

## *Resolution Opposing Elimination of Countywide Polling Place Program*

- Whereas* Hidalgo County is currently a large, diverse rural and urban county in the state and has been participating in the Countywide Polling Place Program since 2018; and
- Whereas* many of our constituents take advantage of their ability to vote on Election Day in a polling location of their choice through the Countywide Polling Place Program; and
- Whereas* many of our constituents work outside the county and use the Countywide Polling Place Program as a necessary convenience to vote without having to adjust their work schedules; and
- Whereas* the use of the Countywide Polling Place Program has increased voter turnout and reduced the number of provisional ballots for Hidalgo County; and
- Whereas* the requirement to have precinct-based voting locations in Hidalgo County, where there are no public buildings for use as polling locations in every voting precinct and private facilities in some cases are not willing to allow the use of their buildings as a polling site, thus creating a significant expense and hardship on Hidalgo County and its constituents; and
- Whereas* at the time of this resolution there are at least four pending bills that seek to eliminate electronic poll books, eliminate electronic marking devices, and eliminate countywide polling places; and
- Whereas* the use of electronic poll books was authorized by the Texas Legislature through the Texas Election Code Section 31.014 and such poll books allow voters to sign in electronically while confirming identity through official identification and confirming voters have not already voted via absentee ballot or at another polling location, thus dramatically reducing voter fraud and improving wait times for voters; and
- Whereas* the use of electronic ballot marking devices permits voters to cast their ballot with the aid of electronics on a physical ballot, the devices neither stores or tabulates ballots but allows the voter to record the vote which provides voters an additional opportunity to review their votes prior to casting and reassures the voter their ballot is recorded accurately; and
- Whereas* any Texas county using electronic poll books and electronic ballot marking devices are required, by statute, to obtain approval and certification from the Secretary of State to use such equipment and such certification must be re-obtained annually which confirms the security of the voting process for the public; and
- Whereas* the Commissioners Court of Hidalgo County is of the opinion that regression into precinct-based voting would be a disservice to the voting community, reduce voter turnout, and could disenfranchise a large number of voters.

*Now, therefore, be it resolved* that the Hidalgo County Commissioners Court oppose the elimination of countywide polling places, the elimination of electronic pollbooks, and the elimination of electronic marking devices by the Texas Legislature.

***Approved this 18<sup>th</sup> day of February 2025.***

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**RICHARD F. CORTEZ**  
County Judge

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**DAVID L. FUENTES**  
County Commissioner, Pct. 1

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**EDUARDO "EDDIE" CANTU**  
County Commissioner, Pct. 2

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**EVERARDO "EVER" VILLARREAL**  
County Commissioner, Pct. 3

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**ELLIE TORRES**  
County Commissioner, Pct. 4

**Attest:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**ARTURO GUAJARDO, JR.**  
County Clerk