



POLITICS

Companies quiet on whether they will keep donating to GOP supporters of Georgia voting law

[Georgia voting law: Corporate donations to GOP under scrutiny \(cnbc.com\)](#)

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KEY POINTS

- Several major corporations in Georgia have criticized the state's controversial new voting restrictions, signed into law last week by GOP Gov. Brian Kemp.
- But some companies are keeping quiet on whether they will continue making donations to Kemp and other Georgia Republicans who support the law.
- CNBC reached out to six companies to ask whether they would continue making corporate donations to Georgia politicians who support the new law. Three responded.

Several major corporations in Georgia have criticized the state's controversial new voting restrictions, [signed into law last week](#) by GOP Gov. Brian Kemp.

But some of those companies are keeping quiet on whether they will continue making donations to Kemp and other Georgia Republicans who support the law.

CNBC reached out to six companies to ask whether they would continue making corporate donations to Georgia politicians who support the new law. Three responded. One of them, Coca-Cola, pointed to its decision to halt all political giving following the Jan. 6 riot on Capitol Hill.

The new law creates some hurdles to voting by mail and includes greater legislative oversight over how elections are run. Companies such as Delta attacked the law for being too restrictive.

Various advocacy groups have said the law explicitly affects Black voters, who played a key part in Democrats' surprising victories in two U.S. Senate elections earlier this year and the presidential vote last year. There is even talk of an idea, supported by President Joe Biden, to [move this year's Major League Baseball All Star Game](#) out of Atlanta.

Kemp and other Georgia Republicans have defended the law and [dismissed corporate concerns about it](#).

Delta, which is headquartered in Atlanta, [came out against the law in a blistering memo Wednesday](#) from CEO Ed Bastian. The company, through its political action committee, has a history of supporting Kemp and several of the bill's sponsors. Since 2018, the PAC has given over \$25,000 to Kemp and several GOP lawmakers.

A Delta spokeswoman would not say whether the company would halt its donations to Kemp and the law's other supporters.

"As it relates to DeltaPAC and our political donations, we have robust processes in place for reviewing candidates before every contribution to ensure they align with both Delta's position on priority aviation and business issues, and our values," Lisa Hanna, the Delta spokeswoman, said in an email. "Previous contributions do not mean DeltaPAC will contribute to a candidate in the future."

The Delta representative also said that "due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have not made any individual donations to Georgia State House or Senate candidates since before 2020."

Critics are calling for more accountability from corporations like Delta.

"Today they have to match their political spending with their rhetoric," said Bruce Freed, the president of the nonpartisan Center for Political Accountability, which tracks corporate money in politics. "They have passed the point of no return now, it's not just for access or cost free anymore" he noted, while [pointing to the previous calls for boycotting of some of the Georgia based companies](#).

“They are now finding that it’s striking such a deep reaction among consumers and among the public, that it affects, not only their reputation, but their bottom line,” Freed said in explaining how companies are now looking at the public reaction to their corporate donations.

For Coca-Cola, it was a matter of sticking to a policy it instituted after the deadly pro-Trump riot at the Capitol. Coca-Cola CEO James Quincey called the Georgia law “unacceptable” in a Wednesday interview with CNBC. In a statement on Thursday, [Quincey](#) added that their “focus is now on supporting federal legislation that protects voting access and addresses voter suppression across the country.

“We suspended all political giving in January and that pause continues,” said Ann Moore, a spokeswoman for Coke. Moore said the company’s suspension of contributions affects state-level candidates, not just federal ones.

Since 2018, Coca-Cola gave over \$25,000 to the sponsors of the Georgia voting restrictions bill. That total includes over \$10,000 to Kemp’s campaigns for governor between 2018 and 2020.

“We haven’t set any timeline but are continuing to think through how we use these resources,” Moore said when asked whether the beverage giant had any plans to resume contributions.

Home Depot, also headquartered in Atlanta, recently said in response to the Georgia voting law that it will work to ensure its workers across the country have the resources and information to vote.

The company would not say, however, whether it would continue to back lawmakers who support the law.

“Our associate-funded PAC supports candidates on both sides of the aisle who champion pro-business, pro-retail positions that create jobs and economic growth,” said Sara Gorman, a spokeswoman for Home Depot. “As always, it will evaluate future donations against a number of factors.”

Home Depot has given at least \$30,000 to Kemp and the lawmakers who sponsored the bill.

AT&T is based in Texas, but it gave over \$70,000 to Kemp’s campaign and cosponsors of the Georgia bill. A video on Twitter shows the Black Voters Matter group protesting outside of [AT&T headquarters on Monday](#).

The telecom giant has yet to publicly speak on the Georgia bill and did not return CNBC's request for comment.

UPS and Southern Company Gas, two Georgia-based companies that either have given through their PAC to various sponsors of the bill or to Kemp's campaign, did not return a request for comment.

UPS previously said it believes "that voting laws and legislation should make it easier, not harder, for Americans to exercise their right to vote." It did not directly address the bill.

After the Jan. 6 riot, UPS said it would suspend all PAC contributions for the time being.