



PAT GARDNER
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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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April 23, 2020

Honorable Chris Carr
Attorney General of Georgia
40 Capitol Square SW
Atlanta, GA 30334

Dear General Carr:

Recently, Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms received a hateful message that called the Mayor the “n” word and attempted to influence the Mayor’s policy regarding protecting Atlantans and Georgians from COVID-19. Obviously, the sender of the text message intended to intimidate Mayor Bottoms. This is especially concerning because this text message purported to be from an official State of Georgia email account. We expect that you and your office have seen this text message.

As the members of the Atlanta House and Senate Delegations, we are very concerned. Though it is unlikely this came from a sanctioned georgia.gov account, we request that your office immediately investigate to make sure that a State employee did not send this text message. In the more likely event that this text came from a spoof account purporting to be from a georgia.gov email address, we also request that your office investigate and determine the culprits behind this intimidating message.

Either scenario is likely a violation of one or more state laws. Further, continued use of a fake Georgia email address like this one could result in financial scams in Georgia that would be particularly misleading because this email address purports to be from an official Georgia email address. We expect your office is equally concerned, and we request that you immediately begin an investigation to determine the individuals or individuals behind this text message so they can be held responsible. Your office should be able to obtain the necessary subpoenas to unmask the individuals responsible for this. We have contacted Mayor Bottoms’ office, and the Mayor’s office will cooperate.

Hateful and intimidating speech under the guise of an official Georgia email address has no place in Georgia, and especially in the public-policy process. Though Mayor Bottoms was not intimidated and will continue to act to protect her constituents, we must ensure that this does not happen again.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Pat Gardner, Chair
State Representative, House District 57



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