

By: Slaton

H.B. No. 3596

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT
2 relating to proposing a referendum to the people of the State of
3 Texas on the question of whether this state should reassert its
4 status as an independent nation.

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

6 SECTION 1. (a) At the general election to be held November
7 7, 2023, the voters shall be permitted to vote in a referendum on
8 the question of whether this state should reassert its status as an
9 independent nation.

10 (b) Notice of the election shall be given by inclusion of
11 the proposition in the proclamation by the governor ordering an
12 election on any proposed constitutional amendment to the state
13 constitution and in the notice of that election given by each county
14 judge, or, if no constitutional amendment is proposed, the governor
15 shall order and each county judge shall give notice for an election
16 proposing the referendum required by this section.

17 (c) The proposition shall be printed on the ballot above any
18 proposed constitutional amendment under the heading: "Referendum
19 Proposition."

20 (d) The ballot shall be printed to permit voting for or
21 against the proposition: "Should the State of Texas reassert its
22 status as an independent nation?"

23 (e) Returns of the votes cast on the proposition shall be
24 prepared and canvassed in the same manner as the returns on a

1 proposed constitutional amendment.

2 (f) Immediately after the results of the election are
3 certified by the governor, the secretary of state shall transmit a
4 copy of the certification to the lieutenant governor, the speaker
5 of the house of representatives, and each member of the
6 legislature.

7 (g) The referendum proposed under this section is
8 nonbinding on any decision of the legislature following the
9 submission of the report required by Section 2(i) of this Act.

10 SECTION 2. (a) The secretary of state shall immediately
11 transmit a copy of the governor's certification of the result of the
12 referendum required under Section 1 of this Act to:

13 (1) the president of the United States;

14 (2) the speaker of the House of Representatives and
15 the president of the Senate of the Congress of the United States;
16 and

17 (3) the members of the Texas delegation to the
18 Congress of the United States.

19 (b) The Texas Independence Committee is a joint interim
20 committee established to study and make recommendations regarding
21 the most effective and expeditious method by which Texas may be
22 returned to its status as an independent nation.

23 (c) The committee shall consider:

24 (1) recommendations for amending the Constitution of
25 Texas to accommodate the needs of an independent nation, including:

26 (A) the creation of new elected and appointed
27 offices;

1 (B) the modification of the powers, functions,
2 and titles of existing offices;

3 (C) the renaming of the State of Texas to the
4 Republic of Texas;

5 (D) the removal of unnecessary or undesirable
6 provisions that exist solely as a consequence of Texas' status as a
7 state within the United States of America; and

8 (E) the identification of fundamental rights
9 enumerated by the Constitution of the United States of America that
10 may not be adequately preserved in the Constitution of Texas;

11 (2) recommendations for amending Texas statutes to
12 accommodate the needs of an independent nation, including:

13 (A) the creation of new agencies;

14 (B) the modification of the powers, functions,
15 and names of existing agencies; and

16 (C) the identification of necessary and
17 desirable functions of government that are provided for under the
18 statutory law of the United States of America but not adequately
19 described in Texas statute;

20 (3) recommendations regarding transitional issues
21 which must be negotiated with the government of the United States of
22 America, including:

23 (A) any necessary or desirable changes in federal
24 law;

25 (B) the determination of citizenship of
26 residents of Texas;

27 (C) the disposition of the property and assets of

1 the United States of America currently in Texas;

2 (D) a temporary currency union;

3 (E) a free trade agreement;

4 (F) a common travel agreement;

5 (G) the status of Texans currently serving in the
6 armed forces of the United States of America;

7 (H) any necessary disposition of the Texas
8 portion of the national debt of the United States of America;

9 (I) a collective defense arrangement;

10 (J) a postal agreement;

11 (K) the payment of pensions to Texans who have
12 vested in the pension programs of the United States of America and
13 its subnational governments;

14 (L) a social security totalization agreement;

15 and

16 (M) any other transitional issues that the
17 committee may identify; and

18 (4) recommendations regarding any international
19 convention or multilateral agreement to which an independent Texas
20 may become a party in order to benefit the people of Texas or ensure
21 minimal disruption during a transition period.

22 (d) In addition to considering the issues described under
23 Subsection (c) of this section, the committee shall include within
24 its report required under Subsection (i) of this section a strategy
25 for achieving Texas independence not later than 24 months after the
26 date the results of the referendum election required under Section
27 1 of this Act are certified by the governor.

1 (e) The committee is composed of:

2 (1) the lieutenant governor;

3 (2) the speaker of the house of representatives;

4 (3) four senators appointed by the lieutenant
5 governor, one of whom must be the chair of the senate committee on
6 state affairs; and

7 (4) four members of the house of representatives
8 appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives, one of
9 whom must be the chair of the house committee on state affairs.

10 (f) The lieutenant governor and speaker of the house of
11 representatives shall serve as co-chairs of the committee.

12 (g) The committee shall convene at the call of the
13 co-chairs.

14 (h) The committee has all other powers and duties provided
15 to a special or select committee by the rules of the senate and
16 house of representatives, by Subchapter B, Chapter 301, Government
17 Code, and by policies of the senate and house committees on
18 administration.

19 (i) Not later than December 31, 2024, the committee shall
20 report the committee's findings and recommendations to the
21 legislature.

22 (j) The committee is abolished and this Act expires January
23 1, 2025.

24 SECTION 3. (a) Section 2 of this Act takes effect on
25 December 7, 2023, but only if the referendum proposed by the 88th
26 Legislature, Regular Session, 2023, on the question of whether this
27 state should reassert its status as an independent nation is

1 approved by the voters. If that referendum is not approved by the
2 voters, Section 2 has no effect.

3 (b) Except as provided by Subsection (a) of this section,
4 this Act takes effect September 1, 2023.