

**PRESS RELEASE**

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## **GA Voting System Evaluation Lacks Transparency, Integrity Criteria**

ATLANTA GA – The Secretary of State’s (SOS) office received vendor responses last week regarding its [Request for Proposal](#) (RFP) to acquire a new Georgia voting system. The evaluation should now be underway but the team performing the evaluation will not be identified according to the spokesperson for the office.

[HB316](#) requires the SOS to purchase an expensive ballot marking device (BMD) system. It was signed into law by Governor Brian Kemp as Act 24 of this year’s General Assembly. No state has ever implemented BMDs statewide and the RFP lacks published criteria to evaluate the integrity of different BMD systems.

The BMD criteria [attachment](#) of the RFP does not distinguish a BMD system that tabulates hidden votes embedded in unverifiable bar codes from a system that requires no such bar codes. Likewise, it does not distinguish a system that produces a full verifiable ballot with all candidates and referendum language versus one that produces [scanning summaries](#) on small slips of paper about the size of a receipts used by grocery stores and gas stations.

The RFP also has no published criteria to evaluate track records of vendors. It appears to favor incumbent vendor Election Systems and Software (ES&S). ES&S supports Georgia’s current electronic voting system that has been nationally criticized for decades as unverifiable and decertified in other states.

ES&S has proposed Georgia purchase its relatively new Express Vote BMD system that embeds unverifiable votes into bar codes on small paper summaries. A version of that system recently produced a “[glitch](#)” with long reporting delays in Johnson County, Kansas. The county results decided a controversial, tight 2018 Republican Gubernatorial primary between Kris Kobach and Jeff Colyer.

ES&S has been sued for certification violations or breach of contract in [California](#) and [Oregon](#). The type of equipment supported by ES&S and used in Georgia was the subject of improper certification or non-performance lawsuits in [Maryland](#), [Ohio](#) and California where the state obtained a [\\$2.6 million settlement](#). Georgia county GEMS servers were also not certified after Georgia purchased them for the 2002 election according to 2002 [certification records](#) and [SOS correspondence](#).