

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 2840
By: Cyrier
Elections
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Concerns have been raised over the fact that overseas voters who identify themselves as living overseas indefinitely are allowed to vote only in federal elections and not in local elections. Observers note that these voters may still be property owners or have other interests in the local area. H.B. 2840 seeks to allow these voters to vote a full ballot.

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. 2840 amends the Election Code to entitle a person who indicates on a federal postcard application that the person is a U.S. citizen residing outside the United States indefinitely to vote a full ballot as provided by statutory provisions relating to voting by a resident federal postcard applicant if the person is otherwise eligible to vote under those provisions and is a registered voter at the address contained on the application. The bill requires the early voting clerk to provide notice to a person who indicates on a federal postcard application that the person is a U.S. citizen residing outside the United States indefinitely and who does not meet the criteria for voting a full ballot that, as a result of the person's indication, the person is only eligible to vote a federal ballot as provided by statutory provisions relating to voting by an overseas citizen. The bill requires the secretary of state to prescribe the form and manner of the notice.

H.B. 2840 requires a website maintained by a county for providing information on voting, if a county maintains such a website, to include information that describes the effects on the ballot a person will receive under state law if the person indicates on a federal postcard application that the person is a U.S. citizen residing outside the United States indefinitely.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2015.