

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

H.B. 563
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State Affairs
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Engrossed

DIGEST AND PURPOSE

Over the past several years, there has been a decrease in the percentage of registered voters casting votes. Accessibility to polling places and cynicism about the election process are two possible reasons for the decrease. In high growth areas, polling locations frequently change from one election to the next. H.B. 563 attempts to ensure that all voters have ready access to information about the locations of polling places.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 43, Election Code, by adding Subchapter C, as follows:

SUBCHAPTER C. INFORMATION REGARDING LOCATION OF POLLING PLACE

Sec. 43.061. NOTICE OF CHANGE OF LOCATION OF POLLING PLACE. (a)
Provides that this section applies only to a general or special election that is ordered by the governor or the county judge.

(b) Requires the county clerk, if the location of a polling place changes after notice of an election is given under Section 4.003, to give notice of the change not later than the earlier of: 24 hours after the location is changed; or 24 hours before the polls open on election day.

(c) Sets forth requirements for the notice required by Subsection (b).

Sec. 43.062. NOTICE AT PREVIOUS POLLING PLACE. Requires the authority responsible for giving notice of the election, if possible, and if the location of the polling place for an election precinct is different from the location used for the precinct in the preceding election ordered by the same authority, to post notice at the entrance to the previous polling place stating that the location has changed and providing the location of the new polling place.

Sec. 43.063. USE OF COMPUTERIZED INFORMATION. Requires an election officer, in an election in which detailed poll location information is available at a polling place through a computer, to provide that information to assist voters in determining the correct polling place location for the voter's election precinct.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 62.001, Election Code, to require the presiding judge, if the polling place is left unattended at any time after the preparations for voting begin, to take appropriate steps to provide for the security of the polling place. Provides that this subsection does not affect the security requirements for a polling place after the polls open.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2001.