

House Bill 974 (COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE)

By: Representatives LaHood of the 175th, Anderson of the 10th, Leverett of the 123rd, Blackmon of the 146th, Jones of the 25th, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 2 of Title 21 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
2 primaries and elections generally, so as to require the Secretary of State to establish and
3 maintain a state-wide system for the posting of scanned paper ballots; to provide for the
4 scanning of tabulated absentee ballots; to provide for minimum resolution requirements for
5 each such scan; to provide for the minimum amount of time such scans shall be maintained;
6 to provide for the posting of such scanned ballots; to provide for related matters; to repeal
7 conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

9 **SECTION 1.**

10 Chapter 2 of Title 21 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to primaries and
11 elections generally, is amended in Code Section 21-2-493, relating to computation,
12 canvassing, and tabulation of returns, investigation of discrepancies in vote counts, recount
13 procedure, pilot program for posting of digital images of scanned paper ballots, certification
14 of returns, and change in returns, by revising subsection (j.1) as follows:

15 "(j.1) The Secretary of State shall create and maintain a pilot state-wide program for the
16 posting of digital images of the scanned paper ballots created by the voting system. All

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17 such scans shall have a resolution of no less than 200 dots per inch. Such program shall
18 maintain scanned ballot images for a period of no less than 24 months following the
19 election in which the ballot was cast."

20

SECTION 2.

21 Said chapter is further amended in Code Section 21-2-386, relating to safekeeping,
22 certification, and validation of absentee ballots, rejection of ballot, delivery of ballots to
23 location designated by superintendent, duties of superintendent and managers, precinct
24 returns, report of returns of verified and accepted absentee ballots cast as soon as possible
25 following closing of polls, notification of challenged elector, and unlawful disclosure of
26 tabulation results, by adding a new subsection to read as follows:

27 "(g) Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, including, but not limited
28 to, the certification requirement in paragraph (3) of subsection (a) of Code
29 Section 21-2-300, all absentee ballots tabulated pursuant to this Code section shall be
30 scanned so that there is a digital image of each such ballot. All such scans shall have a
31 resolution of no less than 600 dots per inch, or the highest resolution possible within the
32 certified voting system. All such scans shall be posted and maintained by the program
33 provided for in subsection (j.1) of Code Section 21-2-493."

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SECTION 3.

35 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.