



Legislative Panelist Biographies

Representative Omari Crawford Georgia House of Representatives, District 89

Omari Crawford ([Democratic Party](#)) is a member of the [Georgia House of Representatives](#), representing [District 89](#). He assumed office on January 13, 2025. His current term ends on January 11, 2027.

Crawford ([Democratic Party](#)) ran for re-election to the [Georgia House of Representatives](#) to represent [District 89](#). He won in the general election on [November 5, 2024](#)

Omari Crawford lives in Decatur, Georgia. Crawford earned a bachelor's degree in political science from Florida A&M University in 2008, a master's degree in public administration from Florida A&M University in 2009, and a master's degree in business administration and juris doctor from North Carolina Central University in 2013. His career experience includes working as an assistant county attorney with the DeKalb County Government and an associate attorney with The Cochran Firm. Currently he serves on the

Senator Sonya Halpern Georgia Senate, District 39

Sonya Halpern is a first-generation Georgian who has lived in the 39th District for nearly 25 years. Since the day she moved to Georgia, Sonya has committed herself to the community that she chose to call home. Sonya's belief in the principles of equity and access have guided her as she has worked to build a brighter future for the people she represents. The 39th is one of the most socio-economically diverse districts in the state. Entirely within Fulton County, the district includes neighborhoods in portions of Atlanta, South Fulton, College Park, East Point and Union City.

Sonya grew up in a home where both parents graduated from an HBCU – Tougaloo College in Mississippi. Her mother worked at a company helping people with disabilities and father had a 30+ year career at IBM after leaving the U.S. Air Force. Sonya worked summers at both places while pursuing her bachelor's degree at the University of Massachusetts before continuing on to

the University of Hartford for her MBA. After graduating in the middle of a recession which made it impossible to find a job, she moved into her local chapter of the YWCA in White Plains and started doing temp jobs throughout nearby New York City. It was this experience which taught her how important it is to create a strong community where everyone can receive the support they need to build a good life for themselves and their families. She spent nearly a decade in New York, culminating in a job with ESPN where she helped launch their first digital advertising efforts.

A full-time job with Cox Enterprises brought her to Atlanta where she married her husband, Daniel Halpern, and had three beautiful children. During more than two decades of community service work, she has observed first hand every challenge facing the 39th district, including a strained public education system, rising healthcare costs, lack of affordable housing, and the need for criminal justice reform. These challenges can't be solved by community service alone – they must be addressed by elected officials.

Sonya is a fierce advocate for the equity and opportunity every citizen deserves. Faced with a crumbling social safety net and almost no opportunities for economic mobility, very few people are truly free to achieve their full potential. Sonya vows to continue to fight to change that. Since her election in 2020, she serves as Chair of the Senate Study Committee on Excellence, Innovation and Technology at Historically Black College and Universities (HBCUs) and as Vice Chair of the Senate Democratic Caucus, the Urban Affairs Committee, the Fulton County Delegation, and the City of Atlanta Delegation. She is Co-Chair for the General Assembly Working Group on Addiction and Recovery as well as holding membership in the Georgia Legislative Black Caucus, the Women's Legislative Caucus, the Working Families Caucus, and the Georgia-Israel Legislative Caucus.

Before her election, President Barack Obama appointed her the first African-American and first Georgian to Chair the President's Advisory Committee on the Arts at the Kennedy Center. She is a former board chair for The Children's School and the National Black Arts Festival and served as a former vice chair for WABE/Public Broadcasting Atlanta. She was a founding Co-Chair of Atlanta's Electing Women Alliance and a founding member of the Atlanta School for the Arts Foundation. Democratic National Committee activities include membership of the Women's Leadership Forum and the African American Leadership Council. She served on executive Committees for the YMCA of Metro Atlanta and South Arts. Her many honors for community service include YMCA's 2019 Volunteer of the Year, being named one of the Top 100 Black Women of Influence" by the Atlanta Business League, being named a "Woman of Achievement" by the YWCA of Greater Atlanta, the "Sandra Anderson Bacchus Legacy Award" from the National Black Arts Festival and the Nikki T Randall Servant Leadership Award from the GA Legislative Women's Caucus.

Representative Inga Willis

Georgia House of Representatives, District 55

State Representative Inga Willis currently represents the citizens of District 55, which includes portions of Fulton County. She was elected to the House of Representatives in 2022. Rep. Willis is a celebrity brand manager, impact strategist, international marketing specialist, political

strategist and keynote speaker. She has managed global product launches and brand activations for Gabrielle Union, T.L.C, Derek Jeter, Jack Daniels, Keri Hilson and Overland Tandberg Technologies. Furthermore, her client portfolio spans across North America, Africa, Asia and Europe. An Atlanta native, Rep. Willis began her career at 18 as a professional songwriter with ARISTA Records, earning a Grammy Award nomination for songwriting and composing. In 2004, Rep. Willis founded Mogul Group Consultants, which specialized in developing strategy for political and entertainment clients, including Kamala Harris for President, Stacey Abrams for Governor in 2018, among others. Before founding her own company, she worked as the fundraising manager for Shirley Franklin's mayoral campaign in 2004 and as the marketing director for the Jimmy Carter Center. Currently, Rep. Willis is a consultant with EdFarm, a program launched by the Propel Center, specializing in impact strategies for HBCU ecosystem partners and working with government officials on education and social justice. Rep. Willis previously served as the program's senior director of strategic partnerships, where she secured more than 50 HBCUs, Apple and Southern Company as program partners. She has also consulted with HBCUs to create sustainable programming in arts, "agtech," social justice, health and workforce.

Rep. Willis holds a Bachelor of Arts in Communications from Howard University in Washington, D.C. She also recently completed leadership development courses with the University of Liverpool in London. She has also served as a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.; American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers; The Links, Inc.; Board of U.S. Hemp Growers Association; Livingstone College Board of Visitors; and Howard University Alumni Association. She received the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. 2015 Pinnacle of Leadership Award and has been invited to serve as a keynote speaker for a number of high-level engagements.