



Vote to Stop Cop City Coalition

Media Contact: press@copcityvote.com

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U.S. Federal District Judge Mark Cohen Condemns City of Atlanta's Lies and Manipulation In New Ruling

"The City could have avoided the conundrum that now exists"

(Atlanta, Georgia) Today, after the Vote to Stop Cop City Coalition filed suit in the U.S. Northern District of Georgia Federal Court to compel the City of Atlanta to begin [verifying](#) the Cop City referendum petition, Judge Mark Cohen issued a scathing ruling, rebuking the City of Atlanta for its changing goalposts, delay tactics, and insincere and shifting legal arguments designed to stifle the voices of Atlanta voters determined to put Cop City to a vote:

"Although the Court denies the Emergency Motion to Intervene," Cohen wrote, "it is compelled to comment upon the vacillating positions of the City of Atlanta throughout this litigation which has directly contributed to the uncertainty of the validity of the signatures previously collected in accordance with this Court's previous injunction."

While Judge Cohen denied Coalition's motion on technical grounds, citing his lack of jurisdiction to issue a ruling on the City's failure to verify signatures, he did not mince words on the City's decision to approve the referendum petition in public, while fighting it in legal backchannels — laying blame for the current crisis squarely with the City:

"The City could have avoided the conundrum that now exists," Cohen stated, "...but the City instead opted to approve a petition for a referendum it believed and later contended was illegal. A proverb dating back over four centuries ago once again applies here: Honesty is the Best Policy."

[The entire ruling can be found here.](#) As we all wait for the 11th Circuit Court to rule on this case, the Vote to Stop Cop City Coalition continues to call on the City to begin the verification process and will evaluate all legal strategies to ensure every petitioner's voice is heard. As always, the Coalition calls on the City Council to simply vote to place Cop City on the ballot and let Atlanta decide.

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