

By: Swanson

H.B. No. 96

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

1  
2 relating to signature verification on an early voting ballot voted  
3 by mail.

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

5 SECTION 1. Section 87.027(i), Election Code, is amended to  
6 read as follows:

7 (i) The signature verification committee shall compare the  
8 signature on each carrier envelope certificate, except those signed  
9 for a voter by a witness, with the signature on the voter's ballot  
10 application to determine whether the signatures are those of the  
11 same person. The committee may also compare the signatures with  
12 any two or more signatures of the voter made within the preceding  
13 six years and on file with the general custodian of election records  
14 or voter registrar [~~the signature on the voter's registration~~  
15 ~~application~~] to confirm that the signatures are those of the same  
16 person and may [~~but may not~~] use the signatures [~~registration~~  
17 ~~application signature~~] to determine that the signatures are not  
18 those of the same person. Except as provided by Subsection (1), a  
19 determination under this subsection that the signatures are not  
20 those of the same person must be made by a majority vote of the  
21 committee's membership. The committee shall place the jacket  
22 envelopes, carrier envelopes, and applications of voters whose  
23 signatures are not those of the same person in separate containers  
24 from those of voters whose signatures are those of the same

1 person. The committee chair shall deliver the sorted materials to  
2 the early voting ballot board at the time specified by the board's  
3 presiding judge.

4 SECTION 2. Section 87.041(e), Election Code, is amended to  
5 read as follows:

6 (e) In making the determination under Subsection (b)(2),  
7 the board may also compare the signatures with any two or more  
8 signatures of the voter made within the preceding six years and on  
9 file with the general custodian of election records or voter  
10 registrar to determine if [~~confirm that~~] the signatures are those  
11 of the same person [~~but may not use the signatures to determine that~~  
12 ~~the signatures are not those of the same person~~].

13 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
14 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
15 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
16 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
17 Act takes effect December 1, 2017.