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SAFE Commission Member

It has been my privilege to serve as Elections Director in Richmond County these past 25 years and my absolute honor to serve as a member of the SAFE Commission established by former Secretary of State Brian Kemp and charged with researching and evaluating a new voting system for the State of Georgia. The Commission was also asked to solicit feedback, perform a cost analysis, research post-election audit procedures and provide legislative recommendations to lawmakers.

Members of the Commission heard from experts who provided an overview of Georgia's current voting system, the procurement process used by the State, and other legal matters for consideration when implementing a new system. We also heard from expert panelists on topics such as voting rights, security, voting accessibility, intergovernmental coordination between counties and the state. During the process, Commission members were given an opportunity to provide input and to ask questions. Members of the Commission had numerous opportunities to speak with voting equipment vendors and to participate in a public demonstration of the equipment.

As background, I was responsible for the administration of a paper ballot system from 1993 through 2002, at which time the state converted to the electronic system currently used in Georgia. With that background in mind, I do have valid concerns about the manual issuance of paper ballots both during Advance Voting and on Election Day. Advance Voting, which was implemented in Georgia for the first time in 2003, is a very popular option for Georgia voters with as many as half of the voters who participate in any given election choosing to cast their ballot during Advance Voting.

If moving to an all paper ballot system, each Advance Voting center must be equipped to provide a paper ballot for any registered voter of the jurisdiction and poll workers would be required to manually select the proper ballot for each and every voter who casts a ballot. In our jurisdiction of 123,000 registered voters, that equates to 68 different ballot styles in any county-wide election and 204 ballot styles during a Primary. In larger jurisdictions and in jurisdictions where bi-lingual ballots are mandated, even more ballot styles would be required. Printing ballots on demand using a printer in the polling site would help with printing costs, but would not mitigate the risk of a poll worker inadvertently issuing the wrong ballot to a voter. The same scenario exists for Election Day voting in many counties. Election Day polling sites across the state could have as few as 1 ballot style or as many as 30, or more.

As a part of my personal preparation, I offered a survey to election officials across the state seeking their input on their preferred method or type of voting system using the three methods stated in the Request for Information issued by the State of Georgia as a basis. The methods are: (1) paper balloting, (2) ballot marking device for all in person voting, or (3) a hybrid system using paper balloting for mail and Election Day voting and ballot marking devices for Advance Voting.

There were 76 responses to the survey and 95% of those who responded chose Method 2 - using ballot marking devices for all in person voting including Advance Voting and Election Day voting.

| Number of Registered Voters | Number of Respondents | *Method Preference                            | Estimated Printing Cost for all paper |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1,000 - 10,000              | 21                    | 0 - Method 1<br>20- Method 2<br>1- Method 3   | \$1,000 - 10,000                      |
|                             |                       | <b>95% prefer Method 2</b>                    |                                       |
| 11,000 - 40,000             | 25                    | 2 - Method 1<br>23 - Method 2<br>0 - Method 3 | \$4,000 - 40,000                      |
|                             |                       | <b>92% prefer Method 2</b>                    |                                       |
| 42,000 - 100,000            | 17                    | 0 - Method 1<br>17 - Method 2<br>0 - Method 3 | \$15,000 - 58,000                     |
|                             |                       | <b>100% prefer Method 2</b>                   |                                       |
| 105,000 - 300,000           | 8                     | 1 - Method 1<br>7 - Method 2<br>0 - Method 3  | \$75,000 - 165,000                    |
|                             |                       | <b>87% prefer Method 2</b>                    |                                       |
| 450,000 +                   | 5                     | 0 - Method 1<br>5 - Method 2<br>0 - Method 3  | \$200,000 - 500,000                   |
|                             |                       | <b>100% prefer Method 2</b>                   |                                       |

\*Method 1 - all paper balloting  
 Method 2 - ballot marking device for all in-person voting  
 Method 3 - paper balloting for Election Day and by mail and ballot marking device during Advance Voting

Based on the information provided to the Commission, research, presentations, public input and personal experience, I submit the following recommendations for what I believe would be the best solution for a new voting system for Georgia that contemplates both the ease of use by voters and effective and secure election administration.

### Voting System Recommendations

1. During Advance Voting, I do not recommend paper balloting or any other voting method or system that is dependent upon the manual issuance of ballots by poll workers. This same thought applies to Election Day voting in polling places where multiple ballot styles are required.

2. I fully support post-election audits using a method that takes into consideration the time period for certifying election results and Georgia's runoff election schedule. The auditing process should be transparent and open to the public in the same manner as pre-election testing is now and should allow for monitors in the same way as monitors are now allowed during the early tabulation period for absentee ballots.
3. I do not believe the use of a QR code or a bar code on the voter verifiable paper ballot is a security risk nor do I believe it to be an impediment to our ability to accurately tabulate the voter's choices. I believe that a prescribed high standard of physical security and chain of custody documentation combined with thorough and transparent pre-election testing and post-election auditing procedures will work together to ensure without a doubt that all ballots were accurately tabulated, that the equipment used has performed properly and has not been tampered with, and, will readily identify any possible malfunction or deficiency.
4. Any manipulation of the software used in any voting system should be easily detected by the administrator and security should be practiced and evaluated on a regular basis.
5. Any system should have robust capabilities for in-person voting by voters with disabilities including, at a minimum, Braille instructions on the keypad, a good audio system and headset, the ability to enlarge text and change the contrast on the display.
6. Software for bi-lingual ballots should provide the flexibility of adapting to accommodate local dialects.
7. Voters should be able to vote with relative ease.
8. The voting equipment should not be too heavy, should be sturdy, and be easily maintained.
9. Georgia's contract should provide the ability to update software or equipment to keep up with new technology.
10. Counties should have the ability to purchase additional equipment using the pricing structure negotiated in the State contract.
11. Any system purchased should include all components necessary for proper storage and transportation of equipment and also for electronic poll book and ballot on demand printing system as these are critical components of any system regardless of the method used.
12. Legislative changes should include authorizing pilot programs during the November 5, 2019 Election to assist the State in refining processes prior to the 2020 Election cycle.

I appreciate the opportunity to serve Georgia in such a meaningful way and I look forward to the implementation of our new system. Thank you for the opportunity. It has been my pleasure.