

By: Sheets

H.B. No. 1448

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT

2 relating to the provision of a voter's thumbprint with a mailed
3 ballot.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

5 SECTION 1. Section 86.002, Election Code, is amended by
6 adding Subsection (g) to read as follows:

7 (g) The clerk shall include with the balloting materials a
8 disposable fingerprint inked strip and instructions for the voter
9 to include a thumbprint on the ballot.

10 SECTION 2. Section 86.005(c), Election Code, is amended to
11 read as follows:

12 (c) After marking the ballot and providing the thumbprint,
13 the voter must place the ballot [~~it~~] in the official ballot envelope
14 and then seal the ballot envelope, place the ballot envelope in the
15 official carrier envelope and then seal the carrier envelope, and
16 sign the certificate on the carrier envelope.

17 SECTION 3. Subchapter B, Chapter 87, Election Code, is
18 amended by adding Section 87.028 to read as follows:

19 Sec. 87.028. THUMBPRINT VERIFICATION COMMITTEE. (a) A
20 thumbprint verification committee may be appointed in the same
21 manner as a signature verification committee. A thumbprint
22 verification committee may, subject to the same restrictions as the
23 signature verification committee with respect to signatures,
24 determine whether the thumbprint submitted is that of the voter if

1 another sample of the voter's thumbprint from the same hand is
2 available for comparison.

3 (b) The secretary of state may establish methods to obtain
4 thumbprints of as many voters as possible for the purpose of this
5 section including entering into agreements with the Department of
6 Public Safety and other state agencies and governmental entities to
7 provide thumbprints.

8 SECTION 4. Section 87.041(b), Election Code, is amended to
9 read as follows:

10 (b) A ballot may be accepted only if:

11 (1) the carrier envelope certificate is properly
12 executed;

13 (2) neither the voter's signature on the ballot
14 application nor the signature on the carrier envelope certificate
15 is determined to have been executed by a person other than the
16 voter, unless signed by a witness;

17 (3) the voter's ballot application states a legal
18 ground for early voting by mail;

19 (4) the voter is registered to vote, if registration
20 is required by law;

21 (5) the address to which the ballot was mailed to the
22 voter, as indicated by the application, was outside the voter's
23 county of residence, if the ground for early voting is absence from
24 the county of residence;

25 (6) for a voter to whom a statement of residence form
26 was required to be sent under Section 86.002(a), the statement of
27 residence is returned in the carrier envelope and indicates that

1 the voter satisfies the residence requirements prescribed by
2 Section 63.0011; ~~and~~

3 (7) the address to which the ballot was mailed to the
4 voter is an address that is otherwise required by Sections 84.002
5 and 86.003; and

6 (8) the voter has submitted a thumbprint, and if a
7 thumbprint verification committee was appointed, the thumbprint
8 has not been determined to belong to a person other than the voter.

9 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect September 1, 2015.