

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 30
By: Birdwell
Pensions, Investments & Financial Services
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

There are concerns about the limited choice voters have in the projects their tax dollars fund when taxing entities combine multiple purposes into single-ballot bonds. It has been noted that bond proposals are required to describe the general purpose for which the bonds are to be authorized, which allows for multiple distinct purposes to be consolidated into one proposition, and there have been calls for more specificity in bond descriptions. S.B. 30 seeks to address these concerns by requiring local taxing entities to write more transparent and detailed ballot language for propositions to issue bonds.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

S.B. 30 amends the Education Code to establish that the question of whether to approve the issuance of bonds for the construction, acquisition, and equipment of school buildings in a public school district and the purchase of necessary sites for school buildings, notwithstanding an applicable Election Code provision relating to propositions, may be submitted to the voters in a single ballot proposition, except that bonds for each of the following purposes must be stated in a separate proposition:

- the construction, improvement, or renovation of a stadium;
- the construction, improvement, or renovation of a natatorium;
- the construction, improvement, or renovation of another recreational facility other than a gymnasium;
- the construction, improvement, or renovation of a performing arts facility;
- the construction, improvement, or renovation of housing for teachers as determined by the district to be necessary to have a sufficient number of teachers for the district; and
- an acquisition or update of technology equipment, other than equipment used for school security purposes.

S.B. 30 requires the question of whether to approve the issuance of bonds for a stadium, natatorium, another recreational facility other than a gymnasium, a performing arts facility, or housing for teachers as determined by the district to be necessary to have a sufficient number of

teachers for the district to be printed on the ballot as a separate ballot proposition regardless of whether that building is proposed as part of the same complex or building that contains traditional classroom facilities. The bill requires each such separate ballot proposition to state the principal amount of the bonds to be issued that constitutes the cost for construction of that portion of the building or complex attributable to the specified buildings or to the traditional classroom facilities, as applicable.

S.B. 30 amends the Election Code to replace the requirement for a proposition submitted to the voters for approval of the issuance of bonds to specifically state a general description of the purposes for which the bonds are to be authorized with a requirement to specifically state a plain language description of the single specific purpose for which the bonds are to be authorized. The bill requires each single specific purpose for which bonds requiring voter approval are to be issued to be printed on the ballot as a separate proposition.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2019.