

The State of Texas



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Ruth R. Hughs
Secretary of State

ELECTION ADVISORY **No. 2020-29**

TO: Election Officials

FROM: Keith Ingram, Director of Elections

DATE: September 17, 2020

RE: NEW LAW: HB 25 (2017) Elimination of Straight-Party Voting

In its 85th Regular Session (2017), the Texas Legislature enacted House Bill 25, amending certain provisions of the Texas Election Code to eliminate straight-party voting effective September 1, 2020. House Bill 25 also amended Section 31.012 of the Texas Election Code to require the publication of certain notices regarding this change in law.

Notice Requirements

Section 31.012(a) of the Election Code requires the Secretary of State and the voter registrar of each county that maintains a website to provide notice of the elimination of straight ticket voting on each entity's respective website in each language in which voter registration and election materials are available. This provision directs the Secretary of State to prescribe the wording of the notice to be included on the websites. Additionally, a physical copy of the notice must be posted in a prominent location at the county election official's office.

This notice must be posted no later than September 30, 2020, and should remain posted throughout the canvassing period associated with the November 3, 2020 uniform election.

Prescribed Language

The Secretary of State has prescribed the following wording for the notice to be included on each entity's website regarding the repeal of straight-party voting:

“House Bill 25, passed during the 85th Legislative Session, eliminated straight-party voting effective September 1, 2020 (Section 64.004, Texas Election Code). If you wish to vote for all of the candidates affiliated with one party, you should select each candidate one at a time on your ballot.”

“El Proyecto de Ley 25 de la Cámara de Representantes, aprobado durante la 85^a Sesión Legislativa, eliminó la votación de partido único a partir del 1 de septiembre de 2020 (Sección 64.004, Código Electoral de Texas). Si desea votar por todos los candidatos afiliados a un partido, debe seleccionar a cada candidato uno a la vez en su boleta.”

Sign for County Election Office

The Secretary of State has prescribed the following signs for posting in the county election official’s physical office. These signs should be posted in any area where voters may be entering or exiting the location or in areas where voters may be waiting for services offered by the county election official. Additionally, if a county election official has multiple office locations, the signs should be posted in each location. The Secretary of State also strongly recommends that these signs be posted in the county voter registration offices, if they are maintained separately from the county election office.

- *Elimination of Straight-Party Voting Sign*

Signs for Polling Places

The prescribed signs for posting in the county elections office may also be used in early voting and election day polling places. Election officials may design their own signs for posting. These signs must be approved by the Secretary of State prior to use. (Section 62.013).

Ballots

When certifying, ordering, and programming ballots, the instructions for casting a straight-party vote and the voting square for straight-party voting that previously appeared as the first race on the ballot should not be included.

Please contact us at 1-800-252-VOTE (8683) or at elections@sos.texas.gov if you have any questions.

KI:CA:LP