

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 22
By: Swanson
Elections
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Concerns have been raised regarding the experiences of some voters requiring additional assistance when voting. It has been reported that when these voters arrive at polling stations, they are often forced to either wait for election officials to offer assistance or call a potentially inaccessible phone number to request assistance. In some occasions, these voters may not have the means to request assistance or access important contact information. H.B. 22 seeks to address these issues by requiring polling locations to have designated parking spaces reserved for voters who are unable to enter the polling place that display certain contact information.

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. 22 amends the Election Code to require a polling place and a main early voting polling place or other location used for voting by a disabled voter on election day to have two parking spaces reserved for the use of a voter who is unable to enter the polling place without personal assistance or likelihood of injuring the voter's health. Each parking space must be clearly marked with a sign:

- indicating that the space is reserved for use by a voter who is unable to enter the polling place; and
- displaying, in large font that is clearly readable from a vehicle, a telephone number that a voter may call to request assistance from an election official at the polling place.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2021.