

SPONSOR(S): Accreditation Committee of the Green Party of the United States

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SUBJECT/TITLE: Disaccreditation of the Georgia Green Party

TYPE OF PROPOSAL, EXPECTED APPROVAL THRESHOLD: 6-2.1(e) Accreditation of State Parties, Caucuses, and Networks, two-thirds approval threshold

REQUESTED PROPOSAL DECISION-MAKING TIMELINE: Two weeks' discussion, one week vote.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE:

The Accreditation Committee asserts that the Georgia Green Party has established a pattern of undemocratic actions that violate the Key Value of Grassroots Democracy, as well as exhibiting bigoted, anti-transgender positions that violate the Key Value of Social Justice and Equal Opportunity. Therefore, the Georgia Green Party is not organized or run in accordance with these values and is in violation of GPUS accreditation requirements.

The Georgia Green Party passed a series of resolutions and state platform amendments at their Bonaire state convention of February 2020 that would seek to restrict the full legal and political rights of transgender people. At that meeting, they endorsed the [Declaration on Women's Sex-Based Rights](#), which among other things, states that "Men who claim a female 'gender identity' are being enabled to access opportunities and protections set aside for women. This constitutes a form of discrimination against women, and endangers women's fundamental rights to safety, dignity and equality."

Conversely, the Green Party platform states:

The Green Party affirms the right of all persons to self-determination with regard to gender identity and sex. We affirm the right of choosing non-binary and gender fluid identification. We therefore support the right of individuals to be free from coercion and involuntary assignment of gender or sex.

While the Platform is not a binding document, it does represent a democratically-ratified consensus of viewpoint regarding transgender persons. It is also a fair representation of the values that newcomers to the Party would expect to see lived out in state and local parties, and Green Party members across the country accept the Platform as one of the key recruitment tools at our disposal.

At that February 2020 meeting, only 9 members were reportedly present, which appear to be at least a subset of the state coordinating council

(<https://georgiagreenparty.org/georgia-green-party-coordinating-council-2020-2021/>). The absence of rank-and-file members to vote on such seismic platform amendments lends the appearance that only a select group were invited to weigh in on this decision. In fact, [no state meeting was ever announced on Facebook](#), a method that most state parties use to cast a wider net and attract more attendees to statewide meetings. There is [a page announcing this meeting](#) buried in the website, with no way to navigate to it.

According to the [last-known bylaws of GAGP](#), “The Convention may establish organizational policy; amend or, by unanimous consent, suspend its Rules; adopt and amend and repeal platform planks and position statements.” The coordinating council is not authorized to amend the state platform and therefore, the Georgia Green Party violated its own bylaws and the Key Value of Grassroots Democracy.

Further, the decision to endorse the Declaration was already made in advance by the state committee. In [a website post dated December 15, 2019](#), Secretary Hugh Esco posted a copy of a letter sent to the Women's Human Rights Campaign (authors of the Declaration), informing them of the decision and attaching a copy of the GAGP logo. Even if any rank-and-file members of GAGP had attended the February 2020 meeting, the decision had already been made for them.

The Accreditation Committee has made repeated requests of GAGP to provide a membership roster or the number of dues-paid members, as well as a current copy of their bylaws. After the AC's vote whether to recommend dis-accreditation was initiated, GAGP finally responded on this point that the Georgia Secretary of State has a copy of their bylaws on file. However, per an [email response](#), they do not keep copies of bylaws on file. As a demonstration of this, the Georgia Republican and Democratic parties keep a copy on their respective websites. Therefore, the AC must accept the last-known version of their bylaws (<http://greens.org/georgia.static/pdf/Bylaws-0499.pdf>) as current.

The “Criteria for State Party Membership in the Green Party of the United States” includes the following:

Evidence of good faith efforts to empower individuals and groups from oppressed communities, through, for example, leadership responsibilities, identity caucuses and alliances with community-based organizations, and endorsements of issues and policies.

It is unrealistic to imagine that a state party, whose platform endorses a statement that refers to “men who claim a female ‘gender identity’” could expect to attract anyone who is transgender. Logic demands that upon learning of such language, most LGBTQIA+ people would decline to join the Georgia Green Party.

There is no evidence that GAGP is empowering members of the LGBTQIA+ community; in fact, in [testimony from former member Abby Thacker of Savannah](#), who is a transgender woman, unchecked [transmisic](#) commentary from state committee members was a regular occurrence.

Additionally, Thacker testified that after repeated requests, GAGP would not cancel her dues and continued to withdraw them from her bank account.

The National Lavender Green Caucus (NLGC), in an effort to return Georgia's platform to a version more in line with the GPUS Platform, requested mediation via the GPUS Dispute Resolution Committee. Ultimately, from the initial acceptance of mediation on approximately April 16, 2020, and after repeated instances of communication through the assigned mediator, the Georgia Green Party failed to complete the process of mediation and dialogue, ignoring even the third and final notice issued to GAGP on October 8, 2020.

