

By: Smith

H.B. No. 4780

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to ballots voted by mail.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 86, Election Code, is amended by adding Section 86.016 to read as follows:

Sec. 86.016. SIGNATURE SHEET IN LIEU OF CARRIER ENVELOPE.

(a) The official carrier envelope for early voting ballot may be modified to remove the requirements under Section 1.011, 86.002(g), 86.013(b)(2), 86.013(b)(3), 86.013(c), 86.013(e), or 86.013(f), if the voter is provided a signature sheet that contains those required elements.

(b) In order for an early voting mail ballot to be counted, a voter must either include a completed signature sheet in the carrier envelope containing their completed mail ballot or complete the carrier envelope certificate in the manner prescribed by Section 86.013.

(c) If the voter provides a signature sheet in lieu of completing the carrier envelope certificate prescribed by Section 86.013, the early voting ballot board or signature verification committee, if applicable, may open the sealed carrier envelope to retrieve the voter's signature sheet for review pursuant to Sections 87.027 and 87.041.

(d) The secretary of state shall prescribe the form and content of the signature sheet and the modified carrier envelope

1 described in Subsection (a). Officially prescribed forms must
2 contain substantially the same content as the carrier envelope as
3 prescribed in Section [86.013](#).

4 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2023.