BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center   S.B. 993
<div align="right">By: Cain
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DIGEST

Currently, the Texas Election Code governs the process for filling the office of precinct chair for the state's respective political parties. A candidate for precinct chair is elected at the general primary by majority vote of the qualified voters of the precinct. Statistics show that approximately 5 percent of the races for precinct chair are contested.

This bill established a cost effective and time efficient manner for filling the office of precinct chair by requiring an unopposed candidate for precinct chair to be declared elected at the time of the local canvass of the results of voting in the primary. Other provisions attempt to reduce costs for printing precinct chair races on the ballot, decrease time for distributing the ballots to elections officials, and remove time and expense for qualifying undeclared write-in candidates.

PURPOSE

As proposed, S.B. 993 sets forth procedures for the election of the office of precinct chair of a political party under certain conditions.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is granted to the secretary of state in SECTION 3 (Section 171.0231(f), Election Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 171.022(a), Election Code, to make a conforming change.

SECTION 2. Amends Chapter 171B, Election Code, by adding Section 171.0221, as follows:

> Sec. 171.0221. ELECTION NOT HELD FOR OFFICE OF PRECINCT CHAIR. Requires a vacancy to be filled in the regular manner if no candidate's name is to be placed on the ballot or the list of write-in candidates for the office of precinct chair. Requires a candidate to be declared elected to the office at the time of the local canvass under certain conditions. Requires the county chair to post the name of a candidate declared elected under Subsection (b) at a public place in the election precinct.

SECTION 3. Amends Chapter 171B, Election Code, by adding Section 171.0231, as follows:

> Sec. 171.0231. WRITE-IN CANDIDATE FOR PRECINCT CHAIR. Prohibits a write-in vote for the office of precinct chair from being counted unless the name written in appears on the list of write-in candidates. Requires a candidate to make a declaration of write-in candidacy to be entitles to a place on the list of write-in candidates. Requires a declaration of write-in candidacy to be filed with the authority with whom an application for a place on the ballot is required to be filed for the office. Provides that a declaration of write-in candidacy is subject to the filing deadline and any extension of that deadline applicable to an application for a place on the ballot for the office. Provides that Chapter 146B, Election Code, applies to write-in voting for the office of precinct chair. Requires the secretary of state to prescribe any procedures necessary to implement this section.

SECTION 4.   Effective date: September 1, 1997.

SECTION 5.   Emergency clause.