

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1675
By: Campbell
Elections
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

In order to maintain the integrity of elections, certain reforms are needed to safeguard Texans' right to engage in the legislative process and protect elections from various last minute changes to mail-in ballot laws. S.B. 1675 seeks to address this issue by generally prohibiting the qualifications for early voting by mail and procedures for conducting early voting by mail from being amended or suspended for any reason and providing for certain prohibitions against the suspension of a provision of a statute, order, or rule that is related to the qualifications or procedures for early voting by mail.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

S.B. 1675 amends the Election Code to prohibit, except as specifically permitted by statute, the qualifications for early voting by mail and procedures for conducting early voting by mail from being amended or suspended for any reason.

S.B. 1675 amends the Government Code to prohibit the governor from suspending a provision of a statute, an order, or a rule under applicable provisions of the Texas Disaster Act of 1975 if the provision, order, or rule is related to the qualifications or procedures for early voting by mail. The bill authorizes the governor, upon declaration of a state of disaster, to suspend Election Code early voting provisions that do the following only for the purpose of allowing a voter registered to vote at an address located in a disaster area to deliver a marked ballot voted under those provisions to the early voting clerk's office on or before election day:

- authorize a voter to deliver a marked ballot in person to the early voting clerk's office only while the polls are open on election day; and
- require a voter who delivers a marked ballot in person to present an acceptable form of identification.

S.B. 1675 prohibits the presiding officer of the governing body of a county or incorporated city from suspending a provision of a statute, rule, or order under provisions of the act relating to a declaration of local disaster if the statute, rule, or order is related to the qualifications or procedures for early voting by mail.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2021.