

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 160
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State Affairs
7/1/2013
Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Currently, county election judges and clerks are required to wear badges indicating their name and position at polling places. Poll watchers are not permitted to wear name tags even though they are allowed in polling places to observe election activities performed by election judges and clerks. Voters are not able to identify poll watchers as part of the election process. Poll watchers can observe, take notes, and may talk only with the election judge. They are not permitted by law to talk to voters. Without the ability to wear identification or communicate with the voters, poll watchers are put in difficult positions when voters ask them questions and do not know who they are or their function.

S.B. 160 amends current law relating to the identification of a person as an election poll watcher.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 33.051, Election Code, by adding Subsection (f), as follows:

(f) Requires the election officer, on accepting a watcher for service, to provide the watcher with a form of identification, prescribed by the secretary of state, to be displayed by the watcher during the watcher's hours of service at the polling place.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2013.