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Fresh Political Pickins From The Peach State

MacGinnitie Responds To I-Team Report Of Identity Theft From SOS Website

May 18, 2010 11:47 am

by [Icarus](#) · [85 comments](#)

Press Release just issued by Doug MacGinnitie:

Last night's Fox 5 investigative report by Dale Russell was disturbing. I watched as the news reporter showed how to easily hack into corporate records at the Georgia Secretary of State's office. As a businessman, who knows how hard it is to start up a business, I find this totally unacceptable.

At a time where Georgia can't afford to impede job growth and job creation, we learn that the Secretary of State's office has a major security breach when it comes to protecting the identity of the 700,000 Georgia business owners on file with the office. This not only affects small business owners already operating in Georgia, putting them at risk of identity theft, but it also affects prospective businesses looking to set up shop in our state. The current Secretary of State has let our business owners down and quite frankly should be embarrassed.

In the business world, technology has to pass two tests: functionality and security. Anytime you are dealing with an individuals' personal, financial or business data, security should always be first. What we have here is not a minor technology glitch, but rather a major gap in priorities. When the incumbent spends time away from his desk on midday campaign fundraisers and golf outings, it is no surprise criminals view our Georgia business owners as a weak target for identity theft.

The Secretary of State's office is a \$35 million, 300 person executive office. If this debacle had occurred in the private sector, we would be facing a major lawsuit at best and shareholders would be looking for a new CEO. Georgia's taxpayers and business owners deserve better.

As Secretary of State, my priority will be to protect our business owners, keep their confidential information safe and secure and at a minimum show up to work and do what the taxpayers pay me to do.

Respectfully,

Doug MacGinnitie

Tagged as: [Brian Kemp](#), [Dale Russell](#), [Doug MacGinnitie](#)

{ 85 comments }



NEW

redrock [May 18, 2010 at 11:56 am](#)

This reeks of desperation.

I actually like MacGinnitie, but I don't hold this against Kemp at all.

I don't expect Kemp to overhaul an antiquated computer system that catalogues over 700,000 corporations within a couple months of taking office.

Just go sign up for those email alerts stat!



NEW

BuckheadConservative [May 18, 2010 at 12:04 pm](#)

Oh, I disagree. When something like this happens on your watch, you own it. He actually kind of takes ownership of it when he says "That's what we tried to do...make it easier to use" Whenever those changes were made, whatever they were, there should have been some thoughts given to security. Anyone who has to deal with customer information has to deal with this. Hell, my blackberry is set to lock every 5 minutes on the off chance I am mugged and there is customer information on it. That information is far less benign than the stuff on the SoS website, I'm sure.



NEW

ByteMe [May 18, 2010 at 12:09 pm](#)

Yep, Kemp owns this one. He's had the office long enough to have been able to do something about it. I don't think it'll hurt, though.

The web site is NOT ancient. And from talking with small business owners around the country, it's also far better than what many other states offer.



NEW

SFrazier [May 18, 2010 at 2:24 pm](#)

No, he just got there 5 months ago. This is Karen Handel's flawed system. Who said a college education did not have value? Karen Handel is unfit to serve...



NEW Jim Bob [May 18, 2010 at 5:12 pm](#)

Couldn't agree more with SFrazier. The person that owns this is Karen Handel.

I can hear the PP spinmasters now.....



NEW benevolus [May 18, 2010 at 12:00 pm](#)

My question is: When did the problem with the musician occur? Shouldn't the problem have been corrected at that time? Why would it take a TV report to fix it?



NEW Part-Time Atlanta [May 18, 2010 at 12:14 pm](#)

Well, I guess when you're not doing your job you have to catch it on the news.



NEW KempforAg [May 18, 2010 at 12:30 pm](#)

Typical politician running an office instead of a businessman.



NEW SouthernGent [May 18, 2010 at 12:16 pm](#)

It's Kemp's name on the site so it's his responsibility to make sure businesses are safe. It took a news report to get him to act and even now it is a reactive system. The site should be a preventive system with password protection. I hadn't picked a horse in this race but if this is how Kemp will treat my small business, I got to go with ManGinnitie.



