

## **TODD (DAVID TODD) MARKLE-GEORGIA COURT OF APPEALS**

Key findings include:

- **Appointed by Republican Governor Nathan Deal:** Markle was appointed to the Fulton County Superior Court in 2011 by Governor Nathan Deal and later appointed to the Georgia Court of Appeals in 2018 after Judge William M. Ray II left for the Eleventh Circuit.
- **Career Grounded in State Government Legal Work:** His background includes serving as Executive Counsel to the Governor and participating in statewide criminal justice reform efforts, placing him within Georgia’s established Republican legal circles rather than the activist wing of the party.
- **Veterans Court Experience:** He presided over Fulton County’s Veterans Treatment Court, overseeing a specialty docket focused on treatment and supervision for justice-involved veterans.
- **Role in Trump Election Appeal:** In December 2024, he joined the 2–1 majority opinion disqualifying Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis from prosecuting the Trump election-interference case. He did not author the opinion but concurred in the result.
- **Contextual Proximity to HB 87 Litigation:** While serving as Executive Counsel to Gov. Deal, Markle was in the Governor’s Office during enactment of HB 87 and the ensuing federal court challenge that resulted in a preliminary injunction blocking key provisions; no public record indicates direct personal involvement in the litigation.

The Georgia Court of Appeals is the intermediate appellate court for Georgia and hears most appeals that are not reserved to the Supreme Court of Georgia. The court has 15 judges who sit in five divisions of three judges each (with assignments made/changed pursuant to internal rules and statute) [[Georgia AOC](#), accessed, 2/18/2026].

Georgia’s intermediate appellate judges are chosen through statewide, nonpartisan elections at the general primary in even-numbered years, with terms structured on a six-year cycle under state law [[Justia](#), accessed, 2/18/2026]. For the 2026 cycle, the Georgia Secretary of State has published a list of “Judges – Court of Appeals” offices appearing on the ballot in 2026 that includes “David Markle,” with a term end date shown as 12/31/2026 [[Georgia Secretary of State](#), accessed, 2/19/2026].

Demographically and politically, Georgia is a large and fast-growing state whose population is estimated by the U.S. Census Bureau at ~11.3M (July 1, 2025) and ~11.18M (July 1, 2024), with substantial metropolitan concentration and continued growth that has reshaped electoral and civic institutions [[United States Census](#), accessed, 2/19/2026]. The court’s statewide jurisdiction means judges campaign (and are evaluated by voters) in a context that includes: (a) a competitive statewide political environment; (b) intense scrutiny around election rules and election litigation; and (c) high salience of criminal justice, protest-related prosecutions, and separation-of-powers disputes [[Georgia Court of Appeals](#), 12/19/2024].

### **BACKGROUND**

#### **Markle Was Appointed To Georgia Court Of Appeals In 2018 And Elected Statewide In 2020.**

“Judge Todd Markle was appointed to the Court of Appeals of Georgia by Governor Nathan Deal on December 17, 2018. Prior to his appointment, Judge Markle served as a trial judge on the Superior Court of Fulton County. Judge Markle began his legal career in Atlanta in 1989. He started his own law firm in

1996 handling general civil litigation. In practice, he tried numerous jury trials and has multiple reported appellate decisions from the state and federal courts. He held an AV rating from Martindale-Hubbell as well.” [[North Fulton Rotary Club](#), accessed, 2/19/2026]

**Prior To Markle’s Appointment He “Served As A Trial Judge On The Superior Court Of Fulton County.”** “Judge Todd Markle was appointed to the Court of Appeals of Georgia by Governor Nathan Deal on December 17, 2018, and was elected state-wide in 2020. Prior to his appointment, Judge Markle served as a trial judge on the Superior Court of Fulton County.” [[Judge Markle](#), accessed, 2/18/2025]

