

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center

H.B. 298  
By: Madden (Ellis)  
State Affairs  
5-17-97  
Committee Report (Amended)

### **DIGEST**

Currently, Texas law allows special elections for Alcoholic Beverage Code options and bond elections for public schools and colleges to be held on dates other than the Uniform Election Dates as established in the Election Code. Some voters may be confused about the nature of elections due to varying dates. This bill eliminates the exemption from uniform election dates for certain entities holding elections related to various matters.

### **PURPOSE**

As proposed, H.B. 298 eliminates the exemption from uniform election dates for certain entities holding elections related to various matters.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

This bill does not grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 31A, Election Code, by adding Section 31.008, as follows:

Sec. 31.008. COLLECTION OF INFORMATION: FORUM ON ELECTION COST SAVINGS. Requires the secretary of state to collect and maintain information on the number of elections held in this state and the administrative costs associated with the elections. Requires the secretary of state to conduct an annual forum to allow election officials from political subdivisions to exchange ideas on the administration of elections, including issues related to cost savings and efficiency in the conduct of elections. Requires election officials to be given the opportunity at the forum to make recommendations on proposed changes in the election law.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 31.122, Election Code, to provide that a regular business days means a day on which the school district's main business office is regularly open for business, if the political subdivision is an independent school district.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 41.0052(a), Election Code, to authorize the governing body of a political subdivision other than a county to change the date on which it holds its general election for officers to another authorized uniform election date by December 31, 1997, rather than 1993. Prohibits an election on the new date from being held before 1998, rather than 1993.

SECTION 4. Amends Section 9.004(b), Local Government Code, to require the ordinance ordering the election to provide for the election to be held on the first authorized uniform election date prescribed by the Election Code or on the earlier of the date of the next municipal general election or presidential general election. Requires the election date to allow sufficient time to comply with other requirements of law and to occur by a certain date.

SECTION 5. (a) Amends Chapter 41A, Election Code, by adding Section 41.0031, as follows:

Sec. 41.0031. ELECTIONS IN MARCH IN CERTAIN POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS.  
Sets forth entities to which this section applies. Requires a general or special election of

officers of a political subdivision covered by this section to be held on the fourth Saturday in March.

(b) Amends Section 7(c), Chapter 429, Acts of the 70th Legislature, Regular Session, 1987, to require directors elections to occur on the fourth Saturday in March, rather than on the May general election date, of even-numbered years.

SECTION 6. Repealer: Section 41.003, Election Code (Authorized November Elections in Even-Numbered Years).

SECTION 7. Sets forth provisions regarding effective dates of certain provisions.

SECTION 8. Emergency clause.  
Effective date: upon passage.

### **SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE CHANGES**

Amendment 1.

Deletes SECTION 3. Renumbers remaining SECTIONS accordingly.