

Timeline: The Road to the June 2026 Special Session

May 2024 – Senate Bill 189 Signed Into Law

Georgia Governor Brian Kemp signs a comprehensive election overhaul bill. A core provision requires Georgia to completely eliminate QR codes from paper ballots—transitioning entirely to human-readable text for vote counting—with a strict implementation deadline of

April 3, 2026 – Regular Legislative Session Adjourns

The Georgia General Assembly officially adjourns its regular session. Despite debating several ways to implement and fund the QR code ballot transition, lawmakers failed to pass a final bill, leaving local election offices without a funded blueprint or legal alternative just months before the deadline.

April 29, 2026 –U.S. Supreme Court Guts Voting Rights Act in *Louisiana v. Callais*

In a 6-3 decision, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that a newly drawn, majority-Black congressional district in Louisiana relied too heavily on race, now making it an unconstitutional gerrymander. The decision shifts the legal landscape for Voting Rights Act interpretations across Southern states, making it more difficult for Black and Brown to challenge voting maps that dilute their votes, and prompted Georgia leaders to seek a mid-decade map correction in line with other Southern states.

May 13, 2026 –Governor Kemp Issues Special Session Proclamation

Citing both the unresolved July 1 ballot mandate and the need to adjust voting boundaries following the Supreme Court's ruling, Governor Kemp officially triggers a special session to resolve these two high-stakes issues. Because voting for the 2026 midterms is already underway, any newly drawn district maps would be for the **2028 election cycle**.

June 17-24, 2026 –Special Legislative Session Convenes

Lawmakers returned to the State Capitol on June 17, exactly one day after the state's primary runoff elections concluded. Legally restricted by the Governor's proclamation, they must focus exclusively on ballot infrastructure and redistricting maps.

In a surprise move, Republican lawmakers announced they would not pursue redistricting at this time, after voting rights and community groups made their opposition to a rushed process clear. Lawmakers did pass a measure that extended the ban on ballot QR code use until Jan. 1, 2028.

The special session ended on June 24.