



LATEST FROM TALLAHASSEE

Kathleen Griffiths was in Tallahassee and met with Senator Ingoglia's aide, Hannah Christensen. Kathleen is Senator Ingoglia's constituent and has an established relationship with him and his aide. It is apparent to Defend Florida's advocates that the Florida election process does not follow the same standards that are applied to business, especially when it comes to risk assessment.

Kathleen explained to Hannah that we were alarmed that HB1381/SB1414 changed language in current legislation that hampers hand counting paper ballots in a disputed or close election. In current legislation, the Ingoglia bill SB1414 changes "manual audit" to "vote validation." Manual recounts are changed to "manual reviews."

SB1414 totally strips out the ability to look at paper ballots. However, there is one small area where a paragraph starts with "Nothing from the previous legislation would prevent SOEs from looking at paper ballots." This gives Senator Ingoglia cover to say on social media that he hasn't removed paper ballots. However, this statement is so far along in the chain of events, and since it is merely an option, there is no reason for the SOEs to do it. It only applies in cases of disputed elections or extremely close races.

Hannah stated that her objective is to learn our concerns and put together a document for Senator Ingoglia to use when pitching the bill in committee. He wants to understand what our concerns are. The document will help him know whether he has explained his bill correctly and determine if Defend Florida is wrong about his bill, or if we have a solution to make his bill better.

Kathleen emphasized that our big issue is that when digital images on one tabulator are cross referenced with the same digital images in another tabulator the results will always be the same. Ballot insertion (stuffing) and ballot deletions due to broken chain of custody will be undiscoverable.

ACCURACY OVER EFFICIENCY



Hannah expressed confidence that Representative Jacques' Citizenship Bill, HB 831, would likely be consolidated into HB1381/SB1414. Kathleen, however, strongly emphasized the importance of ensuring Florida does not rely solely on "vote validation review," a machine-to-machine precertification process, without implementing a robust auditing mechanism. She pointed out that Georgia and Arizona are currently involved in litigation due to evidence of ballot image duplication and manipulation during the 2020 election. In those cases, only ballot images—not the original ballots—were available for review and failed to detect deleted or inserted ballots. Kathleen warned that Defend Florida aims to prevent Florida from facing similar vulnerabilities as Georgia. Efficiency can't be more important than accuracy. Hannah agreed that there needs to be a way to check it. Deb Monks explained to Hannah the mechanisms we have in our bills that fix this and can be incorporated into SB1414 and HB1381.

KEY TAKEAWAYS



Deb was happy that Hannah understood that just having machines audit machines was insufficient. She was open to integrating hand counting into the process. Deb felt Hannah was even open to the idea of a manual cross check earlier in the election cycle. This would be a huge win for Defend Florida.

Our bill doesn't say you can't use the clear ballot machinery. It says you *must* do this minimal step, which is more than we do today, of manual hand counting to catch ballot flipping or manual insertion. In addition, SOEs can use the machine with the manual audit.

OUR NEW STRATEGY



We learned that Senate Chairmen have more autonomy this year than the House Chairmen. Senator Gaetz, Chairman of the Ethics and Elections Committee, is pushing a petition bill, SB7016. There are two weeks left to get our bills scheduled to be heard in committee. Senator Garcia has submitted the bills she sponsored, SB396 – Vote by Mail Security and SB1330 – Only Citizens Vote to Senator Gaetz's Ethics and Elections Committee. We are waiting to see if they will be read. Monday March 24th is week number 4 of the session. If our bills don't get read in week 5, we've lost the fight for this session. That is why your calls and emails are so important.

Representative Linda Chaney is the Chairwoman of the Government Operations Sub-Committee and the gate keeper for the House bills. The process is for the sponsor to send their bill to the chairman and the chairman decides what to do with it. Representative Jacques's bill HB831 was sent to Representative Chaney March 3rd. So far nothing has been done on his bill. It's up to the Representative to work the bill. Jacques's aide said there are too many election bills and recommended we take the important parts of HB831 and tag it onto another bill. Kathleen doesn't think there will be a stand-alone Jacques bill.

Email the chairs of the committees and BCC everyone on the committee. Tell them what parts of HB831 you want them to consider to be tagged onto another bill. The committee will take all the emails and ideas and blend them together. In other words, we give all the ingredients to the Government Operations Committee and their staff will make the recipe. Representative Jacques's aide said we should be looking at getting whatever language we like added to a proposed committee substitute. Representative Chaney's committee will be the committee to make the 'recipe' of the merged bills.

Hannah, Senator Ingoglia's aide, said that inserting HB831 into SB1414 would probably be our best option. Committee chairs are the key. Email Senator Gaetz at gaetz.don.web@flsenate.gov and Representative Chaney at Linda.Chaney@myfloridahouse.gov. Also email Representative Will Robinson at Will.Robinson@myfloridahouse.gov. He is the chair of the State Affairs Committee and oversees all the election integrity bills. In the email subject line put, **Vote YES to put HB831 on agenda**. As of this writing, Senator Gaetz's aide said they have not received any emails, so get busy Defend Ambassadors! The same people are on the Fiscal Policy Committee chaired by Senator Joe Gruters. His email is gruters.joe.web@flsenate.gov. If we don't act now, nothing will happen in the 2026 session

because it is an election year. Election fraud will be unchecked.



To reach our goals there are important actions to take. Call the chairs of the following committees and tell them we want our bills put on the table.

- Ethics and Elections Committee
Sen. Don Gaetz – (850)487-5001
- Fiscal Policy
Sen. Joe Gruters – (850)487-5022
- State Affairs Committee
Rep. Will Robinson – (850)717-5071
- Government Operations Subcommittee
Rep. Linda Chaney – (850)717-5061

Go to www.defendflorida.org/resources and click on the yellow box that says **“ALERT. Please be aware of limitations on SB14414 and HB1381”** for help in crafting your message. Remember when speaking with a House Representative, only mention the House bill numbers. When speaking to the Senators, only mention the Senate bill numbers. Tell them what parts of our bills you want to be incorporated into legislation.

Deb Monks was encouraged that we were getting the same advice from the House and Senate aides. She suggested we work the Committee bill angle. It's the committee chairs that will decide what goes in the committee bill and what gets heard at committee.

PINELLAS COUNTY ELECTION FRAUD DISCOVERED



John Liccione reported that VR Systems has a bug concerning NO-NO ballots. 171 fake Vote by Mail ballots were reported by Pinellas's SOE. There were 23,885,000 false VBM requests. This information is a gold mine to help boost our Vote

by Mail bill. John is going to see Governor DeSantis on the matter.

Our bill will help mitigate litigation which is like kryptonite to legislators. Remember that fact when communicating with legislators. There were 219,000 NO-NO ballot requests in the last election cycle. A NO-NO ballot is missing a Social Security Number or Driver License number and are not to be counted. The Florida Attorney General admitted that VR Systems had a bug and needed a patch.

STAY CONNECTED



Register for the weekly Tuesday 7pm Eastern zoom calls at www.defendflorida.org. If you miss a call, go to www.defendflorida.org/p2 or access it from the homepage. Check out the Resources tab on the homepage and share the newsletters, election integrity documents and training videos with your friends and grass roots groups.

**Until next time, be a Defend Florida
Ambassador!**

