

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 2503  
By: Bohac  
Elections  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Interested parties observe that large counties conducting joint elections find it difficult to comply with state law prohibiting election precincts from containing territory from more than one type of territorial unit and argue that having to incorporate justice precincts, wards, and State Board of Education lines is too onerous. These parties point out, for example, that in Harris County, there are a number of justice districts that are not aligned with any other office and that there are several board of education districts in the county that do not align with any other district. The parties also assert that the alignment and population considered in combining election precincts can be confusing or in conflict.

The parties note that in Harris County, with its more than 750 voting precincts, it is difficult to find polling locations because some areas do not have schools or other public buildings available. In addition, the parties contend, it is very difficult to find enough poll workers willing to work the hours to staff all of these polling locations. In order to address these issues, H.B. 2503 seeks to increase the flexibility of election officials to combine precincts.

### **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**

H.B. 2503 amends the Election Code, in a provision prohibiting a county election precinct from containing territory from more than one each of certain types of territorial units, to remove from those territorial unit types a justice precinct, a ward in a city with a population of 10,000 or more, and a State Board of Education district. The bill, in a provision authorizing county election precincts in a county with a population of 250,000 or more to be combined if changes in election precinct boundaries to give effect to a redistricting plan result in county election precincts with 500 or more but fewer than 750 registered voters, revises that condition to authorize the combining of such precincts if the changes result in precincts with fewer than 2,500 registered voters.

H.B. 2503 repeals Sections 42.005(c) and (d) and 42.010(a), Election Code.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2013.