NEW BuckheadConservative [May 18, 2010 at 12:39 pm](#)

And herein lies the reason I tend to favor successful entrepreneurs and business executives for office rather than the insider favorites. MacGinnitie started and grew a business larger than the SoS. He understands the role of technology in an organization of this size and the security issues around handling other people's data.



NEW ByteMe [May 18, 2010 at 12:41 pm](#)

Not really. Even people well-steeped in technology can miss security issues with online

applications... especially when you don't have the budget money to hire an external firm to do a "black hat" security audit.



NEW

[Doug Deal May 18, 2010 at 12:46 pm](#)

The number one fix for security issues is to be current on security patches. I would love to see an audit of what level their network apps and OS are running.



NEW

[Chris May 19, 2010 at 3:45 pm](#)

Security patches had nothing to do with this problem. In this case the security hole was the feature – easy ability to register/renew your corporation online.



NEW

[Doug Deal May 20, 2010 at 7:24 pm](#)

Yeah, but that's not my point. Anyone who would write software like this, very likely has wide open ports as well as unpatched OSes.



NEW

[seekingtounderstand May 18, 2010 at 12:41 pm](#)

MacGinnitie if a very impressive candidate for any office, I wish he was running for congress. Georgia needs new leadership.

We need more like him running for all positions.



NEW

[SFrazier May 18, 2010 at 2:29 pm](#)

A quick look at voter vault has him voting in more Democratic primaries as he did GOP primaries. He seems to be a typical Fulton RINO who along with Handel supporterd are trying to get Mary Norwood elected rather than back the GOP candidate. Is the GOP candidate to conservative and not back same sex unions?



NEW

[BuckheadConservative May 18, 2010 at 2:52 pm](#)

Wow...wow. Lay off the booze, man. A quick look in voter vault proves you are precisely wrong. Kemp's the guy who voted (D) until 2002. Mary Norwood, Karen Handel? What?



NEW

ByteMe [May 18, 2010 at 2:57 pm](#)

It's the "when you can't think clearly, throw rocks" school of commentary, BC. Just go with it. 😊



NEW

Doug Deal [May 18, 2010 at 3:03 pm](#)

Remember Kemp was the ones who couldn't get the voter history thing right the first time.

Kemp has now failed at both ends of the SoS's job duties.



NEW

DMZDave [May 18, 2010 at 3:56 pm](#)

I think the strategy is if you have Mary Norwood on the ballot for Commmission Chairman you have a shot at forcing a runoff and in a runoff, the taxpayers (Republicans) turn out and vote so we actually have a chance at electing a responsible Commission Chairman.



NEW

SFrazier [May 18, 2010 at 6:19 pm](#)

What are you saying; a real conservative cannot be Fulton County Commission Chairman?

Why would Handel's people stiff the Republican in the race, Steve Broadbent? Is it because he is a Veteran.? You know Handel people are not fond or respectful of veterans. Is it because he had a real job in DC working in the Bush treasury department? Handel had the lowest job there as deputy Chief of staff to Mrs. Quale, she basically kept her schedule for her. Handel has not been truthful about her resume. We will either call her on her lies or look like idiots.



NEW

SFrazier [May 18, 2010 at 6:21 pm](#)

Mr. Barnes will certainly bring it up...



NEW

Icarus [May 18, 2010 at 8:37 pm](#)

You're doing a great job at the latter.

  ReaganRepublican [May 18, 2010 at 9:58 pm](#)

Easy, be cool, the powers to be might put you in time out.

  Jim Bob [May 18, 2010 at 10:07 pm](#)

Are you saying PP is the same as the Chinese Gov't???

  Lady Thinker [May 18, 2010 at 11:16 pm](#)

And how do you have access to Voter Vault? You have to have the name of an authorized person and their password. Are you one of the hackers? What are you doing with the Voter Vault information you are looking up?

  Doug Grammer [May 18, 2010 at 11:37 pm](#)

Good questions. Please explain, SFrazier.