**Markle Grew Was Raised In Cobb County Metro Atlanta And Graduated From South Cobb High School.** “Judge Markle grew up in the South Cobb community of the metro Atlanta area and graduated from South Cobb High School. He earned his Bachelor’s degree from the University of Georgia, graduating magna cum laude in 1986, and earned his Juris Doctor from Mercer Law School, where he graduated cum laude in 1989. At the University of Georgia, he was a member of the Golden Key Honor Society and was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa. In law school, he was a member of Phi Kappa Phi and the Brainerd Currie Honor Society and served on the Mercer Law Review.” [[Judge Markle](#), accessed, 2/18/2025]

**1986: Markle Earned His Bachelor’s Degrees From University Of Georgia.** “Judge Markle grew up in Cobb County, GA. He graduated magna cum laude from the University of Georgia in 1986 and was a member of Phi Beta Kappa. In 1989, he graduated cum laude from the Walter F. George School of Law at Mercer University, where he was a member of the law review and the Brainerd Currie Honor Society.” [[North Fulton Rotary Club](#), accessed, 2/19/2026]

**1989: Markle Earned His J.D From Mercer University Walter F. George School Of Law.** “Judge Markle grew up in Cobb County, GA. He graduated magna cum laude from the University of Georgia in 1986 and was a member of Phi Beta Kappa. In 1989, he graduated cum laude from the Walter F. George School of Law at Mercer University, where he was a member of the law review and the Brainerd Currie Honor Society.” [[North Fulton Rotary Club](#), accessed, 2/19/2026]

**1996: Markle Co-Founded Miller & Markle LLP.** “Co-founder of Miller & Markle, LLP, a law firm handling civil litigation in Atlanta, Georgia.” [[Judge Markle](#), accessed, 2/18/2025]

**January 2011: Markle Was The Executive Counsel To Georgia Governor Nathan Deal.** “Judge Markle, 51, was appointed to the Superior Court of Fulton County by Gov. Nathan Deal in 2011. He has been re-elected twice. Judge Markle began his legal career in Atlanta in 1989. In January 2011, he left private practice to become Executive Counsel to the Governor. In this role, he served as Governor Deal’s chief legal advisor during the 2011 legislative session and chaired the initial Georgia Criminal Justice Reform Council. In 2014, he was appointed by Chief Justice Hugh Thompson to the Returning Veterans Task Force. He currently presides over Fulton County’s first, and the state’s largest, Veterans Treatment Court. In 2016, Governor Deal appointed him to the Georgia Child Support Commission.” [[North Fulton Rotary Club](#), accessed, 2/19/2026]

- **Markle Was Re-elected Twice.** “Judge Markle, 51, was appointed to the Superior Court of Fulton County by Gov. Nathan Deal in 2011. He has been re-elected twice. Judge Markle began his legal career in Atlanta in 1989.” [[North Fulton Rotary Club](#), accessed, 2/19/2026]
- **2012: After Markle’s 2011 Appointment To The Superior Court Of Fulton County, He Won A Contested Election To Retain His Seat.** “Governor Deal appointed Judge Markle to the

Superior Court of Fulton County in August 2011. He won a contested race to retain his seat in 2012 and ran unopposed in 2016. In addition to his regular judicial duties, he was instrumental in establishing what became the States largest Veterans Treatment Court.” [[North Fulton Rotary Club](#), accessed, 2/19/2026]

- **2016: Markle Ran For Re-election Unopposed.** “Governor Deal appointed Judge Markle to the Superior Court of Fulton County in August 2011. He won a contested race to retain his seat in 2012 and ran unopposed in 2016. In addition to his regular judicial duties, he was instrumental in establishing what became the States largest Veterans Treatment Court.” [[North Fulton Rotary Club](#), accessed, 2/19/2026]

**2014: Markle Was Appointed By Chief Justice Hugh Thompson To The Returning Veterans Task Force.** “Judge Markle, 51, was appointed to the Superior Court of Fulton County by Gov. Nathan Deal in 2011. He has been re-elected twice. Judge Markle began his legal career in Atlanta in 1989. In January 2011, he left private practice to become Executive Counsel to the Governor. In this role, he served as Governor Deal’s chief legal advisor during the 2011 legislative session and chaired the initial Georgia Criminal Justice Reform Council. In 2014, he was appointed by Chief Justice Hugh Thompson to the Returning Veterans Task Force. He currently presides over Fulton County’s first, and the state’s largest, Veterans Treatment Court. In 2016, Governor Deal appointed him to the Georgia Child Support Commission.” [[North Fulton Rotary Club](#), accessed, 2/19/2026]

