

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 2356
By: Bohac
Elections
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties observe that certain large counties, such as Harris County, may incur unreasonable expenditures for election equipment, supplies, and personnel in precincts that have relatively few registered voters and no schools or other public buildings available to function as polling locations. In addition, the parties contend, it is very difficult to find enough poll workers to staff those locations. In order to address these issues, H.B. 2356 seeks to increase the flexibility of election officials to combine precincts.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

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. 2356 amends the Election Code to remove from the authorization for a commissioners court or county executive committee of a political party for a general election, special election, or primary election, as applicable, to combine county election precincts to avoid unreasonable expenditures for election equipment, supplies, and personnel the condition that changes in the county election precinct boundaries giving effect to a redistricting plan result in county election precincts with a number of registered voters less than 500. The bill instead makes that authorization to combine precincts applicable in a county with a population of less than 250,000 if the precinct has less than 500 registered voters and in a county with a population of 250,000 or more regardless of the number of registered voters in the precinct.

H.B. 2356 repeals Section 42.0051(b), Election Code.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2015.