

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 2390
By: Madden
Elections
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

In view of the sacrifices being made by military personnel and members of the merchant marine and their families stationed overseas, these individuals should be afforded every opportunity to provide them a means to cast an absentee ballot in federal or other elections in which they are eligible to participate. Currently, this option can be exercised by submission of a Federal Postcard Application (FPCA) allowing the overseas service personnel and members of the merchant marine and their dependents to register to vote and request an absentee ballot. While the FPCA can either be mailed or faxed, it is not uncommon for service personnel or members of the merchant marine and their dependents to have greater access to a scanner than either of the other two forms of transmission. C.S.H.B. 2390 would allow military personnel and members of the merchant marine and their dependents to convey their Federal Post Card Application via scanner, entitling them to vote absentee in applicable stateside elections.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

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

ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 2390 amends the Elections Code by allowing members of the armed forces of the United States, members of the merchant marine of the United States, their spouses, or their dependents to submit an electronic image of their Federal Postcard Application to the early voting clerk. The measure requires the secretary of state to prescribe procedures as necessary to implement this amendment.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2007.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL TO SUBSTITUTE

C.S.H.B. 2390 allows members of the armed forces of the United States, members of the merchant marine of the United States, their spouses, or their dependents to submit an electronic image of their Federal Postcard Application to the early voting clerk. H.B. 2390 limited this option for members of the armed forces of the United States or their spouses or dependents who are on active duty overseas and are submitting their application from an area that are eligible to receive hostile fire, imminent danger pay, or has been designated by the president of the United States as a combat zone.