

SUBJECT: Repealing the requirement for a petition to run for certain judicial offices

COMMITTEE: Elections — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 6 ayes — Laubenberg, Goldman, Fallon, Phelan, Reynolds, Schofield

0 nays

1 absent — Israel

WITNESSES: For — Glen Maxey, Texas Democratic Party; Jennifer Hall; Brandon Moore; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Rosemary Edwards; Kathy Haigler)

Against — Alan Vera, Harris County Republican Party Ballot Security Committee

On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Ashley Fischer, Secretary of State; Keith Ingram, Texas Secretary of State, Elections Division)

BACKGROUND: Election Code, sec. 172.021 requires a candidate seeking a place on the general primary election ballot to submit an application accompanied by a filing fee or a petition in lieu of the filing fee.

Sec. 172.021(e) provides that certain candidates for judicial office who choose to pay the application filing fee also must accompany the application with a petition with at least 250 signatures for a place on the primary ballot.

If the candidate chooses to file the petition in lieu of the filing fee, the minimum number of signatures required for that petition is increased to 500. Signatures on a petition may not be obtained on the grounds of a county courthouse or courthouse annex.

Sec. 172.021(g) establishes that a candidate for the office of chief justice or justice of the Supreme Court, or presiding judge or judge of the Court

of Criminal Appeals, who chooses to pay the filing fee also must accompany the application with a petition. The petition must have a minimum of 50 signatures from each court of appeals district.

**DIGEST:** HB 2754 would repeal Elections Code, sec. 172.021(e) and sec. 172.021(g) to no longer require a candidate running for certain judicial offices to file a petition when submitting an application for a place on the ballot.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2015.