

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 2778
By: Elkins
Elections
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested observers explain that federal postcard applicant voters may send in an application for a ballot by e-mail and receive a ballot by e-mail, which is then marked, printed out, and mailed back to the early voting clerk. The observers point out that a voter may only receive a ballot by e-mail for elections in which there is a federal candidate or issue on the ballot but that the voter can only receive the ballot by mail if the election is only a local or state election. Many people have expressed confusion and frustration about this and contend that it discourages participation in local elections because the process is not consistent and not as accessible to voters. H.B. 2778 seeks to address these concerns.

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. 2778 amends the Election Code to authorize balloting materials to be sent by e-mail for any election in which the voter who registers under statutory provisions relating to voting by a resident federal postcard applicant is eligible to vote and removes a provision limiting that authorization to certain elections.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2015.