  SFrazier [May 19, 2010 at 2:26 pm](#)

My Democratic family members in Atlanta have told me he shows up on their canvassing lists. Only one way that can happen.

  Doug Grammer [May 19, 2010 at 8:23 pm](#)

Why did you say voter vault? Most people on here don't have access to it. I have access to my part of the state, but not the whole state. It would be a violation of the terms of use to use voter vault for things other than campaigning or supporting the GOP. You could have said a quick look at the Fulton voter records will show....

  Lady Thinker [May 19, 2010 at 11:53 pm](#)

Why would she know about it and not fix it? What liquor store? Site reference please? Oh wait, you don't have one.



NEW

Lady Thinker [May 19, 2010 at 11:55 pm](#)

This comment is for Mayo but I have no clue as to why it didn't post under his name.



NEW

Doug Deal [May 18, 2010 at 12:43 pm](#)

I work with secure websites and it is like guard duty, you don't fall asleep on the job and then blame someone else for making the job boring.

Six months is an eternity in network security. If that is too short of a time for Kemp, maybe his "uncle" should have appointed him to something easier to handle. I hear that there is an opening at State School Super.



NEW

KempforAg [May 18, 2010 at 12:46 pm](#)

Maybe someone should send this to the cut red tape site.



NEW

Part-Time Atlanta [May 18, 2010 at 1:08 pm](#)

Lol. Seriously!



NEW

ConservativeVoice [May 18, 2010 at 1:07 pm](#)

It is all Brian Kemp's fault???? It is the fault of all the Secretary of States dating back to Cathy Cox. Why not blame Karen Handel for this matter? Handel couldn't even Handle her job as Secretary of State. How in the world do you expect her to handel the job as Governor of Georgia. The MacGinnitie team is getting desperate here and they have no chance at winning this Primary. My vote is going to Brian Kemp.



NEW

Glen Ross [May 18, 2010 at 1:53 pm](#)

Blame it on the previous administration? That sounds like Barack Obama. Sorry, CV, but that's not leadership. When you're evaluating candidates in a neck and neck race like this, these sorts of things matter.



NEW

benevolus [May 18, 2010 at 1:59 pm](#)

“Leadership” outranks “truth”?
This ain’t the Marines.



NEW

Glen Ross [May 18, 2010 at 2:24 pm](#)

And Mr. Kemp should be happy about that. If it was the Marines, the consequences would be much worse.



NEW

benevolus [May 18, 2010 at 5:00 pm](#)

So, if you are going to lie, do it with forcefulness! That’s leadership!



NEW

KempforAg [May 18, 2010 at 1:28 pm](#)

So no fault belongs to Kemp? none at all?



NEW

sendthelight [May 18, 2010 at 1:36 pm](#)

Great job Karen Handel! 😊



NEW

Jim Bob [May 18, 2010 at 5:15 pm](#)

Exactly!! Just think what she could screw up as Governor....



NEW

Glen Ross [May 18, 2010 at 2:06 pm](#)

Appropriate response from Kemp’s opponent. These sorts of issues facing an organization aren’t sexy but you better have these taken care of if you want to make a case for keeping your job.



NEW

Progressive Dem [May 18, 2010 at 2:39 pm](#)

Karen Handle and Cathy Cox bear more responsibility for this problem than brian Kemp. According to the news report, Kemp inherited this system and the insufficient security measures from his predecessors. Kemp has been on the job 3-4 months. Cox started the online system and Handel managed it, too. Neither one of them fixed it, and they held the position much longer than Kemp. The state has been at risk for a much longer period than Kemp’s term as SoS. I don’t know the dates of the federal investigation,

but it is a safe bet the crimes occurred while Handel or Cox was in office.



NEW

gopgal [May 18, 2010 at 3:27 pm](#)

Mr. Kemp's Secretary of State office managed to send out 136 press releases since he took charge in January. Perhaps he needs to reallocate some staff from the press office to IT.



