

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 234
By: Harris
State Affairs
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As Filed

DIGEST AND PURPOSE

Currently, the Texas primary election, including the presidential primary, is held on the second Tuesday in March. Since Texas passed this law, 15 other states have scheduled their presidential primaries for the first Tuesday in March. During the most recent presidential primary, the Republican and Democratic presidential nominees were effectively chosen before Texans had an opportunity to vote. As proposed, S.B. 234 would move the primary election date to the first Tuesday in March.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the secretary of state in SECTION 4 of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Sections 41.007(a), (b), and (c), Election Code, by providing that the general primary election date is the first, rather than the second, Tuesday in March in each even-numbered year. Makes conforming changes.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 172.023(a), Election Code, by requiring an application for a place on the general primary election ballot to be filed not later than 6 p.m. on December 2, rather than January 2, in the year before the primary election year unless the filing deadline is extended under Subchapter C.

SECTION 3. Provides that the term of a person who is serving as a county or precinct chair of a political party on the effective date of this Act ends on the 20th day after the first Tuesday in April 2004.

SECTION 4. Requires the secretary of state by rule to modify applicable procedures, dates, and deadlines in the Election Code to implement the changes in primary election dates made by this Act.

SECTION 5. Effective date: September 1, 2003.