

SUBJECT: Confidentiality of certain information regarding state election inspectors

COMMITTEE: Elections — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 5 ayes — L. Taylor, Berman, Branch, Burkett, P. King
2 nays — Farias, Veasey
2 absent — Hernandez Luna, Isaac

WITNESSES: For — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Skipper Wallace, Texas Republican County Chairmen’s Association)

Against — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Anthony Gutierrez, Texas Democratic Party)

On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: David Glickler, Office of the Attorney General; Ann McGeehan, Office of the Secretary of State)

BACKGROUND: Elections Code, sec. 34.001 allows the secretary of state to appoint one or more state inspectors for an election. The secretary is required to do so if requested by 15 or more registered voters in the area that the inspector would monitor. That request is not available for public inspection until the day after the election.

DIGEST: If the secretary of state appointed one or more election inspectors, HB 2060 would make the appointment confidential until the day after the election. Additionally, HB 2060 would make information on where the inspectors were appointed to monitor confidential until the day after the election.

The bill would take effect on September 1, 2011.

SUPPORTERS SAY: To prevent voter intimidation, the identities of people requesting the presence of an election inspector are kept confidential. The election inspectors, who work to protect our most basic democratic right and privilege, should be extended that same right to confidentiality.

These election inspectors do not influence elections, but simply monitor their proceedings to prevent voter fraud and intimidation.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

HB 2060 would decrease transparency and remove accountability of our election officials. By hiding the identities of election inspectors, HB 2060 would end safeguards ensuring impartial election monitoring, giving the secretary of state too much power to influence the outcomes of elections.