



Millions in Debt, Stacey Abrams' Group Lays off Nearly All Its Staff

Has Stacey Abrams, once viewed as a rising star in the Democratic Party, now become a falling star?

As it grapples with debt totaling millions of dollars, two-time gubernatorial Georgia candidate Stacey Abrams' voting-rights group — once a major force to be reckoned with — is now reportedly cutting almost all of its staff.

Fair Fight, founded by Abrams, played a major role in Democrat wins in the Peach State in recent years, running well-oiled voter turnout operations. But according to the [Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#), the organization has accumulated huge legal bills related to its voting-rights activism.

To make ends meet amid the crippling debt, Fair Fight is laying off a whopping 75 percent of its staff, impacting all of its activities from fundraising to organizing to media outreach. The group is also scaling back its spending on vendors and consultants.

As part of a "restructuring" attempt, Lauren Groh-Wargo, who served as Abrams' campaign manager during her second bid for the governorship (in 2022, when she had her rematch with the now-incumbent Republican Brian Kemp), is taking on the position of interim leader for Fair Fight as the organization faces \$2.5 million in debt with only \$1.9 million on hand.

Salena Jegede, Fair Fight's board chair, said to the AJC that the current predicament is the result of "slow fundraising" compounded with high litigation expenses that left the organization with "serious funding deficit that makes our current trajectory unsustainable."

Jegede maintained that "While we are disappointed by these realities, we are not discouraged. We will adapt to this new phase of the fight for democracy by restructuring the organization to focus on how we serve Georgia and American voters for the 2024 cycle and beyond."

In the aftermath of her initial loss to Kemp, Abrams established Fair Fight in 2018 with the aim of addressing purported voter suppression. The organization's scope broadened in 2019 with the addition of a political component, Fair Fight PAC.

Fair Fight was widely heralded as having contributed to Joe Biden's victory in Georgia in 2020, as well as the successful election of Democratic senators John Ossoff and Raphael Warnock, both of whom



AP Images
Stacey Abrams



Written by [Luis Miguel](#) on February 2, 2024

secured their seats in close runoff races in January 2021.

The group gained prominence by opposing Georgia's 2021 voting law, which was designed to enhance election integrity. Abrams often characterized the legislation as "Jim Crow 2.0." Ultimately, Fair Fight's legal challenge to the law failed and a federal court last year ordered the group to cover legal costs amounting to a quarter of a million dollars.

In the aftermath of the 2020 election, the office of the Georgia Secretary of State [investigated](#) (among other left-wing organizations) another group founded by Abrams and formerly chaired by Raphael Warnock for seeking to "aggressively" register "ineligible, out-of-state, or deceased voters."

Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger investigated Abrams' New Georgia Project for soliciting voters living out of state and people who have passed away.

Raffensperger's office made reference to one Fulton County resident who claimed to have received five postcards from The New Georgia Project soliciting a registration "for the same dead person," along with a Cherokee County resident who received a voter registration solicitation from The New Georgia Project for his spouse who is ineligible to vote.

Still a third person, according to Raffensperger's office, said The New Georgia Project sent a voter registration solicitation to his daughter, who is not registered to vote in Georgia, while a fourth individual reportedly received a "package of postcards" at her home in New York City from The New Georgia Project encouraging people to register to vote in the Georgia Senate runoffs.

One of Abrams' most notable benefactors has been socialist mega-donor George Soros. During the 2022 Georgia governor's race, Soros [injected \\$1 million](#) into the pro-Abrams PAC One Georgia. The Fair Fight PAC also gave \$1.5 million to One Georgia.

Ironically, Fair Fight's operations weren't enough to get Abrams over the edge in her 2022 face-off with Kemp in the governor's race.

Abrams has also gotten major financial help from the state government. Georgia taxpayers bailed out bad loans made by Abrams' financial-technology company, NOW Corp. Then, in 2021, the company secured \$29 million in new financing from a private-equity firm.

Notably, Abrams' net worth went from \$109,000 in 2018 to \$3.17 million by 2021, the same period of time in which NOW Corp.'s fortunes changed dramatically.

Abrams was widely lauded after her close race against Kemp in 2018, chosen to deliver the response to Donald Trump's State of the Union address in 2019, and even seen as a potential running mate for Joe Biden in 2020.

But the losing streak has seriously wounded Abrams' reputation as a major player in Democratic politics. The decline of Fair Fight is another sign that the party has moved on from the woman who was once seen as the "savior" who would deliver the Democratic Party from decades of Republican dominance in Georgia.



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