

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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H.B. 1264
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AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Electoral integrity is of importance for multiple reasons, including political legitimacy of elected leaders, strengthening public confidence in electoral institutions, and satisfaction with the performance of democracy. Elections in which the citizens lack faith can have severe repercussions by failing to accommodate all groups through electoral channels, thereby progressing underlying grievances that lead to electoral violence, widespread unrest, and civil wars, ultimately leading to the unraveling of democratization.

The first step in the integrity of elections is to ensure the integrity of the voter rolls. The goal of maintaining an accurate voter list is to ensure that eligible voters can cast a ballot, to keep track of who has voted to prevent anyone from voting twice, and, by reducing inaccuracies, speed up the voter check-in process at polling places. Voter registration lists are the foundation of everything else in election administration.

The bill would clean up the state's voter rolls by ensuring dead people cannot vote in elections, by improving the reporting of deaths to voter registrars, who then can purge the decedent from the voter rolls.

H.B. 1264 amends current law relating to the time for making required reports of deceased residents of this state to a voter registrar and to the secretary of state.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Sections 16.001(a) and (b), Election Code, as follows:

(a) Requires the local registrar of deaths to file each abstract with the voter registrar of the decedent's county of residence and the secretary of state (SOS) as soon as possible, but not later than the seventh day after the abstract is prepared. Deletes existing text requiring the local registrar of deaths to file each abstract with the voter registrar of the decedent's county of residence and SOS not later than the 10th day of the month following the month in which the abstract is prepared.

(b) Requires the clerk of each court having probate jurisdiction to file each abstract with the voter registrar and SOS as soon as possible, but not later than the seventh day after the abstract is prepared. Deletes existing text requiring the clerk to file each abstract with the voter registrar and SOS not later than the 10th day of the month following the month in which the abstract is prepared.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2021.