

# Georgia Elector: I Will Vote My Conscience

**UPDATE:** *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution is reporting the elector has resigned and will be replaced by the Georgia Republican Party.*

An Electoral College elector in Georgia has declared he cannot, in good conscience, vote for Donald Trump.

Wednesday, Baoky Vu—a naturalized U.S. citizen who has been a longtime Republican activist in Georgia—said he has already decided he won't vote for Trump in the Nov. 8 general election. Then, he added he would likely cast his Electoral College vote for someone else.

He defended his decision with a statement after state GOP activists called for his ouster as an elector:

*I've been active in the Republican Party for many years precisely because it has championed the aspirational ideals of Lincoln, Reagan and Kemp. Our recent standard-bearers have proudly and honorably defended those ideas on the political battlefield. From Bush 41 to Romney to Jeb and many of the other 2016 primary contestants, there was never a wavering doubt as to their character, integrity and temperament.*

*Until now.*

*This is the Republican Party of Lincoln and Reagan and Romney and Ryan, not the Party of Donald Trump. As a 2016 Presidential Elector, I am forever grateful to our state Party and our Chairman for bestowing this once-in-a-lifetime honor on me. I take my role seriously and in the face of the difficult choice before us, I will always put America First over party and labels.*

*Thus, I will not be voting for Donald Trump in the general election. My conscience is clear but my soul is being tested. Born in Saigon, my family knows what it is like to lose a country and my family is forever indebted to America and our allies. I have never questioned the soul, character and goodness of the Nation by who we have chosen as our leader throughout history.*

*Until now.*

*Rather than earning the American people's respect and trust through the duration of the past year, Donald Trump's antics and asinine behavior has cemented my belief that he lacks the judgment, temperament and gravitas to lead this Nation. Throughout the process, he has hurled insults at our heroes and their families, denigrated the disabled and praised dictators. Forget political incorrectness, this is simply despicable demagoguery.*

*In this time of global challenges, we will succeed only if we come together. We've done it before, from the courthouse steps of Appomattox to the days after Pearl Harbor. And to my Republican brothers and sisters in arms, politics should be a honorable sport. Rather than fighting to defend the indefensible, let's live to fight another day.*

Vu is pledging to be a "faithless elector," meaning he doesn't feel compelled to vote for the candidate the voters have directed him to cast his vote for. This practice is allowed in 21 states. But by doing so prior to the general election, he has put himself and his party in a difficult position.

Usually, faithless electors don't declare themselves until after the general election. There have been 157 over the course of the history of the Electoral College. Here are some examples from the past 50 years:

- 2004 – An unnamed Minnesota elector cast his presidential ballot for John Edwards instead of John

Kerry, probably by accident. This led to changes that make the names of electors and their votes public, and nullifies any “faithless elector” votes.

- 2000 – District of Columbia Elector Barbara Lett-Simmons, pledged for Democrats Al Gore and Joe Lieberman, cast no electoral votes as a protest that the district doesn’t have any voting congressional representation.
- 1988 – West Virginia Elector Margarette Leach, pledged for Democrats Michael Dukakis and Lloyd Bentsen, reversed their positions in her vote as a protest against the winner-take-all format used by 48 states and the District of Columbia in the Electoral College.
- 1976 – Washington Elector Mike Padden, pledged for Republicans Gerald Ford and Bob Dole, cast his presidential vote for Ronald Reagan, who had challenged Ford for the GOP nomination.
- 1972 – Virginia Elector Roger MacBride, pledged for Republicans Richard Nixon and Spiro Agnew, cast the first-ever electoral vote for a woman when he voted for Libertarian candidates John Hospers and Theodora Nathan.
- 1968 – North Carolina Elector Lloyd W. Bailey, pledged for Republicans Richard Nixon and Spiro Agnew, cast his votes for American Independent Party candidates George Wallace and Curtis LeMay.

The irony of Vu’s decision, ultimately, is that he won’t cast any electoral votes if Donald Trump doesn’t win Georgia on Nov. 8.