**2016: Nathan Deal Appointed Markle To The Georgia Child Support Commission.** “Judge Markle, 51, was appointed to the Superior Court of Fulton County by Gov. Nathan Deal in 2011. He has been re-elected twice. Judge Markle began his legal career in Atlanta in 1989. In January 2011, he left private practice to become Executive Counsel to the Governor. In this role, he served as Governor Deal’s chief legal advisor during the 2011 legislative session and chaired the initial Georgia Criminal Justice Reform Council. In 2014, he was appointed by Chief Justice Hugh Thompson to the Returning Veterans Task Force. He currently presides over Fulton County’s first, and the state’s largest, Veterans Treatment Court. In 2016, Governor Deal appointed him to the Georgia Child Support Commission.” [[North Fulton Rotary Club](#), accessed, 2/19/2026]

**2018: Governor Nathan Deal Appointed Markle To The Georgia Court Of Appeals To Fill The Vacated Seat Of Judge Billy Ray.** “Gov. Nathan Deal on Friday appointed his former top lawyer to the state Court of Appeals. Fulton County Superior Court Judge Todd Markle will fill the seat vacated by Judge Billy Ray, who was recently confirmed by the Senate for a seat on the U.S. District Court in Atlanta.” [[AJC](#), 12/7/2018]

**January 2026: The Georgia Secretary Of State Listed “David Markle” Among Court Of Appeals Judgeships Appearing On The 2026 Ballot.**

Six Year Term Offices	
Office	Term Ends
United States Senator	01/03/2027
Judges – Supreme Court 1. Sarah Warren 2. Charlie Bethel 3. Benjamin Land  Judges – Court of Appeals 1. Sara Doyle 2. E. Trenton Brown III 3. Elizabeth Gobeil 4. J. Wade Padgett 5. David Markle	12/31/2026

Published January 29, 2026

[[Georgia Secretary of State](#), accessed, 2/19/2026]

*Personal Financial Disclosure Review (2025 Filing)*

**Markle Filed His 2025 Personal Financial Disclosure Statement In January 2026 Ahead Of The Statutory Deadline.**

SECTION 2: Filing Requirements				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original <input type="checkbox"/> Amendment      Amendment Date:				
<b>Reason For Filing</b>	Incumbent - Court of Appeals Judge - 2026 Georgia State Election			
<b>Covering Calendar Year</b>	2025			
<b>Reporting Period</b>	<b>Start Date:</b>	01/01/2025	<b>End Date:</b>	12/31/2025
	<b>Due Date:</b>	04/01/2026	<b>Original Filed Date:</b>	01/07/2026

[[Georgia State Ethics Commission](#), accessed, 2/24/2026]

**Markle Disclosed Ownership Of A Personal Residence Valued At More Than \$200,000.**

Section 6 Direct Ownership Interests in Real Property			
<p><b>Direct ownership interest</b> is the holding or possession of good legal or rightful title of property or the holding or enjoyment of real or beneficial use of the property by any person and includes any interest owned or held by a spouse of the person if such interest is held jointly or as tenant in common between the person and spouse.</p> <p>Identify each tract of real property in which the candidate for public office or public officer has a direct ownership interest as of December 31 of the covered year when that interest has a fair market value in excess of \$5,000.00. "Fair Market" value means the appraised value of the property for ad valorem tax purposes.</p>			
County and State where Property is Located	Address	General Description	Value of Tract
Ga, GA	Redacted pursuant to SB 199, effective January 2026	Personal Residence	More than \$200,000.00

[[Georgia State Ethics Commission](#), accessed, 2/24/2026]

