home to predominantly Black and low-income residents:
 - A 2018 report [found](#) that Georgia Power owned 10 out of 11 coal-fired power plants that were leaking toxic coal ash into groundwater supplies.
 - In 2016, Honeywell International and Georgia Power [agreed](#) to pay the EPA \$29 million to clean up 760 acres of polluted marshland at the LCP Chemicals Superfund Site in the [predominantly Black](#) city of Brunswick.
 - The LCP Chemicals Site was placed on the EPA Superfund program’s [National Priorities List](#) in 1996 because of contaminated groundwater, soil and sediment from facility operations, and residents today are still [grappling](#) with pollution from the site.
 - In 2016, Georgia Power [proposed](#) constructing another nuclear power plant next to Stewart Detention Center, a private prison that houses U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement detainees.

- While Loeffler sat on Georgia Power's board, residents of Shell Buff continued to fight [against](#) the company's plans to expand the Vogtle nuclear power plant. The nuclear facility produces radioactive chemicals that have [contaminated](#) local groundwater.
- This year, residents [filed](#) a lawsuit against Georgia Power Co. alleging the coal ash pond at Plant Scherer in Juliette was contaminating the community's well water. Residents living near the plant [linked](#) health problems including cancer, cardiovascular and immune disorders, to polluted well water.
- Georgia Power has been [accused](#) by environmental experts, regulators and activists of buying property and land surrounding plants as a means of circumventing coal ash clean up requirements.
- As CEO of the Atlanta-based Bakkt, a subsidiary of Intercontinental Exchange (ICE), Loeffler was reportedly [involved](#) in investing and trading within the energy sector.
 - ICE, founded by Loeffler's husband Jeffrey Sprecher, originally [focussed](#) on trading energy products including crude and refined oil, natural gas, power, and emissions. Sprecher was a power plant [developer](#) who built, owned and operated plants across the U.S., and in 2001 ICE [acquired](#) the International Petroleum Exchange in 2001.

CLIMATE CHANGE TOUCHES EVERY ISSUE

You don't have to wait for a question about climate change to highlight how climate change touches nearly every major issue. 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 and Kelly Loeffler 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, Perdue wrote an op-ed [claiming](#): “the scientific community is not in total agreement about whether mankind has been a contributing factor.”
- 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.
- 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:

- In a Senate debate, Ossoff [stressed](#) the need to “protect our planet,” noting that “Georgia is already suffering from the effects of climate change” after Hurricane Michael “wiped out our orchards” and coastal cities are having to heavily invest in preparing for flooding and worsening extreme weather.
- Ossoff [said](#) it was “clear” that in order to tackle the climate crisis, “Congress must make massive investments in clean energy as part of an overall infrastructure and jobs program necessary to recover from this current financial crisis.”
- Ossoff [stressed](#) that “the health of the environment is vital to our own health, prosperity, and security” and [promised](#) to “make energy and environmental policy on the basis of scientific evidence — not lobbying by polluters.”
- Ossoff [called](#) for controlling “out-of-control pollution” from fossil fuels that “is fast changing the climate, destroying ecosystems, killing off species, and damaging human health.”
- Ossoff [said](#) the world faces “an urgent environmental crisis” and that if scientists’ warnings are not heeded and greenhouse gas pollution is left uncontrolled, “the consequences will be dire.”
- Ossoff [vowed](#) to support efforts “to reverse the Trump Administration’s rollbacks of clean air, clean water, and fuel economy standards — and then to strengthen them.”
- Ossoff [said](#) that Congress had failed to act on the climate crisis due to “the power of the fossil fuel industry, which exploits our corrupt campaign finance system to buy the allegiance of politicians like David Perdue.”
- Ossoff [vowed](#) to fight for Americans demanding “a healthy environment, clean air, and clean water.”

Rev. Raphael Warnock:

- Rev. Warnock [supports](#) transitioning to a net-zero emissions economy by 2050.
- Rev. Warnock [said](#) that there was “nothing more important than honoring and protecting the only home we’ve been blessed with, for ourselves and our children.”

- Rev. Warnock [argued](#) that “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.”
- As Senior Pastor at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, in 2019 Rev. Warnock [hosted](#) an interfaith meeting on climate change with former Vice President Al Gore and Reverend William Barber II.
- Rev. Warnock [pledged](#) to “work to reverse rollbacks on EPA standards for clean air and water.”
- Rev. Warnock [said](#) “that solutions to climate change are moral issues” and called for acting “on the consensus that already exists among Americans by ignoring Washington special interests and putting effective, common sense policies in place” to fight the climate crisis.

