

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 1615  
By: Fallon  
Elections  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Informed observers contend that in certain elections the authority calling the election will use multiple mobile voting locations that are in operation only for certain hours and days during the early voting period. These observers explain that this can lead to confusion among voters because of the varied and staggered availability of these polling locations. H.B. 1615 seeks to address this issue by creating a more predictable early voting process with respect to temporary branch polling places.

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

### **ANALYSIS**

H.B. 1615 repeals Election Code provisions relating to days and hours for early voting by personal appearance at a temporary branch polling place in a county with a population of 100,000 or more and in a county with a population under 100,000 that authorize voting to be conducted at such a polling place on any one or more days and during any hours of the period for early voting by personal appearance, as determined by the authority establishing the branch, including early voting by personal appearance on a Saturday or Sunday at any temporary branch polling place under certain conditions.

H.B. 1615 amends the Election Code to clarify that early voting by personal appearance at a temporary branch polling place may be conducted on any one or more days and during any hours of the period for early voting by personal appearance, as determined by the authority establishing the branch, and that the appropriate authority may order early voting by personal appearance on a Saturday or Sunday at any temporary branch polling place that is not required to conduct voting on the same days and during the same hours as voting is conducted at the main early voting polling place.

H.B. 1615 requires, in an election in which the authority ordering the election has established at least five temporary branch polling places in the territory served by the early voting clerk, early voting by personal appearance at no less than 80 percent of the temporary branch polling places to be conducted on the same days and during the same hours as voting is conducted at the main early voting polling place. The bill establishes, for the purposes of this requirement, that a temporary branch polling place does not include a temporary branch polling place established at a church.

H.B. 1615 repeals the following provisions of the Election Code:

- Section 85.064
- Section 85.065

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2015.