By: Huffman, et al.  S.B. No. 5

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to requiring a voter to present proof of identification; providing a criminal penalty.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 31, Election Code, is amended by adding Section 31.013 to read as follows:

Sec. 31.013. MOBILE LOCATIONS FOR OBTAINING IDENTIFICATION. (a) The secretary of state shall establish a program using mobile units to provide election identification certificates to voters for the purpose of satisfying the requirements of Section 63.001(b). A mobile unit may be used at special events or at the request of a constituent group.

(b) In establishing the program, the secretary of state shall consult with the Department of Public Safety on the creation of the program, security relating to the issuance of an election identification certificate, best practices in issuing an election identification certificate, and equipment required to issue an election identification certificate.

(c) The secretary of state may not charge a fee to a group that requests a mobile unit established under this section.

(d) If the secretary of state cannot ensure the required security or other necessary elements of the program, the secretary of state may deny a request for a mobile unit established under this section.
The secretary of state shall adopt rules necessary for
the implementation of this section.

SECTION 2. Section 63.001, Election Code, is amended by
amending Subsections (b), (d), and (e) and adding Subsection (i) to
read as follows:

(b) Except as provided by Subsection (h), on offering to
vote, a voter must present to an election officer at the polling
place:

(1) one form of photo identification listed in
[described by] Section 63.0101(a); or

(2) one form of identification listed in Section
63.0101(b) accompanied by the declaration described by Subsection
(i) [63.0101].

(d) If, as determined under Subsection (c), the voter's name
is on the precinct list of registered voters and the voter's
identity can be verified from the documentation presented under
Subsection (b), the voter shall be accepted for voting. An election
officer may not question the reasonableness of an impediment sworn
by a voter in a declaration described by Subsection (i).

(e) On accepting a voter, an election officer shall indicate
beside the voter's name on the list of registered voters that the
voter is accepted for voting. If the voter executes a declaration
of reasonable impediment to meet the requirement for identification
under Subsection (b), the election officer must affix the voter's
voter registration number to the declaration either in numeric or
bar code form.

(i) If the requirement for identification prescribed by
Subsection (b)(1) is not met, an election officer shall notify the voter that the voter may be accepted for voting if the voter meets the requirement for identification prescribed by Subsection (b)(2) and executes a declaration declaring the voter has a reasonable impediment to meeting the requirement for identification prescribed by Subsection (b)(1). A person is subject to prosecution for perjury under Chapter 37, Penal Code, or Section 63.0013 for a false statement or false information on the declaration. The secretary of state shall prescribe the form of the declaration. The form shall include:

1. A notice that a person is subject to prosecution for perjury under Chapter 37, Penal Code, or Section 63.0013 for a false statement or false information on the declaration;
2. A statement that the voter swears or affirms that the information contained in the declaration is true, that the person described in the declaration is the same person appearing at the polling place to sign the declaration, and that the voter faces a reasonable impediment to procuring the identification prescribed by Subsection (b)(1);
3. A place for the voter to indicate one of the following impediments:
   A. lack of transportation;
   B. lack of birth certificate or other documents needed to obtain the identification prescribed by Subsection (b)(1);
   C. work schedule;
   D. lost or stolen identification;
(E) disability or illness;
(F) family responsibilities; and
(G) the identification prescribed by Subsection (b)(1) has been applied for but not received;

(4) a place for the voter to sign and date the declaration;
(5) a place for the election judge to sign and date the declaration;
(6) a place to note the polling place at which the declaration is signed; and
(7) a place for the election judge to note which form of identification prescribed by Subsection (b)(2) the voter presented.

SECTION 3. Chapter 63, Election Code, is amended by adding Section 63.0013 to read as follows:

Sec. 63.0013. FALSE STATEMENT ON DECLARATION OF REASONABLE IMPEDIMENT. (a) A person commits an offense if the person intentionally makes a false statement or provides false information on a declaration executed under Section 63.001(i).

(b) An offense under this section is a felony of the third degree.

SECTION 4. Section 63.004(a), Election Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) The secretary of state may prescribe forms that combine the poll list, the signature roster, or any other form used in connection with the acceptance of voters at polling places with each other or with the list of registered voters. The secretary
shall prescribe any special instructions necessary for using the combination forms. The combination forms must include space for an election officer to indicate whether a voter executed a declaration of reasonable impediment under Section 63.001(i).

SECTION 5. Section 63.0101, Election Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 63.0101. DOCUMENTATION OF PROOF OF IDENTIFICATION.

(a) The following documentation is an acceptable form of photo identification under this chapter:

(1) a driver's license, election identification certificate, or personal identification card issued to the person by the Department of Public Safety that has not expired or that expired no earlier than two years [60 days] before the date of presentation;

(2) a United States military identification card that contains the person's photograph that has not expired or that expired no earlier than two years [60 days] before the date of presentation;

(3) a United States citizenship certificate issued to the person that contains the person's photograph;

(4) a United States passport issued to the person that has not expired or that expired no earlier than two years [60 days] before the date of presentation; or

(5) a license to carry a handgun issued to the person by the Department of Public Safety that has not expired or that expired no earlier than two years [60 days] before the date of presentation.
(b) The following documentation is acceptable as proof of identification under this chapter:

(1) a government document that shows the name and address of the voter, including the voter's voter registration certificate;

(2) one of the following documents that shows the name and address of the voter:
   
   (A) a copy of a current utility bill;
   
   (B) a bank statement;
   
   (C) a government check; or
   
   (D) a paycheck; or

(3) a certified copy of a domestic birth certificate or other document confirming birth that is admissible in a court of law and establishes the person's identity.

(c) A person 70 years of age or older may use a form of identification listed in Subsection (a) that has expired for the purposes of voting if the identification is otherwise valid.

SECTION 6. Section 272.011(b), Election Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b) The secretary of state shall prepare the translation for election materials required to be provided in a language other than English or Spanish for the following state prescribed voter forms:

(1) voter registration application form required by Section 13.002;

(2) the confirmation form required by Section 15.051;

(3) the voting instruction poster required by Section 62.011;
(4) the reasonable impediment declaration required by Section 63.001(b);

(5) the statement of residence form required by Section 63.0011;

(6) the provisional ballot affidavit required by Section 63.011;

(7) the application for a ballot by mail required by Section 84.011;

(8) the carrier envelope and voting instructions required by Section 86.013; and

(9) any other voter forms that the secretary of state identifies as frequently used and for which state resources are otherwise available.

SECTION 7. Section 521A.001(a), Transportation Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) The department shall issue an election identification certificate to a person who states that the person is obtaining the certificate for the purpose of satisfying Section 63.001(b), Election Code, and does not have another form of identification described by Section 63.0101(a), Election Code, and:

(1) who is a registered voter in this state and presents a valid voter registration certificate; or

(2) who is eligible for registration under Section 13.001, Election Code, and submits a registration application to the department.

SECTION 8. This Act takes effect January 1, 2018.