Senator Kelly Loeffler:

- When asked what, if anything, Congress should do to address climate change, Loeffler pivoted to [attacking](#) the Green New Deal: “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.”
- Loeffler [said](#) she supported “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 environmental review regulations and EPA air pollution controls that Trump had [suspended](#) in response to the economic downturn caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Loeffler has [taken](#) \$51,000 from energy PACs and another \$25,500 from electric utility PACs since her appointment earlier this year. She previously was [appointed](#) to the Board of Directors of the utility Georgia Power.

- While Georgia farmers [grapple](#) with the [effects](#) of climate change, Loeffler has yet to acknowledge the [impact](#) of climate change on the agriculture industry.
 - On her campaign website, Loeffler [brands](#) herself as “a champion for farmers, agri-business leaders, and rural families in the Peach State”, while her Senate website [lists](#) agriculture as a key issue, promotes her seat on the Senate Agriculture Committee, and states “looking out for our farming communities” as a top priority for the Senator - but both fail to mention the impact of climate change on the industry.
 - Since 1995, five of Loeffler's family members have [received](#) a total of more than \$3.2 million in federal farm subsidies as part of a [program](#) she criticized her former opponent Rep. Doug Collins for supporting.

GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

IF YOU SAY ONE THING

We have a responsibility to leave a better world for our children and grandchildren, and David Perdue and Kelly Loeffler 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 General Electric, 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:

- Perdue signed a [letter](#) urging Trump to exit the Paris Climate Agreement.
- Perdue [attacked](#) the global pact as “a perfect example of Obama-era overreach” and claimed that “when other countries are not willing or able to fully adhere to the terms and meet these targets it ultimately puts American companies and workers at a tremendous disadvantage.”
- Perdue [praised](#) Trump’s decision to exit the Paris Climate Agreement, calling the move a step towards Trump’s promise to rescind burdensome regulations “while still maintaining a seat at the table for future international climate talks.”

Jon Ossoff:

- 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.”
- Ossoff [criticized](#) President Trump’s withdrawal from the Paris Agreement, saying that if the U.S. walked away from the “historic agreement,” “history will condemn us.”

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.”

CLEAN ENERGY JOBS

IF YOU SAY ONE THING

Georgia is a leader on clean energy jobs in the South, but politicians like David Perdue and Kelly Loeffler 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, making the state 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](#), 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:

- Ossoff directly [linked](#) his Senate run-off race to the passage "a historic infrastructure plan that includes massive investments in clean energy, energy efficiency, and environmental protection."
- Ossoff listed [investments in clean energy](#) as one of four actions needed to combat the current economic crisis created by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Ossoff [called](#) on Congress to "make massive investments in clean energy as part of an overall infrastructure and jobs program necessary to recover from this current financial crisis."
- Ossoff [said](#) he wished to "make Georgia the leading producer of clean energy and tackle the climate crisis."
- Ossoff [vowed](#) to "push for a historic and ambitious American infrastructure and clean-energy program."
- Ossoff [supports](#) "big, overdue investments" in "renewable energy, energy efficiency, transit and transportation, public health, emergency response and environmental cleanup."
- Ossoff [said](#) big infrastructure and clean energy investments would "create job training and employment opportunities for millions of American workers and demand for products made by American businesses" and would "revitalize our economy and lay the foundations for decades of prosperity, environmental sustainability and health."

- Ossoff [said](#) America should be “the world's top producer of renewable energy.”

Rev. Raphael Warnock:

- Rev. Warnock [supports](#) “working toward a clean economy that will create jobs, reduce pollution, and produce a world that our children can inherit.”
- Rev. Warnock [said](#) he would “work hard to ensure that no working Georgians are left behind in our transition to sustainable energy” and to “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.”
- Rev. Warnock [vowed](#) to push for legislation to “prepare Georgia's coastline for rising sea-levels with investments in green infrastructure, structural reinforcement and climate science.”
- Rev. Warnock [supports](#) expanding public transportation, including high speed rail.
- Rev. Warnock [promised](#) to “push for investment in resources, infrastructure, and education in communities of color to benefit in energy cost savings.”
- Rev. Warnock [said](#) he would “advocate for marginalized people to receive training and education to participate in the green new economy and jobs.”
- Rev. Warnock supports transitioning to a net-zero emissions economy by 2050, and to that end, [promised](#) to “encourage investment in clean energy.”

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, 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 run by Loeffler and 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

Senators Perdue and Loeffler 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 U.S. 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.

- Rev. Warnock [vowed](#) 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

- Perdue and Loeffler are two of Trump's [closest allies](#) in the Senate. They 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.