NEW

Georgia Judge [May 18, 2010 at 2:56 pm](#)

Once again PP posters try and pimp their chosen candidate.....not going to work in this race either. Kemp wins easily, book it.



NEW

KempforAg [May 18, 2010 at 3:51 pm](#)

I'd like to book a trip



NEW

DaleRussell [May 18, 2010 at 3:19 pm](#)

The federal indictment was this year.

The two victims in tonight's story reported their corporate identity theft to the Secretary of State's office in 2007 and 2009 respectively.

We know from just these two cases, there are a lot more victims of identity theft. For example, one guy we interview tonight, had a name put on his corporate account. He searched it and the same name (which was a stolen identity) was on 19 other corporate accounts.



NEW

Pine Knot [May 18, 2010 at 3:53 pm](#)

The blame should fall some on Kemp, but he really hasn't been in there long enough to do too much. Mainly the blame should be placed on past the past Sec of State's, mainly Karen Handel.



NEW

Pine Knot [May 18, 2010 at 4:37 pm](#)

Didn't mean the double past. Something interrupted me.



NEW

Jim Bob [May 18, 2010 at 7:13 pm](#)

Another ringing endorsement for Karen Handel.

The next thing you know, she will be giving Medicaid to illegals....



NEW

Technocrat [May 18, 2010 at 4:55 pm](#)

Out of 784 employees [less what Handel got rid of at the end] there appear to be about 15 involved with IT [\$34>\$95k] and 1 for the website [\$34k]. 100's appear to work in something called Business Operations [and are paid much higher on average].

Looks like Handel left a pile of Dog Poo but hard to tell from just Salary Expense List as we know State titles are often meaningless as to function.



NEW

benevolus [May 18, 2010 at 5:03 pm](#)

Perhaps this is what happens when you make across the board staff cuts without regard to actual need.



NEW

Chris [May 19, 2010 at 3:49 pm](#)

You assume the system was run out of the SoS office and not GTA.



NEW

HowardRoark [May 18, 2010 at 5:03 pm](#)

Wait wait wait...Kemp is out during office hours hosting golf events and fundraisers? No wonder. This is what happens when you have people in office who are more interested in titles and paychecks than a vision.



NEW

AlanR [May 18, 2010 at 11:39 pm](#)

A vision . . . A vision? Do you really think the Secretary of State should have "a vision?"

You lost me. Incompetent? Maybe. Derelict? Not in the office? Maybe. Especially the stuff about golf.

But "a vision?"



NEW

HowardRoark [May 19, 2010 at 9:07 am](#)

I do. We should have someone in office who at the end of their term wants Georgia to be a better place to do business and safer place to cast your vote. And that goes for any Constitutional office. We don't need a lot of Maytag repairmen up there who walk around with their nametags on drawing 6 figure checks that only turn on their brain every 4 years.



NEW

foray [May 18, 2010 at 9:22 pm](#)

great job brandon — how many accounts do you have on this site now?



NEW

KempforAg [May 18, 2010 at 10:42 pm](#)

Whoa Joel get that blood sugar back up



NEW

mitchmartin [May 18, 2010 at 10:26 pm](#)

Nice spelling of “brech” in that press release. That release is about as credible as Dale Russell’s reporting.



NEW

Lady Thinker [May 19, 2010 at 12:11 am](#)

All systems have flaws. Billionaire Bill Gates hasn't figured out how to make Internet Explorer hackerproof, yet millions of people buy the product he developed without a college degree. Would a college degree help Gates with the hacker problem? Do the hackers have college degrees?

Banks, credit card companies, hospitals, private businesses, and colleges are hacked all the time and they report it when it occurs, yet it still is going on.

I'm willing to bet none of the gubernatorial candidates over 50 are computer literate to the extent needed to forsee these types of problems. It is not Karen's flawed system, it was in place before she was elected SoS. I would be willing to bet every computer system in the entire state has flaws and with manpower and budget cuts it will happen again.

It is easier to berate Karen and put her down than to realize that criminals work overtime to figure out a way to beat the system and that we need IT people trained to find and fix the “what if” security problems. Are we willing to pay IT people for their expertise and for the software or hardware needed to constantly monitor these problems? No, we are cutting budgets, jobs, and salaries.

