

1-1 By: Bettencourt, Hagenbuch, Paxton S.B. No. 985
1-2 (In the Senate - Filed January 29, 2025; February 13, 2025,
1-3 read first time and referred to Committee on State Affairs;
1-4 March 17, 2025, reported favorably by the following vote: Yeas 11,
1-5 Nays 0; March 17, 2025, sent to printer.)

1-6 COMMITTEE VOTE

	Yea	Nay	Absent	PNV
1-7				
1-8	Hughes	X		
1-9	Paxton	X		
1-10	Bettencourt	X		
1-11	Birdwell	X		
1-12	Hall	X		
1-13	Hinojosa of Nueces	X		
1-14	Middleton	X		
1-15	Parker	X		
1-16	Perry	X		
1-17	Schwertner	X		
1-18	Zaffirini	X		

1-19 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
1-20 AN ACT

1-21 relating to the combination of certain election precincts.
1-22 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:
1-23 SECTION 1. Section 42.0051, Election Code, is amended to
1-24 read as follows:

1-25 Sec. 42.0051. COMBINING CERTAIN PRECINCTS. (a) If changes
1-26 in county election precinct boundaries to give effect to a
1-27 redistricting plan result in county election precincts with fewer
1-28 than 500 registered voters, a commissioners court for a general or
1-29 special election, or for a primary election the county executive
1-30 committee of a political party conducting a primary election, may
1-31 combine county election precincts notwithstanding Section 42.005
1-32 to avoid unreasonable expenditures for election equipment,
1-33 supplies, and personnel [~~This section applies only to a county with~~
1-34 ~~a population of less than 1.2 million that does not participate in~~
1-35 ~~the countywide polling place program described by Section 43.007~~].

1-36 (b) County election precincts in a county with a population
1-37 of not less than 250,000 may also be combined under Subsection (a)
1-38 if the changes result in county election precincts with not fewer
1-39 than 500 and not more than 750 registered voters.

1-40 (c) A combined precinct under Subsection (a) or (b) is
1-41 subject to the maximum population prescribed for a precinct under
1-42 Section 42.006.

1-43 (d) [~~(a-1)~~] In a general or special election for which use
1-44 of county election precincts is required, the commissioner's court
1-45 of a county with a population of less than 1.2 million that does not
1-46 participate in the countywide polling place program described by
1-47 Section 43.007 may, on the recommendation of the county election
1-48 board, combine county election precincts notwithstanding Section
1-49 42.005 if:

1-50 (1) the commissioners court cannot secure a suitable
1-51 polling place location under Section 43.031; and

1-52 (2) the location of the combined polling place
1-53 adequately serves the voters of the combined precinct.

1-54 (e) [~~(e)~~] A combined precinct under Subsection (d) [this
1-55 section] may not contain more than 10,000 registered voters.

1-56 (f) [~~(d)~~] A combined precinct may not be established if it:
1-57 (1) results in a dilution of voting strength of a group
1-58 covered by the federal Voting Rights Act (42 U.S.C. Section 1973c et
1-59 seq.);

1-60 (2) results in a dilution of representation of a group
1-61 covered by the Voting Rights Act in any political or electoral

2-1 process or procedure; or
2-2 (3) results in discouraging participation by a group
2-3 covered by the Voting Rights Act in any political or electoral
2-4 process or procedure because of the location of a polling place or
2-5 other factors.

2-6 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2025.

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