

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 3113
By: Troxclair
Elections
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The bill author has informed the committee that when counties conduct a hand count of voted paper ballots for their elections, the process can be slow, error-prone, and difficult to verify. The bill author has also informed the committee that although hand counting ballots is not inherently problematic and can be effective for smaller elections, issues arise when an audit is necessary to confirm election results. Without scannable ballots, audits can become complicated and time-consuming, which can undermine public confidence in the accuracy of election results. C.S.H.B. 3113 seeks to address these issues and enhance accuracy, efficiency, election security, and public trust by requiring a ballot, for an election in a county that conducts a hand count of voted paper ballots, to be capable of being scanned and processed by an optical scanner.

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

C.S.H.B. 3113 amends the Election Code to require a ballot, for an election in a county that conducts a hand count of voted paper ballots, to be capable of being scanned and processed by an optical scanner.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2025.

COMPARISON OF INTRODUCED AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 3113 may differ from the introduced in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

Both versions of the bill require scannable ballots for an election in a county that conducts a hand count of voted paper ballots. However, whereas the introduced required a ballot to be capable of being scanned and processed by automatic tabulating equipment, the substitute requires a ballot to be capable of being scanned and processed by an optical scanner. Accordingly, the substitute omits the introduced version's definition of "automatic tabulating equipment."