As for the police? The FBI had to figure out what Financial Identity Fraud was as well as computer crimes and develop a training program to teach to local police agencies. Computer laws have been on the books for only the past 10 – 12 years. We have come a long way but we still have a long way to go to learn how to protect computers from hackers.

Pointing fingers at specific people and saying they are to blame counter-productive and just plain wrong. We should be focusing on identifying the hackers and give them long prison sentences as we use tax dollars to clean up their crimes.

**NEW**

[Robbie Honerkamp](#) [May 19, 2010 at 8:16 am](#)

“Billionaire Bill Gates hasn’t figured out how to make Internet Explorer hackerproof, yet millions of people buy the product he developed without a college degree. Would a college degree help Gates with the hacker problem?”

Because of course Bill Gates is the guy who wrote IE.

All by himself, even.

Without even a college degree.

The point is that there will always be hackers. Sure, find them and lock them up. But responsibility falls on the system’s owner to make sure the data they store is secure and reliable. The buck has to stop somewhere, and that place is the SoS, who runs their department and sets the tone and priorities.

I tried contacting the SoS office about some record problems last month. When I tried sending email to the address on the “Contact Us” page, it bounced. So did two others I found elsewhere on the site. If you can’t even be bothered to update the text on your website, you probably can’t be bothered to keep your servers patched and your IDS rules updated either.

Does Kemp think that the “I” after his name on the ballot is a freebie that comes with no responsibility? Sure, he’s only been in office a short time. But most of what he’s done in that time is promote himself rather than doing anything. Handel is also at fault here, as she apparently did nothing to deal with the issue either.

Robbie

**NEW**

[Doug Deal](#) [May 19, 2010 at 5:59 pm](#)

He certainly had time to scrub the entire web site of any mention of Handel and make sure his name was prominently displayed on every page.

Perhaps his priorities should have been in doing his job instead of using his position to merely campaign to keep his job beyond November.

NEW

SFrazier [May 19, 2010 at 2:41 pm](#)

Gates was at Harvard and left to pursue starting a small business and succeeded. Handel never went to college and has never run a small business never mind succeeded. In fact, at this point I would be happy to see Handel's High School transcripts to see how she did. She will not release them, your knowledge and your intelligence is what it is. She gets an A+ for deception as she has fooled people with a fake resume of accomplishments. Her key to success is she leaves before her time is up so no one discovers how incompetent she really is. That is why she has never ever finished out a term in office. Look at the mess at the SOS office that she left. It will take a while to figure out the full effects.

"Gates graduated from Lakeside School in 1973. He scored 1590 out of 1600 on the SAT and enrolled at Harvard College in the autumn of 1973. While at Harvard, he met Steve Ballmer, who later succeeded Gates as CEO of Microsoft, and computer scientist Christos Papadimitriou, with whom he wrote a paper about pancake sorting. He did not have a definite study plan while a student at Harvard and spent a lot of time using the school's computers. He remained in contact with Paul Allen, joining him at Honeywell during the summer of 1974. The following year saw the release of the MITS Altair 8800 based on the Intel 8080 CPU, and Gates and Allen saw this as the opportunity to start their own computer software company. He had talked this decision over with his parents, who were supportive of him after seeing how much Gates wanted to start a company."

NEW

Jim Bob [May 19, 2010 at 5:37 pm](#)

SFrazier,

You are dead on with your comments. I am glad people are beginning to see through the nonsense that Handel keeps throwing out.

NEW

Jim Bob [May 19, 2010 at 5:46 pm](#)

LT,

You mention cutting budgets, jobs and salaries. But the fact remains that as Secretary of State, Karen Handel was the one to set the priorities for her own budget. Yea, she may not of had as much money as she wanted/needed (who wouldn't want more money), but she alone was responsible for running the show or not as the case seems to be.

NEW

Jeff [May 19, 2010 at 4:21 am](#)

Fact of the matter is, this was a failure on the basic design and implementation of the original website, built by a Democrat (Cathy Cox).