**Markle Served In Fiduciary Roles With CHRIS 180, Georgia Appleseed, And Presbyterian Homes Of Georgia.**

Section 4 Fiduciary Positions			
Name all fiduciary positions held by the candidate for public office or the public officer at any time during the covered year. A <b>fiduciary position</b> is any position imposing a duty to act primarily for another's benefit as officer, director, partner, guardian, or other designations of general responsibility of a business entity. A fiduciary position may be a <b>paid or unpaid position</b> . A <b>business entity</b> is any corporation, sole proprietorship, partnership, limited partnership, limited liability company, limited liability partnership, professional corporation, enterprise, franchise, association, trust, joint venture, or entity, whether <b>profit or nonprofit</b> .			
Title of Position	Name	Address	Principal Activity of Business Entity
Board of Directors	CHRIS 180 Support Organization, Inc.	1030 Fayetteville Road, SE, Atlanta, GA 30316	Service
Board of Directors	Georgia Appleseed	1600 Parkwood Circle, SE, Suite 200, Atlanta, GA 30339	Service
Board of Trustees	Presbyterian Homes of Georgia	301 E. Screven Street, Quitman, GA 31643	Service
Co-Trustee	David and Martha Markle Unitrust	1599 Mulkey Road, Austell, GA 30106	Charitable Family Trust

[[Georgia State Ethics Commission](#), accessed, 2/24/2026]

**Markle Is Co-Trustee Of David And Martha Markle Unitrust.**

Section 4 Fiduciary Positions			
Name all fiduciary positions held by the candidate for public office or the public officer at any time during the covered year. A <b>fiduciary position</b> is any position imposing a duty to act primarily for another's benefit as officer, director, partner, guardian, or other designations of general responsibility of a business entity. A fiduciary position may be a <b>paid or unpaid position</b> . A <b>business entity</b> is any corporation, sole proprietorship, partnership, limited partnership, limited liability company, limited liability partnership, professional corporation, enterprise, franchise, association, trust, joint venture, or entity, whether <b>profit or nonprofit</b> .			
Title of Position	Name	Address	Principal Activity of Business Entity
Board of Directors	CHRIS 180 Support Organization, Inc.	1030 Fayetteville Road, SE, Atlanta, GA 30316	Service
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Co-Trustee	David and Martha Markle Unitrust	1599 Mulkey Road, Austell, GA 30106	Charitable Family Trust

[[Georgia State Ethics Commission](#), accessed, 2/24/2026]

**Markle’s Disclosed Investments Include Index Funds Managed By Vanguard, Dimensional Fund Advisors, And IShares.** [[Georgia State Ethics Commission](#), accessed, 2/24/2026]

**Markle Disclosed Investments Include Bond Funds With PIMCO And TIAA.** [[Georgia State Ethics Commission](#), accessed, 2/24/2026]

**VULNERABILITIES & ADVERSE FINDINGS OF NOTE**

*Proximity to Deal-Era Legislative Litigation*

**2011: Georgia Governor Nathan Deal Signed HB 87 “One Of The Toughest Anti-Illegal Immigration Measures Enacted.”** “Despite protests outside his office and boycott threats, Georgia's governor signed into law Friday one of the toughest anti-illegal immigration measures enacted by an individual state. The measure, which Gov. Nathan Deal inked about a month after it cleared the

Republican-dominated Georgia Legislature, allows law enforcement officers to ask about immigration status when questioning suspects in certain criminal investigations. HB 87 also imposes prison sentences of up to one year and fines of up to \$1,000 for people who knowingly transport illegal immigrants during the commission of a crime. It also asserts that workers convicted of using fake identification to get jobs could be sentenced to 15 years in prison and fined \$250,000. ‘This legislation is a responsible step forward in the absence of federal action,’ Deal said after the bill signing. ‘Illegal immigration places an incredible burden on Georgia taxpayers.’ As they have throughout the debate, leaders in the local Latino community railed against the measure. Among them were several dozen people who demonstrated Friday outside the governor's office at the state Capitol, chanting, ‘Shame on you.’ The legislation drew threats of lawsuits targeting the bill, as well as boycotts aimed at forcing the government's hand. The group Southerners on New Ground is calling for a national boycott of conventions and vacation travel to Georgia, while a blog entry on the website of the group Somos Georgia warned, ‘Veto HB 87 or Boycott! It's your choice, Governor Deal!!’” [CNN, accessed, 2/20/2026]

