Senate Research Center   S.B. 1116
By: Bettencourt et al.
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Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Currently, the results of elections associated with independent school districts or local governments, particularly tax ratification elections, are not always readily accessible to the public. While election results up the ballot garner headlines and news coverage and are required to be placed on state and county elections websites, these down-the-ballot elections neither receive the same news coverage, nor have the same statutory posting requirements. The result is less government transparency. Citizens who seek to learn the outcomes of such elections often must work exponentially harder to find the results.

S.B. 1116 requires cities, counties, and independent school districts that maintain a website to place on their respective websites, no more than two clicks away from their homepage, the results of their respective elections. While the bill would require each entity to post the election results related to that entity, an independent school district, for example, would not need to post results of an election of a different entity.

(Original Author's / Sponsor's Statement of Intent)

S.B. 1116 amends current law relating to a county, city, or independent school district posting election notices and results on an Internet website.

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 Subchapter A, Chapter 65, Election Code, by adding Section 65.016, as follows:

> Sec. 65.016. INTERNET POSTING OF ELECTION RESULTS. (a) Requires a county that holds or provides election services for an election and maintains an Internet website to post on its public Internet website for an election of public officials or of a governmental entity authorized by law to impose a tax administered by the county the results of each election, the total number of votes cast, the total number of votes cast for each candidate or for or against each measure, the total number of votes cast by personal appearance on election day, the total number of votes cast by personal appearance or mail during the early voting period, and the total number of counted and uncounted provisional ballots cast.

> (b) Requires a city or independent school district that holds an election and maintains an Internet website to post on its public Internet website for the city or independent school district, as applicable, the results of each election, the total number of votes cast, the total number of votes cast for each candidate or for or against each measure, the total number of votes cast by personal appearance on election day, the total number of votes cast by personal appearance or mail during the early voting period, and the total number of counted and uncounted provisional ballots cast.

(c) Requires that the information described by Subsections (a) and (b) be posted as soon as practicable after the election and be accessible without having to make more than two selections or view more than two network locations after accessing the Internet website home page of the county, city, or district, as applicable.

SECTION 2. Amends Chapter 4, Election Code, by adding Section 4.009, as follows:

Sec. 4.009. INTERNET POSTING. (a) Requires a county that holds or provides election services for an election and maintains an Internet website, not later than the 21st day before election day, to post on its public Internet website for an election of public officials or of a governmental entity authorized by law to impose a tax administered by the county the date of the election, the location of each polling place, each candidate for an elected office on the ballot, and each measure on the ballot.

(b) Requires a city or independent school district that holds an election and maintains an Internet website, not later than the 21st day before election day, to post on the public Internet website for the city or independent school district, as applicable, the date of the next election, the location of each polling place, each candidate for an elected office on the ballot, and each measure on the ballot.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2021.