Georgia's New Era Is About More Than Its Victories

By Thomas Wyatt | EIC, The Villager



(GEORGIA) – Before I give you the details of this magnificent historical feat in the annuals of Black progression, I just wish to say two things. First, congratulations to all the women you are about to read about. For it is a true honor to write about them and the achievement they have bestowed upon the lineage of our culture. Secondly, I wish my mother, Barbara, my father, Tommie, and my first-born daughter, Angela, could have been here the witness this monumental triumph over adversity given our current state of events. Never underestimate the power of a Black woman!

History is often described as a door suddenly opening. In reality, it is usually the result of generations pushing against a wall that was never supposed to move. The election of **Keisha Lance Bottoms** as Georgia's governor, alongside the victories of at least seven other women in statewide offices, represents not simply a political shift, but the visible outcome of decades of work by women who organized, voted, advocated, governed, and refused to accept that leadership belonged exclusively to men.

Georgia voters have elected **Bottoms** as the first female governor in state history and the first Black woman elected governor of any U.S. state. At the same time, women won statewide offices that include **Tanya Miller**-attorney general, **Penny Brown Reynolds**-secretary of state, **Nikki Porcher**-labor commissioner, **Keisha Waites**-insurance commissioner, **Katherine Juhan-Armold**-agriculture commissioner, **Lydia Powell**-state school superintendent, and **Shelia Edwards**-Public Service District 5.

Without question, the significance of these victories extends far beyond representation alone. Representation matters because power matters. The people who hold public office influence decisions affecting voting rights, education, economic opportunity, consumer protection, public safety, health care, and access to government itself. For generations, many of these institutions were managed almost exclusively by men, even as women carried much of the responsibility for sustaining families, communities, schools, and civic life. Georgia's election results suggest a growing recognition that leadership should reflect the people being served.

Perhaps no story better captures the meaning of this moment than Bottoms' reflection on her family's journey from enslavement to the governor's mansion. Bottoms spoke of her great-great-grandmother, born before emancipation, and of an enslaved ancestor whose name appeared in an 1860 property record. More than a century and a half later, a descendant of that family has been elected to lead the very state where that ancestor was held in bondage.

You should recognize this is not merely a personal achievement. It is evidence of how democracy can expand when barriers rooted in race and gender begin to fall. For communities historically pushed to the margins, symbolic victories are important because they challenge the narratives used to justify exclusion. Yet symbolism alone is not enough.

The true test of this election will not be found in celebratory headlines. It will be found in whether public policy improves the lives of ordinary Georgians. It will be found in whether working families can afford housing, whether children receive quality education, whether health care becomes more accessible, whether voting rights are protected, and whether government remains accountable to the public rather than powerful interests. Justice demands outcomes, not just milestones.

That standard should apply equally to every elected official, regardless of race or gender. Women in public office should not be burdened with unrealistic expectations, nor should they be shielded from legitimate scrutiny. Equity means neither lowering the bar nor raising it unfairly. It means ensuring that everyone receives a fair opportunity to lead and an equal obligation to deliver.

The election of Penny Brown Reynolds as the first Black woman elected Georgia secretary of state and Tanya Miller as the first woman elected attorney general further demonstrates how rapidly Georgia's political landscape is changing. These offices oversee functions that are fundamental to democratic participation and public trust. Their victories carry special importance because they place women in positions historically associated with institutional power, election administration, and the enforcement of law.

The broader lesson extends beyond Georgia. Across the South and across America, communities are demanding leadership that better reflects the diversity of lived experiences within the electorate. Women, particularly Black women, have long served as organizers, advocates, educators, and community builders. Their influence has shaped public life for generations, often without the corresponding authority of elected office. These election results suggest that voters are increasingly willing to align political power with civic leadership that has already existed on the ground.

A justice-centered reading of this moment does not declare victory over inequality. It recognizes progress while understanding that progress remains incomplete. The election of women to high office does not automatically erase disparities in wealth, health, education, or opportunity. It does, however, expand the possibilities of who can lead and whose voices can be heard.

