

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 1300
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Elections
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Concerns have been raised regarding ambiguity in state law pertaining to whether a child accompanying their parent to a voting station may read or mark a ballot at their parent's direction. While a child may accompany their parent to the voting station, it has been suggested that an election official may prevent a parent from allowing their child to read or mark a ballot under their direction due to this confusion. C.S.H.B. 1300 seeks to address this issue by clarifying that a child under 14 years of age who is accompanying their parent to a voting station may read or mark the ballot at the direction of their parent.

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

C.S.H.B. 1300 amends the Election Code to authorize a child under 14 years of age accompanying the child's parent to a voting station to read or mark the ballot at the direction of the parent. This activity does not constitute assisting a voter for purposes of state election law.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2021.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 1300 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

The substitute changes the age of the child authorized by the original to read or mark the ballot at the direction of the parent from under 18 years of age to under 14 years of age.