

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 2477
By: Harless
Elections
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The Texas secretary of state serves as the voter registrar for the entire state of Texas. Under current law, however, counties are required to furnish voter registration materials in all foreign languages that are spoken by a certain minimum percentage of the population as determined by the U.S. Census Bureau. H.B. 2477 seeks to require the secretary of state to provide translations of certain materials in any language necessary to fulfill the foreign language requirement in order to achieve consistency across county lines and to reduce duplicate effort.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the secretary of state in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 2477 amends the Election Code to require a political subdivision on a determination by the director of the census that the political subdivision is required to provide election materials in a language other than English or Spanish under federal law to provide election materials in that language in the same manner in which the political subdivision would be required to provide materials in Spanish under state law, to the extent applicable. The bill requires the secretary of state to prepare the translation for election materials required to be provided in a language other than English or Spanish to the same extent that the secretary of state prepares Spanish translations under state law. The bill authorizes the secretary of state to adopt rules as necessary to implement the bill's provisions.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2011.