

- SUBJECT:** Requiring certain filing fees or petitions for general election candidates
- COMMITTEE:** Elections — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 7 ayes — Klick, Cortez, Burrows, Cain, Fierro, Middleton, Swanson  
2 nays — Bucy, Israel
- WITNESSES:** For — Kathaleen Wall, Republican Party of Texas, State Republican Executive Committee, Election Integrity Working Group; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Alan Vera, Harris County Republican Party Ballot Security Committee; Russell Hayter; Ed Johnson; Kay Tyner)  
Against — Brandon Moore; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Bill Sargent)  
On — Lon Burnam, Public Citizen; Christina Adkins, Secretary of State; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Heather Hawthorne, County and District Clerks' Association of Texas; Jenifer Favreau and Sabra Srader, Texas Association of Elections Administrators)
- BACKGROUND:** Election Code sec. 172.001 requires political parties' nominees in general elections for state and county offices and for the U.S. Congress to be nominated by primary elections if the parties' nominees for governor in the most recent gubernatorial general election received at least 20 percent of the votes received by all candidates. Candidates in primary elections must pay filing fees ranging from \$75 to \$5,000, depending on the office, as outlined in sec. 172.024, or instead secure a sufficient number of signatures based on the office, as outlined in sec. 172.025.  
Some have suggested that all candidates on general election ballots should be required to pay similar filing fees or to submit petitions with signatures.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 2504 would require all candidates who were nominated by convention, in order to be eligible to be placed on general election ballots for state and county offices, to pay filing fees or submit petitions with

signatures in lieu of filing fees.

The filing fee amounts and minimum number of required signatures on the petitions would match current requirements for candidates nominated for the same offices in general primary elections.

The bill would require that any filing fees received by the secretary of state be deposited in the state treasury to the credit of the general revenue fund and any filing fees received by county judges be deposited in county treasuries to the credit of that county's general fund.

The secretary of state would be required to adopt rules as necessary to implement this bill.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2019.

NOTES:

According to the Legislative Budget Board, the bill would have a positive impact of \$230,000 to general revenue related funds though fiscal 2020-21.