Then, it was a failure for nearly 4 years to correct this BASIC design/implementation issue by a Republican (Karen Handel).

Then, it was a failure for nearly 6 months to correct this BASIC design/implementation issue by another Republican (Brian Kemp) – and even AFTER this is brought to his attention **by the news media**, he STILL fails to implement an actual fix to the problem. Note that the confirmation emails are STILL going to the thieves, based on Brian's comments! (He said that they now go to every address on record – apparently INCLUDING the new one the thieves put in!)

This case is a PERFECT example of why NEITHER Democrats NOR Republicans can be trusted, and why we need someone in office whose Party is untouched by this issue and can actually get it fixed.

That “someone” is [David Chastain](#), the Libertarian nominee.

Remember, a vote for a Democrat or Republican in this race is a vote to compromise your identity or that of your business.


NEW

HowardRoark [May 19, 2010 at 8:58 am](#)

Second part of the series

<http://www.myfoxtlanta.com/dpp/news/i-team%3A-secretary-of-state-website-pt.-2-051810>


NEW

Part-Time Atlanta [May 19, 2010 at 3:12 pm](#)

Wow. This just keeps getting better...

Someone needs to explain what is/has been going on.


NEW

Mayonnaise [May 19, 2010 at 4:12 pm](#)

Sure sounds like Karen knew about it and did not fix it. Her only fix was to set up a system where the thief would get email confirmation of their crime. Great job Karen! What do you expect from someone who's only business experience was running a liquor store in Maryland.


NEW

Lady Thinker [May 19, 2010 at 11:56 pm](#)

Why would Karen know about a security breach and not fix the problem? What liquor store are you referring to in your comment? Site reference please? Oh wait, you don't have one.

  Mayonnaise [May 20, 2010 at 8:45 am](#)

You really don't even know your own candidate. Shame.

  ByteMe [May 20, 2010 at 9:18 am](#)

So educate. Give us a reference citation. Until then, STFU with the fake charges.

  Mayonnaise [May 20, 2010 at 9:45 am](#)

Fake? That would be Hillary Handel posing as a social conservative.

  ByteMe [May 20, 2010 at 3:31 pm](#)

As we suspected. You got nothin' but made-up charges. You don't do your candidate any good by having you as a spokesmodel.

  Mayonnaise [May 20, 2010 at 9:30 pm](#)

Karen's ownership of a liquor store is well known. Sorry, there isn't a link for every stinking fact that exists out there.

  ready2rumble [May 20, 2010 at 9:46 pm](#)

If she did own a liquor store, who cares.

  Lady Thinker [May 20, 2010 at 10:03 pm](#)

Then how did you find out about this

questionable liquor store?



NEW

Doug Grammer [May 21, 2010 at 10:45 am](#)

I didn't know about the liquor store. Are you sure?



NEW

Mayonnaise [May 21, 2010 at 2:01 pm](#)

"If she did own a liquor store, who cares." ... obviously not you.

"Then how did you find out about this questionable liquor store?" ... same way people communicated information prior to Google.

"I didn't know about the liquor store. Are you sure?" ... yep. Ask the pundits on here who are remaining silent.



NEW

Lady Thinker [May 21, 2010 at 3:32 pm](#)

You are still avoiding the answer to the question Mayo. How did YOU hear about this rumor?



NEW

Lady Thinker [May 20, 2010 at 10:05 pm](#)

I know my candidate, a very intelligent and ethical woman who will be Georgia's next governor. Who is your candidate or are you too embarrassed to say?

As for the name Handel, it really isn't that rare, so again, how do you know Karen is/was the owner?



NEW

Jim Bob [May 21, 2010 at 11:46 pm](#)

You really have drank the cool-aid.....



NEW

ReaganRepublican [May 19, 2010 at 10:57 pm](#)

SOS was way above her head. "Governor Handel" would be absurd.



NEW

Jim Bob [May 20, 2010 at 6:40 pm](#)

Atlas just shrugged again.....

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