

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

C.S.S.B. 1780
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State Affairs
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Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

It can be argued that the current election notification and voter registration system fails to turnout voters because existing processes fail to provide for sufficient dissemination of information related to elections. The availability of new technologies in voter turnout efforts could significantly boost participation. Because many Texans use new communication tools such as mobile telephony and web-based programs, relying on out-dated voter outreach methods seems impractical.

C.S.S.B. 1780 amends current law relating to political party precinct conventions.

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 Section 18.007, Election Code, as follows:

Sec. 18.007. **LISTS FURNISHED FOR PRECINCT CONVENTIONS.** Requires the registrar, on request of the party's county chair, in a voting year in which a political party holds precinct conventions in the county under Title 10 (Political Parties), to furnish to the chair for use in qualifying individuals for participation in the conventions one of each of the original, supplemental, and correction lists prescribed by this subchapter. Prohibits the registrar from merging lists of registered voters for consolidated or combined precincts.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 172.1141, Election Code, as follows:

Sec. 172.1141. **LIST OF REGISTERED VOTERS FOR CONVENTION.** (a) Creates this subsection from existing text.

(b) Requires each precinct to have a separate list of registered voters. Prohibits the precinct lists of registered voters from being merged in consolidated or combined precincts.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 174.023, Election Code, by amending Subsections (a) and (b) and adding Subsections (d), (e), and (f), as follows:

(a) Requires the county chair to post a notice of the time, date, place, and purpose, rather than hour and place, for convening each precinct convention on the bulletin board used for posting notice of meetings of the commissioners court. Requires that the notice remain posted continuously for the 17, rather than 10, days immediately preceding the date of the convention.

(b) Requires the county chair, not later than the 17th, rather than 10th, day before the date of the precinct conventions, to deliver to the county clerk and any county elections administrator written notice of the time, date, place, and purpose, rather than hour and place, for convening each precinct convention.

(d) Requires the early voting clerk of a county to post notice of the precinct convention of each precinct in a prominent visible place at each early voting polling place in the county. Requires that the notice state, in a font large enough to be read easily by the majority of voters, the time, date, place and purpose of the precinct convention. Requires that the notice remain posted continuously during the period for early voting by personal appearance. Provides that the early voting clerk is not required to use an officially prescribed notice.

(e) Requires the county clerk or county elections administrator, if a county has an Internet website, to post on the clerk's or administrator's section of the county's website notice of the precinct convention of each precinct in the county stating the time, date, place, and purpose of the precinct convention. Requires that the notice remain posted continuously during the period for early voting by personal appearance until the polls close on election day.

(f) Requires the committee, if a county executive committee has an Internet website, to post on that website notice of the precinct convention of each precinct in the county stating the time, date, place, and purpose of the precinct convention. Requires that the notice remain posted continuously during the period for early voting by personal appearance.

SECTION 4. Amends Sections 174.025(a), (c), (d), and (e), Election Code, as follows:

(a) Provides that the precinct chair is the chair, rather than the temporary chair, of the precinct convention held under this subchapter.

(c) Requires the precinct chair or temporary chair, before conducting business, to prepare a list containing the name, the residence address, and when available, an electronic mail address and telephone number of each person who is admitted to participate in the convention. Makes a nonsubstantive change.

(d) Requires the precinct chair or temporary chair to call the convention to order.

(e) Requires that the convention select a convention chair if the precinct chair is absent. Requires that the convention select a convention secretary and authorizes the convention to select any other officers considered necessary to conduct the convention's business. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

SECTION 5. Amends Section 174.027, Election Code, by amending Subsection (a) and adding Subsection (a-1), as follows:

(a) Requires the convention chair to prepare, sign, and make a copy of a list of the names, residence addresses, and, when available, electronic mail addresses and telephone numbers of the delegates and any alternates selected by the convention, and the contact information, including the names, electronic mail addresses, telephone numbers, and residence addresses of the convention chair, convention secretary, and any delegation chair.

(a-1) Requires that each delegation chair, delegate, and alternate be given notice of selection by the convention.

SECTION 6. Effective date: September 1, 2009.