

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

H.B. 1654
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State Affairs
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Texas ranks 42nd in the nation in voter registration of 18-24 year olds. According to the latest available United States Census data, only 53.8 percent of Texans 18-24 years old were registered, compared to 69.5 percent of all Texans. National data also indicates voter registration for 18 year olds (30 percent) is significantly lower than for 20-24 years old.

Under current law, principals of public and private high schools or their designees are required to serve as deputy registrars to facilitate voter registration of eligible students. However, principals are often unavailable to fulfill this role due to their other responsibilities or have limited interaction with students. The purpose of the bill is to increase voter registration of high school seniors.

H.B. 1654 requires high school principals to designate four high school or district employees as deputy registrars, as opposed to one designee as is now current law. This bill provides for more accessible deputy registrars and will increase registration among high school students eligible to vote.

H.B. 1654 amends current law relating to the appointment of high school deputy registrars.

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 Section 13.046(a), Election Code, as follows:

(a) Requires each principal of a public or private high school to designate four people who are employees of the high school or employees of the district in which the high school is located and serving at the high school to serve as deputy registrars for the county in which the school is located. Provides that this subsection does not apply to a school with four employees or fewer. Deletes existing text requiring each principal of a public or private high school or the principal's designee to serve as a deputy registrar for the county in which the school is located.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2009.