

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 29
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Elections
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

During the 89th Regular Session, the Texas Legislature enacted S.B. 2217, effective September 1, 2025, which would allow a person's voter registration to take effect immediately upon the voter registrar's receipt of certain notices of a voter's change of address if the voter changes residence within the same county as the voter's current registration address. However, according to a recent article in *The Texas Tribune*, local election officials who attended training presented by the secretary of state's office expressed concerns regarding this new same-day registration process, with one official specifically noting that, because the voter's address would be changed by election workers at the polling location without additional address and mapping verification steps that election officials typically take, there is a risk that a voter could get the wrong ballot. H.B. 29 seeks to address these concerns by repealing the provision, effective September 1, 2025, that would allow for this manner of same-day registration and by reverting related provisions effective on that date to their current state.

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. 29 amends the Election Code, as effective September 1, 2025, to revise the authorization for an otherwise eligible voter, if the voter's residence address is not current because the voter has changed residence within the county, to vote in the election precinct in which the voter resides if the voter resides in the county in which the voter is registered by doing the following:

- changing the precinct in which such a voter is authorized to vote from the precinct in which the voter resides to the precinct in which the voter is registered; and
- conditioning the authorization on the following, if applicable:
 - the voter residing in the political subdivision served by the authority ordering the election if the political subdivision is other than the county; or
 - the voter residing in the territory covered by the election in a less-than-countywide election ordered by the governor or a county authority.

The bill accordingly updates the required contents of the statement of residence that an otherwise eligible voter whose residence address is not current due to a change in residence within the county must execute and submit to an election officer before being accepted for voting and removes from those contents a request to the registrar to change the voter's registration address to the address at which the voter resides.

H.B. 29 repeals Section 15.025(e), Election Code, as effective September 1, 2025, which establishes that a voter's registration takes effect immediately upon the registrar's receipt of a notice of the voter's change of address submitted under applicable Election Code provisions if the voter changes residence within the same county as the voter's current registration address.

H.B. 29 applies only to a notice of a voter's change of address submitted on or after the bill's effective date.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, the 91st day after the last day of the legislative session.