

By: Hall

S.B. No. 27

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the tabulation and reporting of votes, including certain technological requirements for ballots.

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

SECTION 1. Section 52.061, Election Code, is amended by adding Subsection (c) to read as follows:

(c) A ballot must contain a watermark.

SECTION 2. Subchapter A, Chapter 65, Election Code, is amended by adding Section 65.017 to read as follows:

Sec. 65.017. VERIFICATION OF VOTE TOTALS. (a) After precinct returns have been prepared under Section 65.014, each county shall print and compare the returns to ensure the number of votes cast in each precinct in the county matches the total number of votes cast in the county.

(b) After the comparison in Subsection (a) is completed, the secretary of state shall print and compare the returns to ensure the number of votes cast in each county matches the total number of votes cast in the state.

(c) If the comparison in Subsection (a) results in a disparity between the vote counts, an automatic recount under Chapter 216 must be conducted in the precinct for the election in which the disparity is identified. The recount shall be a manual recount by hand of paper records in accordance with Subchapter A, Chapter 214.

1       (d) If the comparison in Subsection (b) results in a  
2 disparity between the vote counts, an automatic recount under  
3 Chapter 216 must be conducted in the county for the election in  
4 which the disparity is identified. The recount shall be a manual  
5 recount by hand of paper records in accordance with Subchapter A,  
6 Chapter 214.

7       SECTION 3. Chapter 279, Election Code, is amended by adding  
8 Section 279.004 to read as follows:

9       Sec. 279.004. TRANSMISSION BETWEEN SECRETARY OF STATE AND  
10 COUNTY ELECTION OFFICERS. (a) In this section, "asymmetric  
11 cryptology" means a system of cryptology that employs a pair of  
12 keys, one known to county election officers, the other only known to  
13 the secretary of state, to encrypt and decrypt the transmission of  
14 election data.

15       (b) Any transmission of election data that occurs between  
16 the secretary of state and a county election officer must be done on  
17 a device that is not capable of being connected to the Internet or  
18 another computer network or electronic device through:

- 19               (1) a secure virtual private network; or  
20               (2) a landline link that employs asymmetric  
21 cryptology.

22       SECTION 4. This Act takes effect on the 91st day after the  
23 last day of the legislative session.