The following is a list of events and deadlines the Accreditation Committee observed in processing the NLGC grievance:

- December 22nd NLGC Submits [Complaint against GAGP](#)
- December 23rd Accreditation Committee Co-chairs Notify GaGP and Accreditation Committee Members
- December 26th NLGC Submits edited version of Complaint with minor clerical edits.
- January 23rd [GAGP responds to Accreditation Committee](#)
- January 31 Vote To Accept Complaint against Georgia Opens
- February 4 [Complaint Against GAGP Accepted](#) 25 Yes- 0 No- 3 Abstain
- February 15 Co-Chairs call for a second vote to accept complaint against Georgia due to confusion about quorum that came from clarification of recusal rule during first vote.
- February 20 [Complaint Against GAGP Accepted](#) 21 Yes-0 No- 1 Abstain- 2 Present
- March 20 Vote on [Accreditation Committee Rules and Process for Investigation and Hearing](#) opens.
- March 23 [Accreditation Rules and Procedures](#) are passed. 21 Yes- 0 No- 1 Abstain- 1 Present
- March 27 Proposal to consider [Georgia Amendments](#) to Rules and Procedures opens
- March 30 [Georgia Amendments](#) fail without quorum 2 yes-12 no- 0 abstain- 4 present
- April 5 Rules sent to Steering Committee and notice given to AC that investigation process would begin April 12
- April 12 Investigation Process begins
- April 19 GAGP and NLGC [invited to provide additional Testimony in writing or via zoom](#). Deadline is May 2nd for zoom and May 9th for Written Testimony
- April 23 Committee [Questions Submitted to the GAGP](#)
- May 2nd [NLGC presents testimony and answers questions over zoom](#)
- May 6 Hugh Esco [Contacts AC asking if there is going to be notification](#)
- May 10 AC [Cochairs reply to Esco](#) explaining previous communication
- May 11 [Hugh Esco Submits Georgia Pleadings and request hearing](#)
- May 15 AC Co-Chairs [Notify Esco and the NC that the hearing request is past the deadline and out of compliance with the rules](#), but agree to enter written documents into record.
- May 28 [Georgia Submits answers to questions](#) from AC
- May 28 Vote to Recommend Deaccreditation of the Georgia Green Party Opens.

- May 31 [Proposal to Recommend DeAccreditation Passes](#) 33 Yes-1 No- 1 Abstain- 1 Present

Many state parties and caucuses have reported repercussions of GAGP's actions in their own recruiting efforts. GAGP's actions have created shockwaves in the progressive community that make party building and recruitment of new members difficult.

GAGP refused to confirm any details to confirm their democratic process. GAGP has resisted all attempts for mediation, for sound governance and party building and new member recruitment, for dialogue and for a good-faith effort to abide by the democratic process of GPUS and their own bylaws, all in favor of an ideological position that runs counter to the overriding position of the Green Party of the United States. Therefore, the Accreditation Committee recommends the dis-accreditation of the Georgia Green Party.

PROPOSAL: The National Committee of the Green Party of the United States recognizes that, through its public statements demonstrating bigotry against transgender people and its undemocratic actions, the Green Party of Georgia has broken with the affiliation requirements specified in our Bylaws and the values called for in our 10 Key Values (specifically, "Social Justice & Equal Opportunity" and "Grassroots Democracy") and therefore shall be disaffiliated.

IMPLEMENTATION/TIMELINE/RESOURCES: (personnel, meetings, work hours, finances, period of implementation, including any sunset clause if applicable)

Should this proposal pass:

(1) The GPUS will remove Georgia Green Party delegation members, alternates and observers from the roster of GPUS National Committee (<https://gp.org/cgi-bin/vote/delegates>) and from all other GPUS committees and caucuses, and from the GPUS National Committee Votes email list and the National Committee Affairs/Discussion email list, and from any GPUS committee and caucus email list. The GPUS state party and caucus accreditation history webpage (<https://gp.us.org/national-committee/accreditation-history/>) will be updated to show that the Georgia Green Party has been disaffiliated. A statement from the Steering Committee will be posted on GPUS social media and the Green Party website informing the public of the decision by the National Committee.

(2) GPUS staff will remove any contact information to the Georgia Green Party from all GPUS public portals, including the party's websites and social media, and will not forward any inquiries the GPUS receives about the Georgia Green Party to the Georgia Green Party.

(3) The history of registered Greens in Georgia who have run for public office will be retained in the GPUS Elections DataBase (www.gpelections.org); and the GPUS policy will continue of listing any person in the Elections DataBase who runs for office who is a registered Green Party member in the STATE in which they reside

<https://www.gpelections.org/green-party-candidate-officeholder-definition/>). The history of Green Party ballot access in Georgia will also be retained at <https://gpus.org/ballot-status/georgia/>.

(4) In reporting presidential results, the GPUS pre-convention practice of reporting all candidates who receive state party and caucus delegates as a result of party primaries, conventions and/or caucuses shall continue to be followed; and for general election results, the results shall be compiled for the GPUS nominee only.

REFERENCES:

- [National Lavender Caucus grievance](#)
- GPUS Rules and Procedures regarding Accreditation:
<https://gpus.org/rules-procedures/#01>
- Abby Thacker testimony:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yI40WG1g7WoPlkjFsiODI4QQXnH7I_Hi/view?usp=sharing
- [Folder of documents and records related to grievance](#)