

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
78R2105 DRH-D

H.B. 402
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State Affairs
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Engrossed

DIGEST AND PURPOSE

Under current law, a voter must present a voter registration certificate at the polling place on election day before casting a ballot. H.B. 402 institutes a pilot program to explore the effectiveness of a voter registration card with a magnetic stripe.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 63, Election Code, by adding Section 63.013, as follows:

Sec. 63.013. [Bill as drafted contains no section heading.] (a) Requires the secretary of state to implement a pilot program to evaluate the use of an electronic registration system on election day and during the period for early voting by personal appearance. Requires the program to: be limited to a single county that chooses to participate and has a population of approximately 500,000 people; allow for the use of a card with a magnetic stripe issued to the voter to confirm the voter's registration instead of the registration certificate when the voter appears in person to vote; and be used in one or more countywide elections as determined appropriate by the secretary of state and the county.

(b) Requires the secretary of state, at the conclusion of the pilot program established under Subsection (a), but not later than December 31, 2006, to file a report with the governor, the lieutenant governor, and the speaker of the house of representatives on the pilot program and the use of an electronic registration card. Provides that the report may contain recommendations on the future use of the card and suggestions for permanent statutory authority regarding the use of the card.

(c) Provides that this section expires January 1, 2007.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2003.