

SUBJECT: Requiring comparison of voter data to DPS database to verify citizenship

COMMITTEE: Elections — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 5 ayes — Cain, Clardy, Jetton, Schofield, Swanson

4 nays — J. González, Beckley, Bucy, Fierro

SENATE VOTE: On final passage, April 12 — 18-13 (Alvarado, Blanco, Eckhardt, Gutierrez, Hinojosa, Johnson, Lucio, Menéndez, Miles, Powell, West, Whitmire, Zaffirini)

WITNESSES: For — Robert L. Green, Travis County Republican Party Election Integrity Committee; Ed Johnson; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Gerald Welty, Convention of States; Deon Starnes, Election Integrity Committee, RPT; Alan Vera, Harris County Republican Party Ballot Security Committee; Tom Glass, Texas Election Integrity; Chad Ennis, Texas Public Policy Foundation; Tom Nobis, The Republican Party of Texas; and 12 individuals)

Against — Rene Perez, Libertarian Party of Texas; Fatima Menendez, Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund; James Slattery, Texas Civil Rights Project; Glen Maxey, Texas Democratic Party; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Lauren Coffee, ACLU of Texas; David Weinberg, Brennan Center For Justice; Joanne Richards, Common Ground for Texans; Cinde Weatherby, League of Women Voters of Texas; Steven Lance, NAACP Legal Defense Fund; Jason Taper, Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism Texas; Phil Bunker, Teamsters JC 58; Joshua Houston, Texas Impact; Chloe Goodman, Workers Defense Action Fund; and 13 individuals)

On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Rebekah Hibbs, Texas Department of Public Safety; Keith Ingram, Texas Secretary of State)

BACKGROUND: Interested parties have contended that the secretary of state lacks the tools to sufficiently verify the citizenship of individuals on the statewide

computerized voter registration list.

DIGEST:

SB 1114 would require the secretary of state to enter into an agreement with the Department of Public Safety (DPS) under which information in the statewide computerized voter registration list was compared against information in the DPS database on a monthly basis to verify the accuracy of citizenship status information provided on voter registration applications. The information compared would have to include, at a minimum, a voter's:

- full legal name;
- former name, if applicable;
- date of birth;
- residence address;
- driver's license or state identification card number;
- Social Security number;
- documentation of lawful presence in Texas; and
- citizenship status.

After a voter registrar received notification of persons who had indicated a lack of citizenship status in connection with a motor vehicle or DPS record, the registrar would have to deliver to each registered voter whose name appeared on the list a written notice requiring the voter to submit proof of U.S. citizenship in the form of a certified copy of certain identifying documents.

By December 31 of each year, the secretary of state would have to provide a report to the Legislature of the number of voter registrations canceled under the bill's provisions during the calendar year.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2021.