

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

H.B. 159
By: Talton (Jackson)
Education
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S/SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Currently, political subdivisions may spend taxpayer dollars to educate the public on matters up for voter approval. Of late, several political subdivisions have been accused of supporting ballot measures rather than informing the voters of the issue.

H.B. 159 prevents political subdivisions from spending funds related to an election within 60 days of a ballot measure and does not prevent private individuals from spending privately raised funds to advertise or promote their opinion on a measure before voters.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

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

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 140, Local Government Code, by adding Section 140.008, as follows:

Sec. 140.008. EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS BY SCHOOL DISTRICT TO ADVERTISE ELECTION MEASURE. (a) Defines "measure."

(b) Prohibits a school district from spending funds on advertising, other promotional materials, or educational materials related to an election or measure for the period beginning on the 60th day before the date of an election and ending on election day.

(c) Provides that this section does not apply to the expenditure of funds for notice or other publications required by the Election Code, another statute, or in response to an open records request under Chapter 552 (Public Information), Government Code.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2005.