

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 1993
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State Affairs
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AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

During this past general election, numerous polling locations experienced a shortage of paper ballots. This created unnecessary delays as election officials scrambled to get more ballots to polling locations. The delays caused voters to stand in line for hours. As a result many gave up. The paper ballot shortage was easily preventable but the delays effectively disenfranchised thousands of voters.

S.B. 1993 establishes that in the event that two percent or more polling locations in a county of one million or more are denied paper ballots for more than one hour then the secretary of state shall call a new election for that county.

As proposed, S.B. 1993 amends current law relating to the authority of the secretary of state to order a new election in certain counties.

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 Title 14, Election Code, by adding Subtitle E, as follows:

SUBTITLE E. ORDER FOR NEW ELECTION BY SECRETARY OF STATE

CHAPTER 249. SHORTAGE OF BALLOTS IN CERTAIN COUNTIES

Sec. 249.001. STANDARD FOR NEW ELECTION. Requires the secretary of state (SOS), notwithstanding any other law, in a county with a population of more than one million, to order a new election if SOS has good cause to believe that at least two percent of the total number of polling places in the county did not receive supplemental ballots under Section 51.008 (Supplementing Distributed Ballots) for one or more hours after making a request for supplemental ballots to the authority responsible for distributing election supplies.

Sec. 249.002. PROCEDURES FOR NEW ELECTION. Requires SOS, in establishing the procedures for a new election ordered under this chapter, to have the same authority granted to a district court under Section 231.007 (Procedures for New Election Generally).

Sec. 249.003. EXPENSES OF NEW ELECTION. Provides that the expenses of a new election ordered by SOS under this chapter are paid from the same fund and by the same authority that paid the expenses of the previous election.

SECTION 2. Makes application of this Act prospective.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2023.