

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 583
By: Lewis
Public Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND

Currently the Forth Worth Independent School District (FWISD) Board consists of nine members with eight elected through single-member districts and the board president elected at-large. Two previous lawsuits, filed against the FWISD by the NAACP and based on the claim that FWISD's electoral system violated the Voting Rights Act of 1965, influenced the FWISD to shift from an at-large election system to its present system. House Bill 583 sets forth provision relating to the method of selecting trustees in independent school districts with more than 80,000 students in certain counties.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this bill is to create more voter equity in the Forth Worth Independent School District.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency or institution.

ANALYSIS

House Bill 583 amends the Education Code to require the board of trustees (board) of an independent school district with more than 80,000 students in average daily attendance in a county having two or more municipalities with a population of 250,000 or more, to be elected from single member districts and to select one of its members as president and another as vice president. The bill requires the board to divide the school district into 11 trustee districts. The bill sets forth provisions concerning the election of district trustees to the board and residency requirements of district trustees. The bill requires the board to redivide the district into 11 trustee districts if census data indicates that the population of the most populous district exceeds the population of the least populous by 10 percent.

This Act applies beginning with the first regular election of trustees held after September 1, 2003 in a school district to which Section 11.0531, Education Code, as added by this Act, applies.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2003.