By: Toth H.B. No. 952

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to identification of early voting ballots voted by mail by electronic code.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter C, Chapter 52, Election Code, is amended by adding Section 52.076 to read as follows:

~~Sec. 52.076. IDENTIFYING CODE FOR MAIL-IN BALLOTS. (a) Each early voting ballot voted by mail must include a unique code readable by an electronic device that may be used to verify the authenticity of the ballot.~~

~~(b) No record associating an individual voter with a code assigned to a ballot under this section may be created.~~

~~(c) The secretary of state by rule shall provide for the design and distribution of a unique code system in a manner that, to the greatest extent possible, prevents the unauthorized reproduction or misuse of mail ballots.~~

SECTION 2. Section 86.001, Election Code, is amended by adding Subsection (h) to read as follows:

(h) ~~Before the clerk provides a ballot to an applicant,~~ The early voting clerk shall document the ballot serial number ranges provided to mail-in voters ~~identify the unique code included~~

~~on each ballot with an electronic device and make a record indicating the serial number ranges of mail in ballots distributed to voters.~~ ~~that a ballot with the unique code was issued~~.

SECTION 3. Section 87.062, Election Code, is amended by adding Subsection (a-1) to read as follows:

(a-1) The early voting ballot board shall identify the ballot serial number specified by Section 52.062 ~~unique code~~ included on each ballot ~~with an electronic device~~ and compare the serial number ~~code~~ on the ballot to the serial number range ~~codes~~ recorded by the early voting clerk under Section 86.001(h). If the serial number ~~code~~ does not match the ~~a~~ recorded serial number range provided by the early voting clerk ~~code~~, the early voting ballot board shall reject that ballot and not count it. ~~may not count the ballot~~. Ballots not counted under this section shall be placed in an envelope and treated in the same manner as rejected ballots under Section 87.043.

~~SECTION 4. Section 87.103, Election Code, is amended by adding Subsection (a-1) to read as follows:~~

~~(a-1) The serial number on unique code included on each mail-in ballot must be identified by an electronic device and if the code on the ballot does not match a code recorded by the early voting clerk under Section 86.001(h), the ballot may not be counted. Ballots not counted under this section shall be placed in an envelope and treated in the same manner as rejected ballots under Section 87.043.~~

SECTION 5. This Act takes effect September 1, 2025.