

By: Johnson

S.B. No. 331

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to eligibility to serve as an interpreter in an election.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 61.032, Election Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 61.032. INTERPRETER PERMITTED. If an election officer who attempts to communicate with a voter does not understand the language used by the voter, the voter may communicate through an interpreter selected by the voter or, if the voter has not selected an interpreter, any interpreter an election officer may appoint.

SECTION 2. Section 61.033, Election Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 61.033. ELIGIBILITY TO SERVE AS INTERPRETER. To be eligible to serve as an interpreter, a person:

(1) if selected by the voter, may be any person other than the voter's employer, an agent of the voter's employer, or an officer or agent of a labor union to which the voter belongs; or

(2) if appointed to serve as an interpreter by an election officer, must be a registered voter of the county in which the voter needing the interpreter resides or a registered voter of an adjacent county.

SECTION 3. Section 61.034, Election Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 61.034. TRANSLATING BALLOT. If a voter cannot

1 comprehend the language in which the ballot is printed, the voter
2 may receive assistance in accordance with Subchapter B, Chapter 64
3 ~~[an interpreter may accompany the voter to the voting station for~~
4 ~~the purpose of translating the ballot to the voter].~~

5 SECTION 4. Section 61.035, Election Code, is amended to
6 read as follows:

7 Sec. 61.035. OATH. (a) Before serving as an interpreter,
8 the person selected as interpreter must take the following oath
9 administered by an election officer:

10 "I swear (or affirm) that, to the best of my ability, I will
11 correctly interpret and translate each question, answer, or
12 statement addressed either to the voter by any election officer or
13 to an election officer by the voter."

14 (b) A person who will be providing ballot assistance under
15 Section 61.034 must also take the oath required by Subchapter B,
16 Chapter 64, and meet all other requirements of that subchapter.

17 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
18 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
19 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
20 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
21 Act takes effect September 1, 2021.