

The House Committee on Governmental Affairs offers the following substitute to HB 604:

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 elections and primaries generally, so as authorize local election superintendents to conduct  
3 a hand accounting of ballots following the computation, canvassing, and tabulation of returns  
4 in an election; to address discrepancies raised by such hand accountings; to provide for the  
5 termination of such hand accountings if they conflict with other duties of the superintendent;  
6 to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

8 **SECTION 1.**

9 Chapter 2 of Title 21 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to elections and  
10 primaries generally, is amended in Code Section 21-2-493, relating to computation,  
11 canvassing, and tabulation of returns, investigation of discrepancies in vote counts, recount  
12 procedure, posting of digital images of scanned paper ballots, certification of returns, and  
13 change in returns, by adding a new subsection to read as follows:

14 "(h.1)(1) Upon completing all tasks required by subsections (a) through (h) of this Code  
15 section, the superintendent may conduct a hand accounting of all ballots cast in one race  
16 appearing on such ballots within a county or municipality. Such hand accounting shall

H. B. 604 (SUB)

17 occur at the same location as the computation and canvassing provided for in subsection  
18 (a) of this Code section and shall be open to the public. For the purpose of such a hand  
19 accounting, the superintendent may organize his or her assistants into sections, each of  
20 whom may simultaneously proceed with the hand accounting provided for by this  
21 subsection.

22 (2) The results of such hand accounting shall be unofficial, but if the results of such a  
23 hand accounting indicate a discrepancy with the official results of the computation,  
24 canvassing, and tabulation provided for in this Code section, any such discrepancy shall  
25 be addressed as provided for in subsections (b) through (h) of this Code section.

26 (3) The hand accounting provided for in this subsection shall in no way delay or inhibit  
27 the superintendent from complying with any requirements of this chapter. If an ongoing  
28 hand accounting will prevent a superintendent from meeting any of the requirements of  
29 any provision of this chapter, such accounting shall be immediately terminated."

30

## SECTION 2.

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