

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 1256
By: Allen
Elections
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Current law requires the secretary of state to adopt rules for publicizing voters' rights, which must inform voters of their right to report existing or potential abuse, their right to file a complaint, and information about the voting rights hotline. This bill seeks to make voter complaint information at a polling place more prominent and comprehensive.

C.S.H.B. 1256 requires the presiding judge of an election precinct to post notice at a polling place informing voters about whom to call or write if a voter has a complaint about the conduct of the election. The bill specifies a font size and type for the notices and requires the notice to include telephone numbers for the voting rights hotline and for reporting complaints about local election officials, as well as mailing addresses and websites where voters can direct complaints to federal, state, or local governments.

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. 1256 amends the Election Code to require the presiding judge of an election precinct to post, at one or more locations in the polling place easily visible to voters, notice in a form prescribed by the secretary of state that informs voters of whom to call or write if a voter has a complaint about the conduct of the election. The bill requires the title of the notice to read "Voter Complaint Information" and be printed in at least 100-point Times New Roman font and include the telephone number for the voting rights hotline established by the secretary of state, any available telephone number dedicated to reporting complaints about the local election official administering the election, and mailing addresses or Internet websites, as available, to which the voters may direct complaints to the federal, state, or local government about the conduct of elections.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2009.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL TO SUBSTITUTE

CSHB 1256 changes the font size from 200-point to 100-point, and specifies that the font size only refers to the title of the notice: "Voter Complaint Information"