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Georgia House Committee Recommends Hand Counting 2026 Ballots

ATLANTA, GA. FEBRUARY 3, 2026 – On Monday, the House Blue Ribbon Elections Study Committee issued their first of several anticipated reports. The committee prioritized a solution for Georgia's current Dominion Democracy Suite 5.5A voting system which was found to be unsecure and in violation of Georgia law. The system tabulates all contest votes that are hidden in a Quick Response (QR) code which **voters cannot verify even with a QR code reader**. The QR coded ballots are used for all in-person voting.

The report [recommends](#) to the Georgia General Assembly that **official General Election results should be hand counted** for all in-person ballots if they continue to be QR coded. The recommendation ensures that **all tabulated votes will be verifiable to the voters**. It also **reduces risks of electronic results tampering** especially since [forensic reports](#) have found Dominion tabulators and servers to be remotely accessible.

VoterGA co-founder, Garland Favorito, explained how paperless electronic voting was implemented in 6 months in 2002 and that **timely and accurate hand counting can be implemented in even less time**. He stated that: *"Based on a hand count benchmark simulation of actual Georgia county ballots, we have determined that nine races on 1000 ballots can be publicly counted by a fresh 16-person team of volunteers and election officials in roughly three hours and 18 minutes with 100% accuracy."*

The committee limited electronic tabulation of QR coded ballots to unofficial results only. It did not recommend changes for the 2026 primaries or for hand marked absentee by mail ballots which contain only alignment marks, not QR codes. The committee also recommended they continue their work through 2026 and asked that the legislature budget funds for a new voting system in Fiscal Year 2027.

Executive Order 14248 required the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) to decertify all QR coded voting systems. VoterGA also [filed](#) an emergency federal [complaint](#) intended to force the EAC to vacate the 2019 certification of Georgia's Dominion Democracy Suite 5.5-A system. The complaint cites unrefuted expert witness testimony showing **the voting system has never met 2005 EAC security requirements that formed the basis to certify the system in 2019**. Cybersecurity experts Ben Cotton and Clay Parikh analyzed an authenticated copy of a Georgia 2020 election server, and [testified](#) how the system uses unchanged hard coded passwords and does not store encryption keys in an encryption module. Mr. Parikh [demonstrated](#) how **the vulnerabilities can be exploited to change election results in three minutes with just six lines of code**.

The expert [testimony](#) taken in the September 30, 2024 *Dekalb GOP v. Raffensperger* hearing revealed that **all Democracy Suite 5 systems are interconnected worldwide through an X.509 certificate using a common shared value**. [Email discovery](#), [affidavits](#) and [depositions](#) have further revealed evidence that **Dominion's Serbian programmers accessed Georgia's voting system during the 2020 General Election and 2021 U.S. Senate runoff**. In addition, Mr. Cotton [testified](#) that **over 3,000 program files were modified without authorization or detection** since the installation of the election server in 2019. He also explained that the server contained an uncertified compiler that could enable a bad actor to make such program file modifications and distribute malware to county equipment without detection.

VoterGA is a non-partisan, 501(c)3 registered non-profit organization created by a coalition of citizens working to restore election integrity in Georgia. We advocate for independently verifiable, auditable, recount capable, transparent and tamper proof elections.