- **CNN: “Despite Protests Outside His Office And Boycott Threats From Advocacy Groups” Nathan Deal Signed House Bill 87.** “Despite protests outside his office and boycott threats, Georgia's governor signed into law Friday one of the toughest anti-illegal immigration measures enacted by an individual state. The measure, which Gov. Nathan Deal inked about a month after it cleared the Republican-dominated Georgia Legislature, allows law enforcement officers to ask about immigration status when questioning suspects in certain criminal investigations. HB 87 also imposes prison sentences of up to one year and fines of up to \$1,000 for people who knowingly transport illegal immigrants during the commission of a crime. It also asserts that workers convicted of using fake identification to get jobs could be sentenced to 15 years in prison and fined \$250,000. ‘This legislation is a responsible step forward in the absence of federal action,’ Deal said after the bill signing. ‘Illegal immigration places an incredible burden on Georgia taxpayers.’ As they have throughout the debate, leaders in the local Latino community railed against the measure. Among them were several dozen people who demonstrated Friday outside the governor's office at the state Capitol, chanting, ‘Shame on you.’ The legislation drew threats of lawsuits targeting the bill, as well as boycotts aimed at forcing the government's hand. The group Southerners on New Ground is calling for a national boycott of conventions and vacation travel to Georgia, while a blog entry on the website of the group Somos Georgia warned, ‘Veto HB 87 or Boycott! It's your choice, Governor Deal!!’” [CNN, accessed, 2/20/2026]
- **HB 87 Authorized Law Enforcement Officers To Inquire About Immigration Status When Questioning Suspects During Certain Criminal Investigations.** “Despite protests outside his office and boycott threats, Georgia's governor signed into law Friday one of the toughest anti-illegal immigration measures enacted by an individual state. The measure, which Gov. Nathan Deal inked about a month after it cleared the Republican-dominated Georgia Legislature, allows law enforcement officers to ask about immigration status when questioning suspects in certain criminal investigations. HB 87 also imposes prison sentences of up to one year and fines of up to \$1,000 for people who knowingly transport illegal immigrants during the commission of a crime. It also asserts that workers convicted of using fake identification to get jobs could be sentenced to 15 years in prison and fined \$250,000. ‘This legislation is a responsible step forward in the absence of federal action,’ Deal said after the bill signing. ‘Illegal immigration places an incredible burden on Georgia taxpayers.’ As they have throughout the debate, leaders in the local Latino community railed against the measure. Among them were several dozen people who demonstrated Friday outside the governor's office at the state Capitol, chanting, ‘Shame on you.’

The legislation drew threats of lawsuits targeting the bill, as well as boycotts aimed at forcing the government's hand. The group Southerners on New Ground is calling for a national boycott of conventions and vacation travel to Georgia, while a blog entry on the website of the group Somos Georgia warned, 'Veto HB 87 or Boycott! It's your choice, Governor Deal!!'" [\[CNN, accessed, 2/20/2026\]](#)

