H.B. No. 493

AN ACT

relating to ineligibility to serve as a poll watcher.

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

SECTION 1.  Section 33.006(b), Election Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b)  A certificate of appointment must:

(1)  be in writing and signed by the appointing authority or, for an appointment for a write-in candidate under Section 33.004, by each of the voters making the appointment;

(2)  indicate the capacity in which the appointing authority is acting;

(3)  state the name, residence address, and voter registration number of the appointee and be signed by the appointee;

(4)  identify the election and the precinct polling place or other location at which the appointee is to serve;

(5)  in an election on a measure, identify the measure if more than one is to be voted on and state which side of the measure the appointee represents; and

(6)  contain an affidavit executed by the appointee stating that the appointee:

(A)  will not have possession of a device capable of recording images or sound or that the appointee will disable or deactivate the device while serving as a watcher; and

(B)  has not been finally convicted of a felony of the first or second degree or a felony offense in connection with conduct directly attributable to an election.

SECTION 2.  Section 33.035, Election Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 33.035.  INELIGIBILITY OF PERSON CONVICTED OF CERTAIN OFFENSES [~~ELECTION OFFENSE~~]. A person is ineligible to serve as a watcher in an election if the person has been finally convicted of a felony:

(1)  of the first or second degree; or

(2)  [~~an offense~~] in connection with conduct directly attributable to an election.

SECTION 3.  This Act takes effect September 1, 2025.

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  President of the Senate Speaker of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 493 was passed by the House on May 13, 2025, by the following vote:  Yeas 86, Nays 52, 3 present, not voting; that the House refused to concur in Senate amendments to H.B. No. 493 on May 28, 2025, and requested the appointment of a conference committee to consider the differences between the two houses; and that the House adopted the conference committee report on H.B. No. 493 on June 1, 2025, by the following vote:  Yeas 90, Nays 44, 2 present, not voting.

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Chief Clerk of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 493 was passed by the Senate, with amendments, on May 26, 2025, by the following vote:  Yeas 26, Nays 5; at the request of the House, the Senate appointed a conference committee to consider the differences between the two houses; and that the Senate adopted the conference committee report on H.B. No. 493 on June 1, 2025, by the following vote:  Yeas 23, Nays 8.

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Secretary of the Senate

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

                 Date

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               Governor