Georgia's new era is not important because Black women have taken charge of top offices. It is important because voters have expanded the boundaries of democratic participation and representation. The greater challenge begins now: transforming historic victories into lasting justice. The measure of this moment will not be the records broken on Election Day, but the lives improved in the years that follow.

CHARI KELLY ELECTED TO TEXAS SUPREME COURT AS WOMEN GAIN HISTORIC MAJORITY

ALFRED STANLEY & ASSOCIATES

AUSTIN, TX — JUSTICE CHARI KELLY WON TUESDAY'S ELECTION FOR PLACE 2 ON THE TEXAS SUPREME COURT, DEFEATING INCUMBENT JUSTICE JAMES P. SULLIVAN. HER ELECTION IS PART OF A HISTORIC RESULT THAT WILL GIVE WOMEN SEVEN OF THE COURT'S NINE SEATS FOR THE FIRST TIME IN ITS REGULAR HISTORY.

ACCORDING TO UNOFFICIAL RETURNS FROM THE TEXAS SECRETARY OF STATE, KELLY RECEIVED MORE THAN 5 MILLION VOTES, OR 52.2 PERCENT, AND LEADS SULLIVAN BY MORE THAN 429,000 VOTES. THE HOUSTON CHRONICLE DECLARED KELLY THE WINNER WEDNESDAY MORNING.

"THE CONFIDENCE THE PEOPLE OF TEXAS HAVE PLACED IN ME MEANS A GREAT DEAL," KELLY SAID. "I WILL CONTINUE TO APPROACH EVERY CASE WITH THE SAME COMMITMENT TO FAIRNESS, IMPARTIALITY, AND THE RULE OF LAW THAT HAS GUIDED ME THROUGHOUT MY JUDICIAL CAREER."

KELLY IS ONE OF FOUR DEMOCRATIC WOMEN ELECTED TO THE SUPREME COURT TUESDAY, JOINING MAGGIE ELLIS, KRISTEN HAWKINS, AND GISELA D. TRIANA. TOGETHER WITH REPUBLICAN JUSTICES DEBRA LEHRMANN, JANE BLAND, AND REBECA AIZPURU HUDDLE, THEY WILL CONSTITUTE THE FIRST FEMALE MAJORITY IN THE COURT'S REGULAR HISTORY. THE ONLY PRECEDENT WAS A SPECIAL ALL-WOMAN COURT APPOINTED IN 1925 TO HEAR A SINGLE CASE.

"THIS IS A REMARKABLE MOMENT IN TEXAS HISTORY," KELLY SAID. "FOR THE FIRST TIME, WOMEN ELECTED FROM BOTH POLITICAL PARTIES WILL CONSTITUTE A MAJORITY OF THE SUPREME COURT. THAT IS WORTH CELEBRATING. BUT THE MOST IMPORTANT THING ABOUT THE COURT IS NOT WHO SITS ON IT. IT IS THE PEOPLE OF TEXAS WHOM IT SERVES."

TUESDAY'S ELECTION WILL ALSO BRING DEMOCRATIC WOMEN BACK TO THE TEXAS SUPREME COURT FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE JUSTICE ROSE SPECTOR, THE FIRST WOMAN ELECTED TO THE COURT, LEFT OFFICE IN 1998.

KELLY WAS ELECTED TO THE THIRD COURT OF APPEALS IN 2018 AND REELECTED IN 2024. SHE HAS AUTHORED MORE THAN 800 APPELLATE OPINIONS AND IS BOARD CERTIFIED IN CRIMINAL LAW AND JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION. SHE HAS TAUGHT TRIAL ADVOCACY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SCHOOL OF LAW



KELLY

FOR NEARLY 20 YEARS AND SERVED AS PRESIDENT OF THE AUSTIN BAR ASSOCIATION AND CHAIR OF THE AUSTIN BAR FOUNDATION.

PREVIOUSLY, KELLY SERVED AS AN ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY IN TRAVIS AND COMAL COUNTIES AND AN ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS. KELLY IS A U.S. ARMY VETERAN.

TEXAS IS BLUE!

SAVE OUR SCHOOLS!