

SUBJECT: Requiring additional information on voter registration certificates

COMMITTEE: Elections — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 4 ayes — Berman, England, Burnam, Farias

0 nays

3 absent — Bohac, Anchia, C. Howard

SENATE VOTE: On final passage, April 19 — 30-0

WITNESSES: No public hearing.

BACKGROUND: Election Code, secs. 15.001 and 15.002 set forth the required contents of voter registration certificates and those that are optional. Sec. 15.001 establishes 15 required items that a voter registration card must contain, including the voter's name, residence address, birthday, registration number, and the effective date of the registration. Sec. 15.002 also allows a voter registration certificate to contain a jurisdictional or distinguishing number for any territorial unit in which the voter resides, including a congressional district, state senatorial district, state representative district, commissioners precinct, justice precinct, city election precinct, or school district election precinct.

DIGEST: SB 932 would require each voter registration certificate to contain — in addition to the contents already required by sec. 15.001 — the jurisdictional or distinguishing number for the following territorial units in which the voter resided, as determined by the voter registrar:

- congressional district;
- state senatorial district;
- state representative district;
- commissioners precinct;
- justice precinct;
- city election precinct; and
- school district election precinct.

Sec. 15.002 would be amended to authorize the voter registration certificate to contain up to seven jurisdictional or distinguishing numbers for any other territorial units in which the voter resided.

Changes in the law made by the bill would only apply to a voter registration certificate issued on or after January 1, 2008.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2007.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

SB 932 would require the inclusion of certain information in voter registration certificates to make these documents uniform across the state and readily understandable for voters who are eligible to vote in multi-jurisdictional elections. Current election law requirements allow, but do not require, a voter registration certificate to contain jurisdictional identifying numbers. However, most certificates contain this information because it expedites the voting process by quickly informing voters of their respective voting districts and in which elections they are eligible to vote. The bill simply would standardize this practice across Texas.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

No apparent opposition.