- **HB 87 Imposed Penalties Of Up To One Year In Prison And Fines Up To \$1,000 For Individuals Who Knowingly Transported Undocumented Immigrants During The Commission Of A Crime.**“Despite protests outside his office and boycott threats, Georgia's governor signed into law Friday one of the toughest anti-illegal immigration measures enacted by an individual state. The measure, which Gov. Nathan Deal inked about a month after it cleared the Republican-dominated Georgia Legislature, allows law enforcement officers to ask about immigration status when questioning suspects in certain criminal investigations. HB 87 also imposes prison sentences of up to one year and fines of up to \$1,000 for people who knowingly transport illegal immigrants during the commission of a crime. It also asserts that workers convicted of using fake identification to get jobs could be sentenced to 15 years in prison and fined \$250,000. ‘This legislation is a responsible step forward in the absence of federal action,’ Deal said after the bill signing. ‘Illegal immigration places an incredible burden on Georgia taxpayers.’ As they have throughout the debate, leaders in the local Latino community railed against the measure. Among them were several dozen people who demonstrated Friday outside the governor's office at the state Capitol, chanting, ‘Shame on you.’ The legislation drew threats of lawsuits targeting the bill, as well as boycotts aimed at forcing the government's hand. The group Southerners on New Ground is calling for a national boycott of conventions and vacation travel to Georgia, while a blog entry on the website of the group Somos Georgia warned, ‘Veto HB 87 or Boycott! It's your choice, Governor Deal!!'" [\[CNN, accessed, 2/20/2026\]](#)
- **HB 87 Established Heightened Penalties For Workers Convicted Of Using False Identification To Obtain Employment, Including Potential Prison Sentences Of Up To 15 Years And Fines Up To \$250,000.**“Despite protests outside his office and boycott threats, Georgia's governor signed into law Friday one of the toughest anti-illegal immigration measures enacted by an individual state. The measure, which Gov. Nathan Deal inked about a month after it cleared the Republican-dominated Georgia Legislature, allows law enforcement officers to ask about immigration status when questioning suspects in certain criminal investigations. HB 87 also imposes prison sentences of up to one year and fines of up to \$1,000 for people who knowingly transport illegal immigrants during the commission of a crime. It also asserts that workers convicted of using fake identification to get jobs could be sentenced to 15 years in prison and fined \$250,000. ‘This legislation is a responsible step forward in the absence of federal action,’ Deal said after the bill signing. ‘Illegal immigration places an incredible burden on Georgia taxpayers.’ As they have throughout the debate, leaders in the local Latino community railed against the measure. Among them were several dozen people who demonstrated Friday outside the governor's office at the state Capitol, chanting, ‘Shame on you.’ The legislation drew threats of lawsuits targeting the bill, as well as boycotts aimed at forcing the government's hand. The group Southerners on New Ground is calling for a national boycott of conventions and vacation travel to Georgia, while a blog entry on the website of the group Somos Georgia warned, ‘Veto HB 87 or Boycott! It's your choice, Governor Deal!!'" [\[CNN, accessed, 2/20/2026\]](#)
- **Deal Said The Bill Was “A Responsible Step Forward In The Absence Of Federal Action.”**“Despite protests outside his office and boycott threats, Georgia's governor signed into

law Friday one of the toughest anti-illegal immigration measures enacted by an individual state. The measure, which Gov. Nathan Deal inked about a month after it cleared the Republican-dominated Georgia Legislature, allows law enforcement officers to ask about immigration status when questioning suspects in certain criminal investigations. HB 87 also imposes prison sentences of up to one year and fines of up to \$1,000 for people who knowingly transport illegal immigrants during the commission of a crime. It also asserts that workers convicted of using fake identification to get jobs could be sentenced to 15 years in prison and fined \$250,000. ‘This legislation is a responsible step forward in the absence of federal action,’ Deal said after the bill signing. ‘Illegal immigration places an incredible burden on Georgia taxpayers.’ As they have throughout the debate, leaders in the local Latino community railed against the measure. Among them were several dozen people who demonstrated Friday outside the governor's office at the state Capitol, chanting, ‘Shame on you.’ The legislation drew threats of lawsuits targeting the bill, as well as boycotts aimed at forcing the government's hand. The group Southerners on New Ground is calling for a national boycott of conventions and vacation travel to Georgia, while a blog entry on the website of the group Somos Georgia warned, ‘Veto HB 87 or Boycott! It's your choice, Governor Deal!’” [[CNN](#), accessed, 2/20/2026]

