

By: Swanson

H.B. No. 189

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to an option on ballots to choose not to vote in a race.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter C, Chapter 52, Election Code, is amended by adding Section 52.0685 to read as follows:

Sec. 52.0685. OPTION TO AFFIRMATIVELY CHOOSE NOT TO VOTE.

(a) Voters shall be given the opportunity to select "I choose not to vote in this race" instead of voting for the candidates appearing on the ballot or the list of write-in candidates for each race.

(b) The secretary of state shall prescribe the form and manner of placing the option "I choose not to vote in this race" on the ballot.

SECTION 2. Section 52.070(b), Election Code, as effective September 1, 2021, is amended to read as follows:

(b) Immediately below "OFFICIAL BALLOT," the following instruction shall be printed: "Vote for the candidate of your choice in each race by placing an 'X' or filling in the shape beside the candidate's name, or by placing an 'X' or filling in the shape beside 'I choose not to vote in this race'."

SECTION 3. Section 52.070, Election Code, is amended by adding Subsection (b-1) to read as follows:

(b-1) A shape shall be printed to the left of the option "I choose not to vote in this race" for each office to be voted on in the election.

1 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect December 1, 2021.