

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 374
By: Bucy
Elections
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Current election law requires any Texas voter requesting a ballot by mail to subsequently request ballots by mail for any ensuing runoff election. This process can be confusing for voters expecting to automatically receive a runoff ballot by mail after voting by mail in the initial election. Overwhelmingly, ballots by mail are used by persons over the age of 65 and persons with disabilities. These voters most often wish to get runoff ballots, but many think of a runoff as an extension of the first election and thus assume that a runoff ballot would come automatically. H.B. 374 seeks to address this issue by providing for a runoff ballot to be automatically sent to a voter who voted by mail unless the voter opts out.

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

H.B. 374 amends the Election Code to establish that an application for an early voting ballot by mail serves as an application for both the main election and for any resulting runoff election. The bill authorizes an applicant for an early voting ballot by mail for the main election to request not to receive a ballot for a resulting runoff election.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2023.