

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 924
By: Springer
Elections
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Some county election precincts have no facility within the precinct that can serve as a polling location. For example, both the Robson Ranch and the Frisco Lakes communities have grown large enough that they have been split into two voting precincts, leaving one precinct without a qualifying facility to serve as a polling location. The residents of these communities would be better served if two voting precincts could be combined for election day voting so a qualifying facility may be used as a polling location by residents from both precincts. S.B. 924 seeks to remedy this issue by allowing counties with a population of up to 1.2 million to combine two or more county election precincts on the recommendation of the county election board if there is not a facility available for use as a polling location.

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. 924 amends the Election Code to revise the procedures for combining county election precincts as follows:

- removes the authority of the county commissioners court, for a general or special election, or the county executive committee of a political party conducting a primary election, for a primary election, to combine precincts for the purpose of avoiding unreasonable expenditures for election equipment, supplies, and personnel if changes to the precinct boundaries would result in precincts with fewer than 500 registered voters;
- repeals the authorization for county election precincts in a county with a population of 250,000 or more to be combined if such changes result in county election precincts with 500 or more but fewer than 750 registered voters;
- restricts the authority to combine precincts to a commissioners court of a county with a population of less than 1.2 million and under the following circumstances:
 - in a general election or special election for which use of county election precincts is required; and
 - on the recommendation of the county election board, if the commissioners court cannot secure a location in a facility for use as a suitable polling place and the location of the combined polling place adequately serves the voters of the combined precinct; and
- raises from 5,000 to 10,000 the cap on the number of registered voters a combined precinct may contain.

S.B. 924 repeals Section 42.0051(b), Election Code.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2023.