- **The Bill Drew Criticism From Latino Advocacy Groups And The Statute Was Later Subjected To Federal Review.** “Despite protests outside his office and boycott threats, Georgia's governor signed into law Friday one of the toughest anti-illegal immigration measures enacted by an individual state. The measure, which Gov. Nathan Deal inked about a month after it cleared the Republican-dominated Georgia Legislature, allows law enforcement officers to ask about immigration status when questioning suspects in certain criminal investigations. HB 87 also imposes prison sentences of up to one year and fines of up to \$1,000 for people who knowingly transport illegal immigrants during the commission of a crime. It also asserts that workers convicted of using fake identification to get jobs could be sentenced to 15 years in prison and fined \$250,000. ‘This legislation is a responsible step forward in the absence of federal action,’ Deal said after the bill signing. ‘Illegal immigration places an incredible burden on Georgia taxpayers.’ As they have throughout the debate, leaders in the local Latino community railed against the measure. Among them were several dozen people who demonstrated Friday outside the governor's office at the state Capitol, chanting, ‘Shame on you.’ The legislation drew threats of lawsuits targeting the bill, as well as boycotts aimed at forcing the government's hand. The group Southerners on New Ground is calling for a national boycott of conventions and vacation travel to Georgia, while a blog entry on the website of the group Somos Georgia warned, ‘Veto HB 87 or Boycott! It's your choice, Governor Deal!’” [[CNN](#), accessed, 2/20/2026]

**June 2011: The Anti-Immigration Bill Drew Immediate Federal Litigation When A Coalition Of Advocacy Groups Filed “Georgia Latino Alliance For Human Rights V. Deal”, naming Governor Nathan Deal As A Defendant In His Official Capacity And Challenged Key Provisions Of HB 87 On Constitutional And Federal Preemption Grounds.**

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF GEORGIA  
ATLANTA DIVISION

GEORGIA LATINO ALLIANCE  
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, et al.,

Plaintiffs,

v.

NATHAN DEAL  
Governor of the State of Georgia, in  
his official capacity, et al.,

Defendants.

CIVIL ACTION FILE  
NO. 1:11-CV-1804-TWT

[[Justia U.S Law](#), accessed, 2/23/2025]

### **The Lawsuit Challenged Key Provisions Of HB 87 As Unconstitutional.**

**At The Time HB 87 Was Enacted And Litigated, David Todd Markle Was Serving As Executive Counsel To Governor Deal.** “Judge Markle, 51, was appointed to the Superior Court of Fulton County by Gov. Nathan Deal in 2011. He has been re-elected twice. Judge Markle began his legal career in Atlanta in 1989. In January 2011, he left private practice to become Executive Counsel to the Governor. In this role, he served as Governor Deal’s chief legal advisor during the 2011 legislative session and chaired the initial Georgia Criminal Justice Reform Council. In 2014, he was appointed by Chief Justice Hugh Thompson to the Returning Veterans Task Force. He currently presides over Fulton County’s first, and the state’s largest, Veterans Treatment Court. In 2016, Governor Deal appointed him to the Georgia Child Support Commission.” [[North Fulton Rotary Club](#), accessed, 2/19/2026]

**The Attorney General’s Office Defended The Statute Not Markle.** [[Justia U.S Law](#), accessed, 2/23/2025]

#### *Financial disclosure/campaign compliance.*

**2016: Markle Paid A \$125 Late Fee After An Assistant Notified Him Of A Missed Deadline.** “In 2015, Fulton County Superior Court Judge Todd Markle’s assistant notified him of a missed deadline, and he went ahead and paid the \$125 fee before the ethics commission ever caught up with him. ‘I didn’t know if they would notify me,’ Markle said. ‘I just figured I owed them the money.’ Judge Markle said he thinks it’s important for the public to know about public officials’ responsibilities and “why things aren’t getting done.’ ‘You know, candidly, I think (a story like this) has been a long time coming,’ he said.” [[AJC](#), 1/16/2016]

#### *Donor influence and appointment network*

**The AJC Reported Markle Was Among Judges Nathan Deal Appointed Who Had Also Been Donors To Deal’s Campaigns, Including \$7,600 In Contributions.** “At least a dozen of the judges Deal has appointed were donors to his political campaigns, including Fulton County Superior Court Judge Todd Markle, the governor’s former executive counsel, who donated \$7,600 to the governor in the 2010 cycle.” [[AJC](#), 6/8/2015]

