

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 2197
By: Hull
Elections
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

In Texas, a person must complete a statement of residence form before voting if the person has changed the person's residence address within the county listed on the person's voter registration. This form, which is designed by the secretary of state, must be completed to verify eligibility to vote in a given precinct. The form contains a conspicuous field for any former county of residence, but the field for the current county of residence is less obvious. Statements of residence for elections held in municipalities with jurisdictions that span multiple counties can create confusion for election workers, who are already expected to work efficiently at a breakneck pace. H.B. 2197 seeks to streamline the process for determining voter eligibility, ease the burden on election workers, and uphold election integrity by requiring a conspicuous field for current county of residence.

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. 2197 amends the Election Code to require a statement of residence submitted by a voter to an election officer before voting to include a field for the voter to enter the voter's current county of residence. The bill requires the secretary of state to adopt a statement of residence form with the required field as soon as practicable after the bill's effective date.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2021.