

SUBJECT: Amending requirements to access the online ballot tracker

COMMITTEE: Elections — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 7 ayes — Smith, Bucy, Burrows, Capriglione, DeAyala, Manuel, Swanson

0 nays

2 absent — E. Morales, Vo

WITNESSES: For —Stephanie Swanson, League of Women Voters of Texas; Trudy Hancock, Texas Association of Elections Administrators; Emily Eby French, Texas Civil Rights Project; Susana Carranza; Valerie DeBill (*Registered, but did not testify*: Lauren Johnson, ACLU of Texas; Katya Ehresman, Common Cause Texas; Stacy McMahan, East Texans for Liberty; Amber Mills, MOVE Texas Action Fund; Joey Bennett, Secure Democracy USA; Cynthia Van Maanen, Travis County Democratic Party; Andrew Brandt; Sherri Heckendorn; Susan Stewart)

Against — Ed Johnson (*Registered, but did not testify*: Andrew Eller, State Republican Executive Committee SD24; Russell Hayter; Lucy Trainor)

On — Alan Vera, Harris County Republican Party Ballot Security Committee; Christina Adkins, Texas Secretary of State

BACKGROUND: Election Code sec. 86.015 requires the secretary of state to develop or otherwise provide an online tool to each early voting clerk that enables a person who submits an application for a ballot to be voted by mail to track the location and status of the application and ballot.

Under sec. 86.015(b), the online ballot tracking tool must require the voter to provide the voter's name, registration address, and the last four digits of the voter's social security number, as well as the voter's driver's license number or personal identification card number issued by the Department

of Public Safety.

Some have suggested that the information that a voter is required to enter to access the online tool should be amended.

DIGEST:

HB 357 would replace the requirement that a voter provides the voter's registration address and the last four digits of the voter's social security number with the voter's date of birth to access the online tool.

A voter also could provide the last four digits of the voter's social security number instead of their driver's license number or personal identification card number to access the ballot tracker.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2023.