

- SUBJECT:** Establishing an interstate voter registration crosscheck program
- COMMITTEE:** Elections — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 4 ayes — Laubenberg, Fallon, Phelan, Schofield
- 1 nay — Israel
- 2 absent — Goldman, Reynolds
- WITNESSES:** For — Jacquelyn Callanen, Bexar County Elections Administrator, Texas Association of Elections Administrators; Kat Swift, Green Party of Texas; Alan Vera, Harris County Republican Party Ballot Security Committee; Dana DeBeauvoir, Legislative Committee of County and District Clerks Association; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Rachael Crider, Cheryl Johnson, and Sheryl Swift, Galveston County Tax Office; Ed Johnson, Harris County Clerk's Office; Willie O'Brien, Mountain View College Student Government Association; John Oldham, Texas Association of Elections Administrators; William Fairbrother, Texas Republican County Chairmen's Association, Legislative Chair; Erin Anderson, True the Vote; and six individuals)
- Against — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Mike Conwell; Jennifer Hall; Brandon Moore)
- On — Glen Maxey, Texas Democratic Party; Keith Ingram, Texas Secretary of State, Elections Division; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Ashley Fischer, Secretary of State)
- DIGEST:** HB 891 would require the secretary of state to cooperate with other states and jurisdictions to develop systems to compare voters, voter history, and voter registration lists to identify voters whose addresses had changed. This system would be required to comply with the federal Voting Rights Act and would be designed to maintain the statewide voter registration list and to prevent duplication of registration in more than one state or jurisdiction.

This bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2015.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

HB 891 would help alleviate issues with people crossing state lines and voting in two states and with students voting in the state where they go to college as well as in their home state using an absentee ballot. Most states do not have a consistent method for removing people from voter rolls when they move. Having the same person listed on multiple voter rolls in different counties and even different states is quite common. HB 891 would clean up this process and ensure that people were registered and voting in only one correct jurisdiction.

The expansion of interstate exchanges of voter registration information has been recommended as a best practice by the Presidential Commission on Election Administration. Two systems currently exist across the country: the Electronic Registration Information Center and the Interstate Voter Cross-Check Program. These programs involve verifying a person's identity before pulling them from the voter rolls and do not result in legitimate voters being turned away.

HB 891 would not change how the secretary of state's office handled potential duplicative records. It still would follow the National Voter Registration Act and use multiple steps and safeguards to verify someone's identity before removing that person from voter rolls. The bill would make no changes to existing law on registration or procedures for verifying registration.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

HB 891 could lead to the government overstepping its bounds. For example, requiring an interstate voter registration crosscheck program could lead to a national government identification program. This would be problematic because people could not participate in the political process without registering for the national program. The bill also could make voting more difficult, which would be counterproductive.

OTHER
OPPONENTS
SAY:

An interstate voter registration crosscheck program would be a good policy only if a system of the highest quality were used. The system should ensure that legitimately registered voters were not turned away on election day.