



## Dress Rehearsal Shows Georgia Ready for Presidential Preference Primary

(ATLANTA) – County election officials across Georgia participated in a dress rehearsal Wednesday for the March 24 Presidential Preference Primary on the state’s new secure paper-ballot system as a way to prepare for actual voting.

Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger called the exercise a success.

“The county officials who actually run the elections proved they have the skills and the equipment to be ready for a record turnout when Georgia launches secure paper balloting statewide,” he said. “There were small things that showed poll workers what they need to watch out for. I’m confident the county officials will address them all with training.”

Wednesday’s exercise involved every county setting up at least one polling place, bringing up all of the voting equipment, and having volunteers cast ballots in a mock election. Then, the votes were tallied and results were transmitted to the Secretary of State’s Office as they will be on election night.

Georgia replaced the first-generation electronic voting machines voters had used since 2002. The new system, which will be used for the first time statewide March 24, will seem similar to voters by having them make their candidate choices on touchscreen devices. Adding a paper ballot for them to review and cast in the tamperproof ballot boxes is an important change, even though it is easy to grasp.

For poll workers, the addition of paper ballots means a bigger change in how they do their jobs. So, Raffensperger scheduled the coordinated practice election, complete with some manufactured obstacles to challenge the poll workers with issues that they will likely see on election day, like a voter spoiling their ballot.

“Spring training for the Braves is a chance for them to limber up, brush off the cobwebs and sharpen their skills, and election officials benefit from practice as well,” he said. “As an engineer, I know it’s helpful to introduce a little stress during testing so that systems perform smoothly in actual operation. Fortunately, most of the counties had no trouble with the curveballs we gave them.”

**Contact:** Walter Jones,  
Communications Manager  
(470) 312-2803

**Press Office:** (404) 360-9033



The new paper-ballot voting has been used in a pilot during municipal elections in November and in two special elections this year. A pair of public audits verified the accuracy of the system, and public audits will be routine beginning with this fall's general election.

To educate voters on ways Georgia is protecting election integrity, Raffensperger launched Secure the Vote. More information is online at [SecureVoteGa.com](https://SecureVoteGa.com).

Georgia is a leader in election innovation and access with automatic voter registration through the Department of Driver Services, three weeks of early voting – including a Saturday, and no-excuse absentee voting. It is the top state in the number of motor voter registrations and, in the last election cycle, experienced record registration and a record increase in turnout.

###