

**SUBJECT:** Standardizing the date of runoff elections

**COMMITTEE:** Elections — favorable, without amendment

**VOTE:** 9 ayes — Cain, J. González, Beckley, Bucy, Clardy, Fierro, Jetton, Schofield, Swanson

0 nays

**WITNESSES:** For — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Joanne Richards, Common Ground for Texans; Gerald Welty, Convention of States; Heather Hawthorne, County and District Clerks Association of Texas; Daniel Collins, El Paso County; Glen Maxey, Texas Democratic Party; and 13 individuals)

Against — Ed Johnson; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Alan Vera, Harris County Republican Party Ballot Security Committee; and seven individuals)

On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Christina Adkins, Texas Secretary of State; Henry Bohnert)

**BACKGROUND:** Under Election Code sec. 2.025(a), runoff elections shall be held between 20 and 45 days after the date the final canvass of the main election is completed, unless otherwise specified.

**DIGEST:** HB 2059 would specify that runoff elections were to be held on the first Saturday after the 27th day after the date of the main election.

The bill also would repeal the statute authorizing a home-rule city charter to prescribe a later runoff date.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2021.

**SUPPORTERS SAY:** HB 2059 would provide clarity to voters and reduce election costs for counties by standardizing the date of runoff elections. Current law provides for a range of dates on which runoff elections may be conducted.

This creates the possibility of multiple runoff elections being held on different dates within the same geographical area, which is confusing for voters and increases election administration costs for counties. The bill would resolve this by creating an unambiguous, standardized date for runoff elections.

Concerns that the bill could result in an overlap between runoff early voting and certain holidays or school breaks could be addressed by a floor amendment.

CRITICS  
SAY:

HB 2059 could require early voting for November runoff elections to overlap with the Thanksgiving holiday or certain school breaks. This would create breaks in early voting and inconvenience voters.

NOTES:

The author intends to offer a floor amendment that would require runoffs to be held on the sixth Saturday after the date of the main election.