

PRESS RELEASE
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HB316 Will Attempt to Legalize Unverifiable Voting Again

ATLANTA GA – Georgia’s House will vote on a new omnibus election bill today that authorizes the state to purchase electronic ballot marking devices including those producing **ballots with votes that are impossible for Georgia voters to verify**. The bill, [HB316](#), was introduced by Rep. Barry Fleming and is co-sponsored by members of the leadership team for House Speaker David Ralston.

HB316 allows electronic ballot marking systems to tabulate hidden votes embedded in [computer generated bar codes](#) the voter cannot read and verify. This “*new wave*” of unverifiable voting **never** tabulates the human readable vote marks made by voters for an election.

HB316 also defines a new vendor term called “[scanning ballot](#)” that authorizes bar coded selections printed on small pieces of paper, **not full face standard ballots**. The paper does not allow voters to see unselected candidates or the language of amendments that were on the real ballot.

HB316 **requires** the state to replace **all** of Georgia’s current electronic voting machines with electronic ballot marking devices that **cannot be meaningfully audited** according to a [Georgia Tech study, correspondence](#) from 24 computer scientists, a [report](#) from the cybersecurity expert of Georgia’s [SAFE voting system commission](#) and a [letter](#) from the inventor of risk limiting audits.

Preliminary [VoterGA estimates](#) show a statewide implementation will cost Georgia taxpayers an extra **\$100 million** initially and roughly **\$10 million more** annually in testing, maintenance, licensing fees and logistics compared to less expensive, more auditable alternatives. **No justifiable benefits have been identified to offset the significant additional expenditures.** Electronic ballot marking devices produce paper selections that are subject to the same [process flow](#) and fraud prevention controls as hand marked ballots. Modern scanners included with any new system can detect “*overvotes*” in the same manner as electronic ballot marking devices.

In 2002, the **Georgia legislature removed a law** that required voting systems to “*...have an independent audit trail for each vote cast*”. That paved the way to purchase a new \$54 million “unverifiable” voting system still used today and often criticized as disenfranchising Georgians for 16 years. [\[OCGA 21-2-301\(b\) SB213, Act 166, 2001\]](#)