



N — No Digital Ballots or Machine Counting

Public confidence depends on election processes that are observable and verifiable by ordinary citizens.

Identified Weaknesses

Digital voting systems rely on software processes that voters cannot independently verify. Even offline machines remain vulnerable to error, manipulation, or insider access.

Examples

- Georgia: Voters are required to use ballot marking devices that generate barcode-based ballots, where the machine, not the voter, determines how selections are recorded and tabulated. Because voters cannot read or verify the barcode that is counted, voter intent is not directly observable or independently verifiable.¹
- Michigan: A tabulation system configuration error in Antrim County initially produced incorrect unofficial election results, requiring correction through manual review. The incident demonstrated how machine-based tabulation errors can occur without immediate detection by voters or observers.²
- Arizona (Maricopa County): Ballot adjudication and tabulation processes rely on software-driven decisions that occur outside direct public observation. While paper ballots exist, voters and observers cannot personally verify how ballots are interpreted or counted by the system.

What C.L.E.A.N. Proposes

- Require hand-marked paper ballots for all voters.
- Require hand counting of ballots at the precinct level with observers present, where feasible and implemented with informed public support.
- Prohibit barcode-based and machine-interpreted ballots.

Key Takeaways

Hand-marked, hand-counted paper ballots provide the highest level of transparency, accountability, and public confidence.

¹Center Square. (2025). [Republicans fired over 2020 election error call for federal investigation](#). *Just the News*.

²Fox 2 Detroit. (2020). [Michigan's Antrim County reports zero votes due to 'skewed results.'](#)