

Technical problems arise as early voting starts in Georgia

The Associated Press

ATLANTA — Long lines of people eager to cast ballots formed as early in-person voting began in Georgia on Monday, Oct. 12, and problems soon developed in the state's most populous county.

Election officials in Fulton County were aware of an issue with the electronic pollbooks used to check voters in at State Farm Arena, where the Atlanta Hawks NBA team plays, county spokeswoman Jessica Corbett-Dominguez said. Technicians were on site working to resolve it, she said.

The line began moving when the arena opened for voting at 8 a.m. and some voters were able to cast their ballots, but things ground to a halt a short time later when the pollbooks

stopped working with hundreds of people waiting. By mid-morning, the problem appeared to have been resolved and the lines had cleared at the arena, which is the largest early voting site in the state with 300 voting machines.

Some people lined up before dawn to be among the first to participate in early in-person voting, which runs through Oct. 30 in Georgia. While voters must vote at their assigned polling place on Election Day, they can vote at any voting site in the county where they live during early voting.

With record turnout expected for this year's presidential election and fears about exposure to the coronavirus, election officials and advocacy groups have been encouraging



Ben Gray/Atlanta Journal-Constitution via AP

People wait in line to vote Monday, Oct. 12, 2020, in Decatur, Georgia.

people to vote early, either in person or by absentee ballot.

Problems with the electronic pollbooks were one of the issues that contrib-

uted to hourslong lines in Georgia during the June primary election, along

with high turnout, consolidated polling places and shortages of poll workers.

With Georgia emerging as a potential battleground state, surrogates from both the Republican and Democratic presidential campaigns were scheduled to travel to the state Monday.

Jill Biden, wife of former vice president and Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden, was scheduled to appear at an event in DeKalb County with prominent state Democrats before traveling to Columbus to meet with military and veteran families.

Meanwhile, President Donald Trump's son, Donald Trump Jr. was set to travel to Savannah near the coast and Kennesaw, just outside Atlanta, to rally Republican voters.

Sen. Graham leads Barrett court hearings

By Laurie Kellman
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina is wielding the gavel in the performance of his political life.

Once a biting critic of President Donald Trump, the Senate Judiciary Committee chairman on Monday, Oct. 12, launched confirmation hearings for Judge Amy Coney Barrett in a bid to seal a 6-to-3 conservative majority on the Supreme Court. Hanging in the balance could be the future of government health care during a coronavirus pandemic that's claimed more than 214,000 American lives. And Graham's own career appears in jeopardy like never before.

For Graham, the Republican Senate majority and Trump himself, the hearings three weeks before Election Day could be a last stand. The proceedings are a display for voters of what it means to control the presidency and the Senate. But they also are a real-time test of whether that's enough to counter a jaw-dropping \$57 million fundraising haul by Graham's Democratic opponent in the South Carolina race, Jaime Harrison.

"Senator, how good is your word?" Harrison, 44, asked at a recent debate.

Graham's answer is complicated by his whipsaw shifts, particularly where Trump is concerned. He's been friend and foe of the belligerent president. Now, they play golf. He once vowed to oppose any Supreme Court confirmation hearings in presidential election years. This week, he is chairing Barrett's, and predicting she'll be confirmed to the high court this month to replace the late Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

With early voting underway in South Carolina and many other states, Graham, 65, mounted the dais Monday amid his opponent's withering fundraising, his own statements as one of the Senate's most visible members, and Trump's weak standing against Democrat Joe Biden in the final stretch of the campaign.

The days leading up to the Barrett hearings were particularly challenging for Graham. On Friday, during a debate forum with Harrison — who is Black — Graham denied there was systemic racism in South Carolina.

"If you're a young African American, an immigrant, you can go anywhere in this state. You just need to be conservative, not liberal," Graham said.

Then Harrison's campaign on Sunday rocked the political world with its fundraising haul, propelled by contributions from around the country.

Facebook bans Holocaust denial, distortion posts

Associated Press

Facebook is banning posts that deny or distort the Holocaust and will start directing people to authoritative sources if they search for information about the Nazi genocide.

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg announced the new policy Monday, Oct. 12, the latest attempt by the company to take action against conspiracy theories and misinformation ahead of the U.S. presidential election.

The decision comes amid a push by Holocaust survivors around the world who lent their voices to a campaign targeting Zuckerberg, urging him to take action to remove Holocaust denial posts from the social media site. Coordinated by the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, the #NoDenyingIt campaign used Facebook itself to make the survivors' entreaties to Zuckerberg heard, posting one video

per day urging him to remove Holocaust-denying groups, pages and posts as hate speech.

The Anti-Defamation League has reported that incidents of white supremacist propaganda distributed across the U.S. jumped by more than 120% between 2018 and last year. Tech companies began promising to take a firmer stand against accounts used to promote hate and violence after a 2017 rally in Charlottesville, Vir-

ginia., where a self-described white supremacist drove into a crowd of counterprotesters.

Zuckerberg said in a blog post Monday he believe the new policy strikes the "right balance" in drawing the lines between what is and isn't acceptable speech.

"I've struggled with the tension between standing for free expression and the harm caused by minimizing or denying the horror of the Holo-

caust," he wrote. "My own thinking has evolved as I've seen data showing an increase in anti-Semitic violence."

Zuckerberg had raised the ire in 2018 when he said that posts denying the Nazi annihilation of 6 million Jews would not necessarily be removed. He said he did not think Holocaust deniers were "intentionally" getting it wrong, and that as long as posts were not calling for harm or violence.

Having Difficulty Hearing People with Masks?

Mask wearing eliminates vital visual information like watching another's lips move to understand speech. This is a problem for those with hearing loss.



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