

By: Alvarado

S.B. No. 23

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to electronic voter registration and electronic submission of an application for an early voting ballot by mail.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 13, Election Code, is amended by adding Section 13.009 to read as follows:

Sec. 13.009. ELECTRONIC VOTER REGISTRATION. (a) The secretary of state shall implement a program to allow a person to complete a voter registration application over the Internet from the official website of this state. The websites of the secretary of state and the Department of Public Safety must also provide a link to the location of the application on the official website of this state.

(b) An applicant for electronic voter registration who has a driver's license or personal identification card issued in this state, regardless of whether the license or card is unexpired, must:

(1) attest to the truth of the information provided on the application by affirmatively accepting the information as true; and

(2) affirmatively consent to the use of the signature on the applicant's driver's license or personal identification card for voter registration purposes.

(c) An applicant for electronic voter registration who does

1 not have a driver's license or personal identification card issued  
2 in this state must:

3 (1) attest to the truth of the information provided on  
4 the application by affirmatively accepting the information as true;  
5 and

6 (2) print a registration application from the website  
7 the applicant is using to register, sign the application, and mail  
8 it to the registrar.

9 (d) For each application submitted under Subsection (b),  
10 the program must require that a digital copy of the applicant's  
11 signature be obtained from the Department of Public Safety.

12 (e) For each application submitted under Subsection (c),  
13 the program must provide the applicant with:

14 (1) a registration application that the applicant can  
15 print from the registration website, sign, and mail to the  
16 registrar as required under Subsection (c)(2); and

17 (2) information about how the applicant can obtain a  
18 driver's license or personal identification card from the  
19 Department of Public Safety.

20 (f) An application submitted under this section is  
21 considered for all purposes an application submitted by mail under  
22 this title.

23 (g) The secretary of state shall adopt rules as necessary to  
24 implement this section, including rules to provide for additional  
25 security measures necessary to ensure the accuracy and integrity of  
26 applications submitted electronically.

27 (h) The rules adopted under Subsection (g) must require

1 that:

2 (1) the Internet website through which a person may  
3 complete a voter registration application include a description of  
4 the offense described by Section 13.007 in a conspicuous location  
5 on the website near the place where the person begins or submits the  
6 application; and

7 (2) the state electronic Internet portal project be  
8 used to authenticate the identity of a person who submits an  
9 application electronically under this section.

10 SECTION 2. Sections 84.001(b) and (d), Election Code, are  
11 amended to read as follows:

12 (b) An application must be in writing and signed by the  
13 applicant. Except as provided by Section 84.0091, an [An]  
14 electronic signature is not permitted.

15 (d) An application must be submitted [~~by mail~~] to the early  
16 voting clerk for the election who serves the election precinct of  
17 the applicant's residence.

18 SECTION 3. Section 84.007(a), Election Code, is amended to  
19 read as follows:

20 (a) Except as provided by Sections 84.008, [~~and~~] 84.009, and  
21 84.0091, an application for a ballot to be voted by mail must be  
22 submitted as provided by this section.

23 SECTION 4. Subchapter A, Chapter 84, Election Code, is  
24 amended by adding Section 84.0091 to read as follows:

25 Sec. 84.0091. SUBMITTING APPLICATION FOR BALLOT VOTED BY  
26 MAIL: ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION. The secretary of state shall  
27 implement a program to allow a person to complete an application for

1 an early voting ballot by mail over the Internet from the official  
2 website of this state. The program must:

3 (1) permit an applicant to electronically sign the  
4 application;

5 (2) deliver a completed application to the early  
6 voting clerk for the election who serves the election precinct of  
7 the applicant's residence; and

8 (3) permit an applicant to check the status of the  
9 applicant's application.

10 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect on the 91st day after the  
11 last day of the legislative session.