- **AJC: Deal Stated “He Evaluates Judicial Candidates Based On “Electability, Temperament, And Conservative Bona Fides.”** “Deal said in an interview that he’ll select each with a combination of electability, temperament and conservative bona fides in mind. If history is any guide, he’ll also gravitate toward younger candidates who are more likely to leave their imprint long after Deal’s second term is over. ‘I’m looking for somebody who is qualified and has the understanding of the areas they’ll confront from the bench,’ Deal said. ‘And overall, we’ve had great success with that formula.’” [[AJC](#), 6/8/2015]

**2010: Markle Contributed \$250 To Fulton County Republicans.** [[Georgia Campaign Finance](#), accessed, 2/23/2026]

**2012: Physician Charles David Markle Contributed \$2,500 To Todd Markle’s Judicial Campaign.** [[Georgia Campaign Finance](#), accessed, 2/23/2026]

**2013: Markle Contributed \$1,000 To Attorney David Belvins’ Judicial Campaign.** [[Georgia Campaign Finance](#), accessed, 2/23/2026]

**2014: Markle Contributed To Attorney Jane Barwick’s Judicial Campaign.** [[Georgia Campaign Finance](#), accessed, 2/23/2026]

**2016: Markle Contributed To Stephen Farrow’s Judicial Campaign.** [[Georgia Campaign Finance](#), accessed, 2/23/2026]

**2019: Markle Markle Made A \$6,600 Self Contribution.** [[Georgia Campaign Finance](#), accessed, 2/23/2026]

**Campaign Finance Records Show That A Physician Named Charles David Markle Has Made Contributions To Republican Candidates In Georgia, Including Then Governor-Nathan Deal, Judge David Todd Markle, And State Rep. Lindsey Tippins.** [[Georgia Campaign Finance](#), accessed, 2/23/2026]

*Participation in Trump Election Interference Appeal (Fani Willis Disqualification Decision)*

**December 2024: The Georgia Court Of Appeals Issued A Published Opinion In The Election-Interference Case Involving Trump, Disqualifying Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis And Her Office From Prosecuting The Matter.** “A Georgia Court of Appeals on Thursday disqualified Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis from prosecuting the case against President-elect Donald Trump and his alleged co-conspirators over their efforts to overturn the 2020 election. The long-awaited decision, in a state criminal case against Trump that was already on hold, raises questions about whether the case can move forward in court. The appeals court found that Willis’ office can’t prosecute the case, so a new special prosecutor would need to be appointed for the case to continue. The appeals court found that a “significant appearance of impropriety” was enough to potentially taint the case in the public eye. The appellate court decided, however, it wouldn’t dismiss the sprawling racketeering conspiracy case entirely.” [[CNN](#), 12/19/2024]

**The Majority Opinion Was Authored By Judge E. Trenton Brown And Markle Joined Him.**

“In their 2-1 majority opinion, Judges Trenton Brown III and Todd Markle wrote that trial judge Scott McAfee’s March ruling allowing Willis to continue on the case “did nothing to prevent an ongoing

appearance of impropriety that existed at times when DA Willis was exercising her broad pretrial discretion about who to prosecute and what charges to bring.”[[CNN](#), 12/19/2024]

**The Appellate Court Found That A “Significant Appearance Of Impropriety” Was Sufficient To “Potentially Taint The Case In The Public Eye.”** “The long-awaited decision, in a state criminal case against Trump that was already on hold, raises questions about whether the case can move forward in court. The appeals court found that Willis’ office can’t prosecute the case, so a new special prosecutor would need to be appointed for the case to continue. The appeals court found that a “significant appearance of impropriety” was enough to potentially taint the case in the public eye. The appellate court decided, however, it wouldn’t dismiss the sprawling racketeering conspiracy case entirely.” [[CNN](#), 12/19/2024]

**The Court Wrote: “While We Recognize That An Appearance Of Impropriety Generally Is Not Enough To Support Disqualification This Is The Rare Case In Which Disqualification Is Mandated.”** ““While we recognize that an appearance of impropriety generally is not enough to support disqualification, this is the rare case in which disqualification is mandated and no other remedy will suffice to restore public confidence in the integrity of these proceedings,’ the court wrote in Thursday’s opinion.” [[CNN](#), 12/19/2024]

## **SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS**

[Campaign Site](#)

[Ga Bar](#)