

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
83R660 ADM-D

S.B. 160  
By: Huffman  
State Affairs  
3/8/2013  
As Filed

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Currently, county election judges and clerks are required to wear badges indicating their name and position at polling places. Poll watchers are not permitted to wear name tags even though they are allowed in polling places to observe election activities performed by election judges and clerks. Voters are not able to identify poll watchers as part of the election process. Poll watchers can observe, take notes, and may talk only with the election judge. They are not permitted by law to talk to voters. Without the ability to wear identification or communicate with the voters, poll watchers are put in difficult positions when voters ask them questions and do not know who they are or their function. S.B. 160 amends the Election Code to require poll watchers to wear a badge that displays the words "Poll Watcher" while the watcher is observing election activity.

As proposed, S.B. 160 amends current law relating to the identification of a person as an election poll watcher.

### **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 Section 33.056, Election Code, by adding Subsection (e), to require a poll watcher to wear a badge that prominently displays the words "Poll Watcher" while the watcher is observing election activity.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 61.010(a), Election Code, to include Section 33.056(e) as an exception to the prohibition on the wearing of a badge, insignia, emblem, or other similar communicative device relating to a candidate, measure, or political party appearing on the ballot, or to the conduct of the election, in the polling place or within 100 feet of any outside door through which a voter may enter the building in which the polling place is located.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2013.