By: Swanson   H.B. No. 2501

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1   AN ACT

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

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

4   SECTION 1. Subchapter C, Chapter 52, Election Code, is

5   amended by adding Section 52.0685 to read as follows:

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

7   (a) Voters shall be given the opportunity to select "I choose not to

8   vote in this race" instead of voting for the candidates appearing on

9   the ballot or the list of write-in candidates for each race.

10   (b) The secretary of state shall prescribe the form and

11   manner of placing the option "I choose not to vote in this race" on

12   the ballot.

13   SECTION 2. Section 52.070, Election Code, is amended by

14   amending Subsection (b) and adding Subsection (b-1) to read as

15   follows:

16   (b) Immediately below "OFFICIAL BALLOT," the following

17   instruction shall be printed: "Vote for the candidate of your

18   choice in each race by placing an 'X' in the square beside the

19   candidate's name or by placing an 'X' in the square beside "I choose

20   not to vote in this race."

21   (b-1) A square shall be printed to the left of the option "I

22   choose not to vote in this race" for each office to be voted on in

23   the election.

24   SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2021.