

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
84R8751 LED-F

S.B. 983  
By: Bettencourt  
State Affairs  
3/10/2015  
As Filed

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

In order to vote in elections in Texas, the law requires most citizens (some, such as people with disabilities, can be exempt) to show one of a handful of allowable photo identifications before their votes can be counted. Acceptable forms include a state driver's license or ID card that is not more than 60 days expired at the time of voting, a concealed handgun license, a United States passport, a military ID card, or a U.S citizenship certificate with a photo.

Experts say more than 600,000 Texans lack such identification. Those citizens can obtain "election identification certificates" free of charge, but must present a copy of their birth certificate. Searching for and obtaining copies of birth certificates can cost between \$2 and \$47.

S.B. 983 will allow those wanting to vote the ability to receive a copy of their birth certificate free of charge by showing up in person to the state registrar, local registrar, or county clerk and stating that the birth certificate will be used for obtaining an election identification certificate.

As proposed, S.B. 983 amends current law relating to restrictions on the assessment of the fee charged for issuance of certain birth records.

### **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 191.0046, Health and Safety Code, by adding Subsection (e), as follows:

(e) Requires the state registrar, a local registrar, or a county clerk to issue without fee a certified copy of a birth record to an applicant who:

(1) appears in person to obtain the record; and

(2) states that the applicant is requesting the record for the purpose of obtaining an election identification certificate under Section 521A.001 (Election Identification Certificate), Transportation Code.

SECTION 2. Makes application of this Act prospective.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2015.