

SUBJECT: Removing requirement for school trustee joint elections

COMMITTEE: Public Education — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 12 ayes — Huberty, Bernal, Allen, Allison, Ashby, K. Bell, Dutton, K. King, Meyer, Sanford, Talarico, VanDeaver

0 nays

1 absent — M. González

WITNESSES: For — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Adam Cahn, Cahnman's Musings; Cary Roberts, Texas Association of Election Administrators; Dominic Giarratani, Texas Association of School Boards; Crystal Main)

Against — None

On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Von Byer and Christopher Maska, Texas Education Agency)

BACKGROUND: Election Code sec. 41.001(a) sets the uniform election dates as:

- the first Saturday in May in an odd-numbered year;
- the first Saturday in May in an even-numbered year for an election held by a political subdivision other than a county; or
- the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November.

Education Code sec. 11.0581(a) requires an election for trustees of an independent school district be held on the same date as certain other state and local elections.

DIGEST: HB 613 would remove the Education Code requirement that school district trustee elections be held as joint elections on the same date as certain other state and local elections. An election held on the same date as the other specified state and local elections would continue to be conducted as a joint election.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2019.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

HB 613 would prevent long-term vacancies on a school board by removing the requirement that district trustee elections be held jointly with other certain local or state elections. Currently, it can be difficult for some rural school districts to fill an unexpected vacancy that arises between the joint election dates. School districts could continue to hold joint elections when appropriate to save money. The bill would not remove the Election Code requirement that elections be held on a uniform election date in May or November.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

No concerns identified.